



Benefit Dance

Sister Mary Margaret Merkel, St. Agnes High School principal, center, will be honored by the school's Parents Club at a dinner dance Friday, April 11, at the Hospitality House, 2226 penfield Road. Planning it are Jim Keating and Arlene Imhof. Proceeds will establish a scholarship fund to help needy students. Reservations may be made at the school.

The Church 1975



Fr. Andrew Greeley

I like John Henry Newman, Gerard Manley Hopkins, G. K. Chesterton, Chantal in Bernanos' "Joy," and Thomas Aquinas.

I also like the "Ave Maria Stella," John Ireland, neighborhood parishes, and priests working with teenagers.

I like frequent Communion, devotion to Mary, John of the Cross, Richard Rolle, and the Hound of Heaven.

So, do I want to return to these things and people?

No way. One returns to a dear departed past to escape the problems of the present. One seeks consolation in the comforts of nostalgia because the old world was better than the present one. One returns to the 13th Century because it was "the greatest of centuries" and the 20th, presumably, the worst.

We don't "return" to Hopkins and Aquinas, Rolle and Bernard, Newman and Ireland. That is not fair to them, or us. We rather go forward together with them. They are part of our heritage; they are with us even if we pretend that they are not. They speak to our time as well as their own, even if we do not want to listen to them. And they will speak to the future more loudly than most of us will.

The suggestion that we can learn from our discarded predecessors is a damnable affront to many of the "with it" Catholics of our time. History began in 1960. Those who went before were either howling savages at worst or "inevitable" at best. There is a new order under Heaven and we are it. We are the hinge of history. Everyone before Freud and Marx and Darwin is part of the Dark Ages.

The clock cannot be turned back. It is not 1275 or 1895 (and Holmes no longer walks through the yellow London fog—in part because anti-pollution measures have taken the yellow out of the fog). Those who seek to recreate the past are living either in a dream or a fool's paradise.

My claim is more modest: We can learn from the past as well as from the present. An unexceptional claim, surely. But when was the last time you read Aquinas or Hopkins or Newman?

That was part of the Church's militant days and was left behind when we entered the ecumenical era.

That we permitted the greats of the Catholic tradition to be identified completely with the narrowness, defensiveness and rigidity of counterreformation immigrant Catholic apologetics is our misfortune, not theirs. What do you want to bet that G. K. Chesterton lasts longer than liberation theology? Or that they will be reading John Ireland long after Sister Neale's theology of relinquishment has been forgotten?

I have been doing research on Mary lately, with a heavy emphasis on the history-of-religions approach—Jung, Neumann, Eliade, Ricoeur. Then one day I read (for the first time, God forgive me) Hopkins' "May Magnificat." It's all there, everything that the great scholars had to say about the life-giving mother image that had been anticipated by the Jesuit poet (who surely is not relevant enough to get in "America" if he were alive today).

What is Spring?—
Growth in everything—
Flesh and fleece,
fur and feather,
Grass and greenworld
all together;
Star-eyed strawberry-breasted
Throstle above her nested
Cluster of bugle
blue eggs thin
Forms and warms
the life within;
And bird and blossom swell
in sod or sheath or shell.
All things rising,
all things sizing
Mary sees, sympathizing
With that world of good,
Nature's motherhood.

There are not many things in this world which move me to tears; but those lines do. Since we have Hopkins, does it follow that we don't need Jung, Neumann, Eliade, and Ricoeur? That's a Protestant question. Why not have them all?

Can we have Thomas Aquinas and the process philosophers? Why not? Aquinas thought we could have Augustine and Aristotle. Do we not follow his footsteps if we see whether we can have him and Whitehead? (David Tracy will shortly assure us that we can indeed have both.)

Can we have Newman and Ireland on the one hand and the Vatican Council II on the other? Read those two gentlemen and then reread the Council documents; then ask yourself whether the English John and the American John do not belong with the Italian John on any list of the fathers of Vatican II.

Can we honor the Blessed Mother in an age of ecological concern? What better reason for not ripping up or ripping off the earth than that it is Mary's garden?

Sheen, Albertson Star In 'Insight' Premiere

The Emmy-nominated weekly television series "Insight" will premiere at 9:30 a.m. Sunday, April 13, on WOKR-TV, Channel 13 in Rochester.

"And the Walls Came Tumbling Down," the opening episode of the new season is a fantasy about a Gatsby-suited God who gives an aging tailor the gift of understanding. The segment stars Martin Sheen and Jack Albertson.

Following episodes of "Insight" include "The King of Penny Arcade," a drama dealing with the problem of teenage alcoholism, starring Mitch Vogel; "When You See Arcturus," a tale of a man so bored with life that he hires the director of The Thanatos, a society that aids in people's suicides to assist him with his own, starring Efrem Zimbalist Jr. and William Windon; and "The Theft," a comedy with an offbeat slant on marital communication, starring Larry Pressman, Sharon Farrell, and Lou Antonio.

Syndicated on more than 250 television stations throughout the United States, Insight is the world's most widely seen.

religious television series. "Insight is drama of involvement," states Father Ellwood E. Kieser, executive producer and founder of the series. "We're trying to dramatize the problems faced by the man on the street and involve him in the search for the solution. People are searching... we're trying to illuminate that search."

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CDA Court Lists Poetry, Essay Contest Winners

Court Our Lady of the Cenacle this week announced the names of nine winners in its writing contest. Cash awards will be presented at the monthly meeting April 15.

The poetry competition in grades 4-6 was won by Janine Donnellan of Holy Rosary, with Oleh Zazulak of St. Joseph's in second place and Sheila Calnan of Christ the King in third.

Poetry awards for grades 7-9 go, in order, to Edward Breiner of Holy Ghost, Mary Elizabeth Hagen of St. Salome's and Kathryn Robach, Holy Cross.

Martha Emmel and Mary Quinn, both of Bishop Kearney High School, placed first and second in the essay contest, with Bruce Benson of St. John Fisher College the winner in the college division.

A religious or patriotic theme was required for the poetry. "The family, source of love and unity" was the essay subject.

Honorable mention was given to the following in the poetry contest: Betsy Hoffman, Anne Marie Lanzafame, Kevin Ouweleen, Mary Beth Madigan, Cheryl Scutiore and Chris Boss, grades 4-6; Kelly Grant, Frances Robinson, Meg Kelly, Gina Giroulo, Deborah Cocilova, George Falcon and Patty O'Brien, grades 7-9.

St. Philip Neri To Stage Comedy

Egad, What a Cad, a comedy by Anita Bell, will be presented by the St. Philip Neri Men's Club and Women's Club on Friday, April 18, and Saturday, April 19, at 8 p.m. in the school hall. Tickets, at 75 cents, may be obtained by calling 482-2400. The cast includes Donna Favitta, Sam Pecorella, Ron Williams, Judy Sinagaglia, Athena Kobryn, Joe Tiberio, Rosalie Iannuzzo, and Katie Kehoe. Refreshments will be available.

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