Airing Problems

In an effort to ease tensions between police and Latin youths in the Clinton-Clifford area, Robert Burgos, CYO inner city youth director, the Puerto Rican Youth Development and Resource Center and the Bi-Lingual Education Office are sponsoring a number of Youth/-Police Workshops.

The project stems from an incident in which police and CYO participants were involved, and in which three youths were charged with resisting arrest and disorderly conduct.

The workshops are designed as opportunities to air grievances and to achieve mutual understandings for the 30 youths and police officers who attend them.

One result of the program is a "ride-along" project in which youths accompany policemen on regular rounds.

Genesis II . . . Building a Church

By MARY ANN GINNERTY

Savannah — What gives today's youth a religious experience that will carry him through life? What is Church to a freshman or sophomore in high school? A diocesan program called Genesis II does not provide the answer, but for some, it might provide the beginning to an answer.

Thirty-two youths and CCD teachers from St. John the Evangelist in Clyde and St. Patrick's in Savannah recently gathered for the two-day program at St. Patrick's under the guidance of program coordinator, Father Robert Hammond. The parish staff included Father John Coonan, pastor, and Father Gerard Hafner, associate pastor.

"The program is not an alternative form of religious education, but rather an experience emphasizing the uniqueness of the person and his relationship to the Church," said Father Hammond. "The goal is to show the need for togetherness in the Church and to get the youths to talk and listen to each other since listening is the base for all effective Christian education programs."

Father Hafner indicated the parishes hope to build a new approach in their religious education program for high schoolers around the Genesis II experience.

Father Hammond explained that it is characteristic of youth to focus on himself and he needs to learn to listen and show concern for others. As this builds, it becomes the basis for the realization that it takes many gifts to build up the body of Christ.

He pointed out that earlier generations of Catholics have tended to see the Church fulfilling a need on special occasions and not as an integral part of all aspects of daily experience.

Genesis II attempts to place the importance of Christianity on the person, the people around him and Jesus, and calling it Church.

The program format includes discussion, movies, Mass and a penance service. The youths focus on examining values and dealing with Jesus as a reality in everyday experiences. Scripture is considered as the word of God and as bringing salvation with it.

"Genesis II is getting the kids' attention and helping them experience the feeling that there is something vibrant and beautiful here," Father Hammond said. "It is saying to them, look we have the words of life and they aren't ours."

For some of the youths, Genesis II may bring the first experience of standing around the altar and feeling the sense of community grow and what they as individuals bring to the worshipping community. The penance service focuses on the idea of sin as affecting the community and explores the theology of forgiveness.

Cathedral Offers New Adult Studies

The needs of adult children of aging parents, self-understanding and prayer, and the story of the Messianic community that emerged from Resurrection morning and the Pentecost experience — these will be the concerns of the three evening courses that Sacred Heart Cathedral unveils Feb. 4 and 5, as its Spring adult education program. In addition, there will be a daytime Bible study course.

"The Middle Generation Stranded" will be given by Family Service of Rochester on Tuesdays, beginning Feb. 4, at 8 p.m. in the rectory hall, 296 Flower City Park. The eight sessions will provide opportunity to explore the questions and concerns of adult children in their relationship with aging parents. Ways of improving relationships between the generations will be discussed. Registration is limited to 25.

On Wednesdays, beginning Feb. 5, at 8 p.m. in Sacred Heart Convent, Sister Anne Mary Dooley, SSJ, director of Continuing Education at St. Bernard's Seminary, will conduct an eight-session course called "The Inner Journey." It is designed to help participants grow in self-understanding through insights gleaned from psychology and practical theology. Instruction in and an opportunity for personal prayer will be a part of each session.

Also on Wednesdays, beginning Feb. 5, at 8 p.m. in the rectory hall, Father Sebastian Falcone, STL, academic dean of St. Bernard's Seminary, will teach a course on the Acts of the Apostles. The Book of Acts follows the emergence of the Messianic community through the Resurrection and Pentecost to a bold crusade of witness that swept its message into the major areas of the Roman Empire. In its eight weeks, the course will deal with the historical range and background of the book, the basic theological dimensions, the literary skill of the writer, and the climate of the early church as it developed from discipleship to worldwide movement.

The daytime Bible study course, led by Sister Ann Habershaw, SSND, religious education coordinator for the parish, is intended as a basic approach to understanding Scripture and its place in Catholic worship. It will be given Tuesdays, beginning Feb. 4, 1:30-2:30 p.m., in the convent. Registration may be made in advance through Ted Lum, 647-1900, or at the first session of any of the courses. The fee is $3 per person of $5 per couple.

ON THE RIGHT SIDE

Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

Is it true that many Catholics are leaving the Church?

There are many statistical analyses on the subject. J. B. Morton, the English columnist wrote: "Statistics: a form of rhetoric." We cannot discount statistics entirely, but it is safe to approach them with suspicion of manipulation. I depend on my own reading and observations.

Hmpf! Aren't you conceited?

No. Only trying to find what is true. For what they are worth, here are some observations. There are three general classes of Catholics in the States.)1 The Grass Roots Catholics, who are faithful to their traditional Faith without much academic interest in theology, liturgy or Fancy Dan religion. They help with school, CCD; care for Our Lord's sanctuary; runs suppers, bingo, bazaars. They are interested in their parish particularly, and the Universal Church generally. They practice charity without blowing a horn or sending for the TV camera. They are the Marys and Josephs of this age. 2) The Elitists, who have had a ball with changing and changes; and with changing changes. A decade ago Pope Paul was impelled to write the beautiful "Mystery of Faith," to keep Catholic doctrine clear. At that time we had those glittery-eyed priests celebrating Mass without vestments, using profane vessels instead of sacred; making up ego-centered liturgies; fracturing the Church's laws of worship with enthusiasm. It was a time of great ego-tripping, exalting self in the name of Freedom. Do get a copy of "Decline and Fall of Radical Catholicism" by Prof. James Hitchcock. It gives the background of these shenanigans. (Image edition: $1.25)

And the 3rd class?

I call them the Limbo-ed class. They don't quite quit the Church, yet they don't quite accept the Church. Many of these are good people, but heart-sick. They are shaken in faith, and are hanging on tenuously. Let me give an example. In 1950 I was the Catholic chaplain of the Air Force Officer Candidate School at Lackland, Texas. In one class was a beautiful female student officer, intelligent and deeply religious. She was in her early twenties. In the same class was a recent convert to the Faith, a firebrand with vibrant enthusiasm. I was happy when they married one another. For some years we corresponded. Then a silence. Three years ago the girl wrote an explosive letter at Christmas time. She professed to be a non-practicing Catholic, betrayed by the Church in its infidelity to the traditions of the ages. Her husband, once a devote of Chesterton, Newman, Dawson and Ronald Knox, as well as the early Fathers, had reverted from the Church. This Christmas brought another letter. . . . ". . . Re your comments about some Catholics' enthusiasm for the **social** aspect of religion. Determining one's actions according to their acceptability by society, either locally or at large, cannot but lead to the lowest common denominator right down the drain hole. This was a mistake that was always very easily made on the parochial scale, which is perhaps what made it so easy to make on a global scale. But the situation is not hopeless. There seems to be always at least one misfit hanging in there. I enclose a clipping somewhat relative to the point." (The clipping was an ad in the NYTimes giving the schedule of Masses at the Traditionalist Catholic Church, pastored by Father Gomar DePauw, JCD.)

What do you do now?

Prayerfully and hopefully I wrote: "I quite sympathize with your difficulties, and pray for a solution which will satisfy your soul. It is an especial sorrow that Ron, in whom I had such hopes, has left the Church entirely. By this post I am sending you a copy of The Church and I by Frank Sheed. In the days of the spiritual élan which you and Ron shared together, the Sheed-Ward publishing company was a glory to the intellectual devout. I think that this latest of Sheed's books gives a good presentation for those who are now suffering from the seeming uncertainties which they see in some church leaders. Jesuit Father deLubac wrote: 'In the name of a 'post-conciliar' Church some people are attempting to found another Church of Jesus Christ: an anthropocentric society, which is threatened by an immanentist apostasy, and which can be drawn into a movement of general surrender under the cloak of rejuvenation, ecumenism, or adaptation . . . .' Sheed writes: 'An increasing number of Catholics find the Church as they meet it a trial to their faith: it is not trial to mine. I know more than most about its day-in day-out reality, yet not only can I not imagine myself outside it, I delight being in it! I pray to Our Lady of Good Counsel, whom you loved so well, to return to you the delights of 'being in it'".

Welcome Pilgrims, Pope Asks Romans

Vatican City [RNS] — Pope Paul has called on Romans to give "brotherly welcome" to Holy Year pilgrims. Addressing pilgrims and Romans gathered in St. Peter's Square for the customary Sunday-noon papal blessing, the pontiff praised civil authorities for their efforts to give an "orderly, functional appearance" to the city of Rome. Urging Romans to put aside greed and indifference and give a courteous welcome to visitors, the Pope observed that "these guests will make facile judgments of you and often from small particulars of courtesy. And then they will carry their opinion into the world."

FIRST PENACE

Hornell — First Penance classes will be held in St. Ignatius Church at 3 p.m. Jan. 20 and 27 with Father Leo Mans, pastor, giving the instructions. The first class was held Jan. 13.

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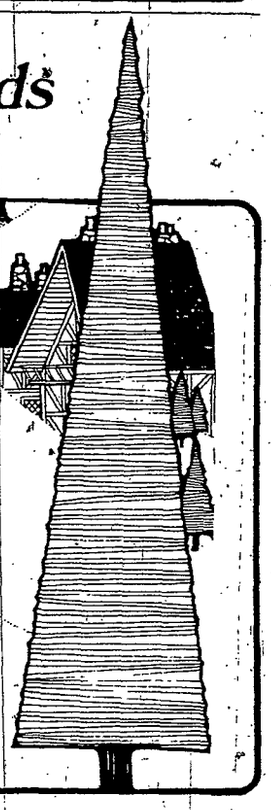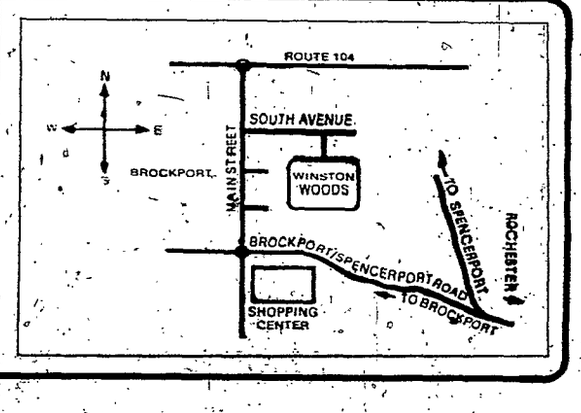
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