

ON THE RIGHT SIDE

Father Paul J. Cuddy

Recently I picked up a hitchhiker at the edge of Webster. He was about 25, with curly hair which was not particularly long, but he seemed to think it daring. His car was in a nearby garage for repairs, and he was on his way there. The dialogue follows.

Priest: Hop in, friend.

Hitchhiker: Thank you. This is the first hitchhiking I've done since college days. Some people are turned off by long hair. But I guess people are more liberal today.

P: I doubt it has much to do with being liberal or not. People hesitate because of dope and queer people — both on the part of drivers and of hitchhikers.

HH: I suppose so. But your collar is a protection for you.

P: Indeed it is. The collar still symbolizes service, and commitment.

HH: Yes. My brother was a priest working among the poor in the Bedford Stuyvesant project in New York. He could walk through the toughest places and no one harmed him. The collar gave him protection.

P: Is he still in the priesthood?

HH: No. He worked at Stuyvesant for several years among the poor. But he decided he could do more good as a social worker, so he left the priesthood.

P: I suppose he got married.

HH: Oh, yes. Nice girl. I think he does more good as a social worker than as a priest.

P: Isn't it curious that so many priests and Sisters who involve themselves in activism end up in marriage, despite their original commitment to God and the Church. What parish do you belong to?

HH: Oh, I no longer consider myself a Catholic. Probably live in Blessed-Sacrament parish. But I don't believe any more. Went to Catholic schools. But I think I'm quite a good person — better than those hypocrites who go to church.

P: Hmpf. You sound like the gent who sat in the front pew of the synagogue and told God how pleased he was with himself. You're a baptised Catholic. You will never escape that.

HH: I don't believe in any organized religion. I live as I think I should.

P: Don't give me that balderdash. Historically Christ established the Catholic church. Your staying or quitting is aside the point. Whether you accept it or not doesn't change the fact that the Church is from God.

HH: But I don't accept that. I make my own life.

P: That may be. But God has spoken. We don't tell God. God tells us. We obey God; not vice versa. Why in heaven's name do you think intellectuals like Newman, Chesterton, Knox, Cheon, Maritain, Oursler and dozens of others embraced the Catholic Faith? Well, here's your garage. I hope you return to the Church where you belong; and I hope your car will run well.

HH: Thanks for the lift. Good-bye.

Until Catholics exult in their Faith, and work to share it with others, we shall continue with these dreadful defections. There are very few great Catholic theologians today. Karl Rahner is probably the best. But others, Kueng, McBrien and the like, who are touted as great shakes, have shaken the Faith of many Catholics. Witness Commonwealth's former editor, John Cogley. They certainly have not brought men into the Faith. The Bible, the Fathers, the Councils, Kempis, Aquinas are old works, but standard and valuable. I think if our people would reread Newman, Knox, Martindale, Ward, Marmion, Karl Adam, et al; plus The Imitation of Christ and the Lives of the Saints, we should have hitchhikers who would narrate to their patrons the glory and the truth and the divinity of the Catholic Faith. Why not begin with you?

PARISH COUNCIL

Wayland — St. Joseph's Parish Council Formation Committee has finished its work and the provisional constitution has been written. The nominating committee is in the process of drawing up a list of nominees which will be submitted to the people of the parish for voting and election. In the near future all parishioners will receive a ballot by mail on which they will be asked to vote for 12 persons. The four persons receiving the highest number of votes will be elected for a three year term, the four receiving the next highest number of votes will be elected for a two year term and the four receiving the next highest will be elected for a one year term.

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'Revitalization' at St. Mary's

By MARY ANN GINNERTY

Waterloo — Revitalization is the key word at St. Mary's elementary school. When classes resume Sept. 4, St. Mary's will have a new kindergarten and a reinstated the seventh grade.

A new pre-school program for three and four-year-olds, staffed by school personnel is open to the entire community enrollment.

The seventh and eighth grades had been discontinued because of financial problems; declining enrollment and an apparent loss of enthusiasm for Catholic education. The seventh grade will open for the 1974-75 school year, and the eighth grade is slated for re-instatement by September 1975 as the parish community responds to the challenge of strengthening the school as the hub of the parish.

Sister Mary Cumbo, SSJ, will assume her responsibilities as principal on a full time basis, without a teaching assignment. Sister Mary indicated that this would enable her to concentrate on curriculum development and expansion of supervision and consultation with the faculty.

including four new staff members.

Departmentalization, rather than the self-contained classroom concept, will continue.

Sister Mary said that renewed enthusiasm, resulting in increased enrollment in grades one through six, had been sparked by the pastor, Father Albert Shamon. He began his pastorate here a year ago by visiting parish families and promoting positive attitudes towards school support.

Father Shamon, a columnist for the Courier-Journal and writer on religious education, directs his experience in education toward

the religion curriculum. In addition to instructing weekly classes for grades four through six, he is available for confessions monthly in the school, conducts penance services for the students and celebrates First Friday masses.


The school was founded in 1904.

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