

**PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE**

By Bishop Joseph L. Hogan

**1975 — Thank You, Lord!**

At the dawn of a New Year of our Lord 1975 it is a source of personal joy to use my column space to extend my blessing to you and your families and share with you my thoughts and hopes for the year that is offered to us as God's gift.



Above all, we should be grateful that the good Lord has allowed us to witness the advent of a new year and has offered us a further allotment of days to renew our lives and to rededicate ourselves to the ultimate value of time — as a preparation for the timelessness and agelessness of eternity.

The note of gaiety that accompanies traditional New Year's celebrations is surely tempered for each of us as we pause to reflect on the swift passage of time. The older we grow, the more we are forced to remark: "Time really does march on and the years do slip by."

What is time? The philosopher tells us that it is man's device to measure change. The life-span of all beings subject to change is measured by time. Only God is being; —

we possess our being not all at once but in successive moments. Yesterday we were — now we are, — tomorrow we may be. To describe the present moment of our existence we use the word NOW — and even in the pronunciation of the word, — before we finish the sound of N, — the moment we attempted to describe has eluded us.

The great St. Augustine — one of the great minds of the Christian world — when asked, "What is time?" remarked, "If no one asks me, I know — but when asked, I do not know."

I am sure we do not need the mind of a philosopher to agree on adjectives to describe time — it is elusive — it is precious.

It is elusive — we cannot dominate it, — we cannot accelerate it, nor retard, its swift passage. We have learned in the last decade to have some dominion over space, — but time lost will be lost forever. The sacred writers had this in mind when they described our life on earth — as a "mist that appears for a little and then vanishes." (James 4:15) — or again, as — "our days upon earth are but a shadow." (Job 8:9)

It is precious — some moments we hold so precious that we try to relive them — we would love to detain them forever. The

science of photography thrives upon this human device to relive the great moments of our lives. A great spiritual writer once commented on the value of time: "God Who is so liberal in all His other gifts shows us by the wise economy of His Providence how circumspect we ought to be in the management of time, for He never gives us two moments together." (Archbishop Fenelon.)

May all of us in 1975 grow to a greater awareness that time's greatest value is the opportunity it presents to us to abandon 'ungodliness and wordly desires' and to live every moment that the goodness of the Lord holds for us in the presence of Him in whom alone there is no change nor shadow of alteration — Who has called us all to share with Him timeless existence.

I like this prayer which I received from a brother priest. I share it with you as I pray that 1975 will be filled with His blessings of peace and joy:

**"A new year is being given us — untouched, full of things that have never been!"**

**Thank you, Jesus! Help us fill each moment with joy and peace!"**

**ON THE RIGHT SIDE**

**Fr. Paul J. Cuddy**

Jesuit Father Michael F. Kavanagh of St. Augustine's parish, Rochester, is the pastor of St. Aloysius Church in Washington, after 15 years with a leper colony in India. We have been friends since high school days at old St. Andrew's Seminary, then on Frank Street near Kodak. St. Andrew's is gone. Old St. Patrick's Cathedral is gone. Father Kavanagh went to the Jesuit Novitiate in Poughkeepsie, and later to Woodstock, Md., now both victims of "the times." These historic places of holiness have been sold to secular works. I went to old St. Bernard's Seminary. Despite 46 years of rarely meeting, we have remained friends, and when he visits Rochester we get together to discuss our mutual loves: The Catholic Church, the diocese of Rochester and the Society of Jesus.

Last Spring I brought Father K

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to the Rochester air port and we had coffee while awaiting his plane. I mentioned my long admiration for the Society, and yet my rarely liking any individual Jesuit. He smiled and said; "There's a new book out: A History of the Society of Jesus, written by one of our Fathers, Father William Bangert. Would you like a copy?" "Why of course." Thank you." A month later the book came — with a bill for \$16.50. It is scholarly but readable, and superbly bound.

I began re-reading the Jesuit beginnings, with the principles and directions of the founder, the Basque Saint Ignatius of Loyola. My first intensive experience with these directions was during my first retreat at the Jesuit Retreat House in Auriesville in 1940. It was eight days of complete silence. A Father McFarland conducted the retreat, and sent men back to their parishes, jolted spiritually, docile, devout, and burning with zeal for the glory of Our Sovereign Lord.

Among the directions of St. Ignatius was the insistence on the examination of conscience twice daily: at noon; at night. As I pondered over this practice, which has produced great holiness, I thought: "How few people today know, how to examine their consciences, even for confession. Why not present an aid?" Maybe this will help some readers:

**Have I without sufficient reason missed my Easter Duties, or Mass on any Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation?**

**Have I used God's Name in vain, in anger or carelessly?**

**Have I neglected my prayers? or spiritual reading? or concern for the works of the Church?**

**Have I been wanting in gratitude to God, or in confidence, or in resignation to His Holy Will?**

**Have I been dishonest: by stealing, cheating; not paying proper wages or bills or debts; or by not doing the work well for which I am paid?**

**Have I been uncharitable in thought, word, deed, omission?**

**Have I revealed the faults of others in idle gossip; told lies to injure another or to excuse myself?**

**Have I contributed to the support of the Church in proportion to my means?**

**Have I been disobedient, rude, sulky to those in authority over me? Or harsh, overbearing or sarcastic to those under my authority?**

**Have I brooded over injuries, refused to forgive? Been angry, envious, jealous?**

**Have I given scandal or bad example? Or been vain, proud, selfish, self-seeking?**

**Have I been immodest or impure in thought, word, deed, with myself or with others?**

**Have I been drunk? And if so, what sorrow did I bring to my family and to others?**

**Have I driven a vehicle without regard to the safety of myself or others?**

**For Married People:**

**Have I failed to show love, respect and good example to my partner?**

**Have I neglected my duty to my children: in regard to their religious instruction; to their training in good habits?**

**Have I sinned against the duties of married life?**

These points of examination make no distinction between mortal sin, venial sin, or imperfections. They are all directed toward the perfection of our own lives and the lives of others whom we influence. They will make a helpful study for many to begin 1975.

**Happy New Year!**

**President Hails Canonization**

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — President Ford has hailed the forthcoming canonization of Blessed Elizabeth Ann (Bayley) Seton, who will become the first American-born saint of the Catholic Church, as a "milestone in our diverse spiritual history."

The White House issued a statement by the President which said that the action of Pope Paul VI was timely "since women have never made a greater contribution to America's national life than today."

President Ford said that "Mother Seton's singular honor is a tribute to all American women who enter the religious life to serve in schools, hospitals and charitable work."

**Ex Humanae Vitae Critic Now Lauds Pope's Stand**

Atchison, Kans. [RNS] — A conference on natural family planning was told here by a Catholic marriage counselor who once rejected Pope Paul's birth control teaching that "if we didn't already have this teaching, we'd have to invent it."

Stating that he had changed his mind about the Pope's 1968 encyclical, "Humanae Vitae," which condemned contraception, Jack Quesnell of Minneapolis said that after years of counseling unhappy married couples he came to see how the application of Pope Paul's "hard core pragmatism" could enrich a marriage.

He and other speakers repeatedly declared that the widespread use of contraception fitted into a pattern of marital unhappiness, immaturity in the use of sex in marriage, and free use of sex outside marriage.

The conference, sponsored by Abbot Brendan Downey, O.S.B., and the monks of St. Benedict's Abbey, Atchison, concentrated on the Ovulation Method of fertility control, also known as the Billings Method, named for Dr. John and Lyn Billings of Melbourne, Australia.

Abbot Downey said "it's unfair for priests to say, 'I'm not going to unsettle consciences by talking about (contraceptive) birth

control.' This is selling people short. Natural family planning is a method that can enhance the marriage relationship."

Quesnell said the "fair thing" is to help people understand that in the teaching of the Church through natural family planning methods, "we have a way to help them come to grips with the three primary challenges of marriage."

"The challenges are for couples to come to the meaning of spiritual life, to meet the question of the equality of the sexes, and to come to grips with their own sexuality," he said.

**LAVERNE REAPPOINTED**

Thomas Laverne has been reappointed state chairman of the 1975 March of Dimes appeal to prevent birth defects. Laverne will be chairman for the third year in a row. Through his leadership, state volunteers raised \$1,492,514.00 (\$130,000) by the Monroe County chapter) during the January through April 1974 drive for support of medical service programs, research and education.

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