

Interfaith Group Discusses Women Priests

Cincinnati [RNS] — An ad hoc group of 19 Roman Catholic and Episcopal theologians agreed here that questions raised by the issue of ordaining women cannot be adequately answered by "the mere citing of traditional practices or beliefs."

The group identified the issue as one demanding of the church "a new effort at self-understanding in regard to certain elements of its Gospel."

The 19 participants said in a prepared statement that current discussion on ordaining women "has shown that traditional reasons for refusing the ordination of women are not universally acceptable."

Representatives of both pro and con positions took part in the meeting, which will report to the Anglican-Roman Catholic Consultation.

Episcopal Bishop Arthur A. Vogel of West Missouri and Catholic Bishop Charles H. Helmsing of Kansas City-St. Joseph, co-chairmen of the dialogue attended in the sessions.

Dr. Peter Day, ecumenical officer for the Episcopal Church, and Father John Hotchkin, director of the Catholic Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, said that the meeting was not called to exercise any influence on decision-making processes in either the Episcopal or Roman Catholic Churches.

The 1976 Episcopal General Convention is expected to consider the issue of women priests.

Official sessions did not include debate on the irregular ordination of 11 Episcopal women deacons to the

priesthood last year. There was informal mention of the event, as well as of the recent decision by the Anglican Church of Canada to ordain women, however.

Positions expressed on certain issues dealing with sacramentality and sexuality were not released to the press. Dr. Day and Father Hotchkin indicated that those issues will be the topics of position papers to be presented to the Anglican-Catholic Consultation in the Fall.

The prepared statement listed four considerations to be kept in mind as the ordination of women is weighed against the authority of tradition. Quotations from the text follow:

"1. There is what may be called an 'essential tradition' which, as witnessed in the Scriptures, the ecumenical creeds, the church's liturgical tradition, and its proclamation and teaching, constitutes the basic identity of the Christian community. This tradition has as its fundamental content the relation of human beings to the God and Father of Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit.

"2. This tradition is variously elaborated and interpreted in

dogma and doctrinal tradition, according as inquiry and change within the church, or confrontation with intellectual, social, or political movements in the world require the church to move toward a deeper self-understanding through explanation of the tradition which constitutes its identity. It thus faces, from time to time, novel issues, which demand that on the basis of its given self-understanding, it explain itself in new ways for the sake of fidelity to the Gospel.

"3. In the current situation, the question of the ordination of women has raised issues which cannot be answered adequately by the mere citing of traditional practices or beliefs. Current discussion of the issue has shown that traditional reasons for refusing the ordination of women

are not universally acceptable. It has further shown that problems relating to the doctrine of God, of the Incarnation, and Redemption are at least indirectly involved in its solution, so that any decision, whether for or against the ordination of women, will in fact require the church to explain or develop its essential tradition in an unprecedented way.

"4. Such an effort involves a two-fold process: first, the theological exploration of the Tradition and of the new question in its bearing on the data of Christian revelation; second, an official decision by constituted authority in the church which encompasses the doctrinal and practical aspects of the issue. In the divided state of the Christian churches, separate processes will be gone through by the different bodies."

St. Joseph's Graduates 22

Wayland — Another year has ended at St. Joseph's School and another group of young men and women, 22 in all, are leaving the halls and classrooms that have been so familiar to them for the past eight years.

Melanie Meyer, Gail Morsch, Michael Nuetzel, Anne Recktenwald, Timothy Reynolds, Mark Russell Patrick Sprague, Lucy Stilson, Kim Traphagen, Linda VanOrsdale and Kurt Wolfanger.

The Graduating Class of 1975 consisted of Mary Baldwin, Jacqueline Beckerman, Carlene Canute, John Edmond, Gary Folts, Terry Folts, Thomas Folts, Michael Hober, Joseph Hoffman, John Kuhn, Mark Lindsey,

Special Awards for various achievements were presented: English Award, Michael Hober; Arithmetic Award, John Edmond; Science Award, Timothy Reynolds and the Social Studies Award, Michael Hober.

CORRECTION

In this column published 7/2/75 Father Kraft was mistakenly identified. His name is Father Richard Kraft.

there loomed tall buildings. I wondered: "Why has Cato built such large high rise apartments near so small a village?" Then I read a sign which said: "Oswego State University." What to do but turn back and stop at a grocery store for directions. Two women were amused at my navigational ineptitude as they gave me the directions. My own reaction was to buy a large ice cream cone to allay my frustration.

Cato's new pastor, Father Schnacky, is a friend from 15 years ago when he was an assistant in Auburn. He greeted me: "Welcome. You are my first guest, and it is fitting that you should be here for our mutual feast day." It was the vigil of Saints Peter and Paul. Helen, the housekeeper, is another old friend. So after admiring the newly re-constructed rectory, it was just like home. Father S. worked in the office. Helen read in the kitchen. I watched the TV program: "Moses, the Law-Giver." It is not the best of productions, but I think that more people learn more about the Old Testament from the movies than from the Bible, and I usually urge them to watch the biblical movies.

The Cato congregations included several friends. Among them were the Muhnicksels whom I knew in Clyde in 1936; and Julia O'Neil who is truly a pastoral assistant without the title or the salary. Every parish has a few men and women like her. They are the sinews of the parish. God bless them forever. When Father S. returned to the rectory from Red Creek-Fair Haven Masses, it was 12:30. Helen had ready two tasty chops each, green beans, cottage cheese, coffee, and fresh cherries for dessert. She also had a check for \$5 for the new Catholic Catechism, by John Hardon, SJ.

By 3:30 p.m. I was back at Webster, in the school hall, munching dainty sandwiches and drinking cherry punch at a farewell-welcome party for Fathers Michatek and O'Connor. Thus the Kingdom of God trundles on. In his farewell bulletin, Father Richard Hart wrote this touching farewell to his people. One part seems so apt.

"I wonder that we ever have a shortage of priests when I experience such happiness in my priestly work. In no way could I have so many wonderful associations in only two and a half years here, except as a priest who already enjoyed a place in the hearts of the people the day he arrived. Such is the joy of the priesthood..."

To which I say a humble AMEN!

ON THE RIGHT SIDE



Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

A while ago our Diocesan Personnel Board, which assigns the clergy, made many parish changes, to be effective June 26. Father Richard Hart, pastor of Cato, Red Creek and Fair Haven, phoned on June 20: "Can you help the week-ends of June 29 and July 6? Father Christy is our regular Sunday helper, but he cannot come these two weeks. I am being transferred to Guardian Angels, and Father Paul Schnacky will be here. But this has to be settled before he comes. Can you help?" "Why, yes. Be glad to. We have several lay Communion distributors, and the local priests are strong and can say an extra Mass. I have to be at Holy Family, Auburn, Saturday for the wedding of a grand-niece. It will be convenient to go to your place after the wedding." So it was settled.

Saturday noon I phoned Father Schnacky. "What do you want me to do?" "Will you say the Saturday evening Mass in Fair Haven at 7 p.m. and hear confessions before, at 6:30? And on Sunday will you take care of the Cato Masses at 8:45 and 10:30?" "Fine. I'll go directly to Fair Haven from Auburn and will stay with you overnight, at Cato." Fair Haven is a summer resort town. Father Heindl bought the Rebecca Lodge Hall there in 1962 and with his parishioners converted it into the devotional St. Jude's Chapel. Joseph Sutton, who has a barber shop across the road, is a guardian angel of the chapel. He has everything ready. He welcomed me, and said: "Usually there are only two or three confessions." However there were 14. Why waste an opportunity! So I put my cassette tape-recorder on the pulpit and let the people listen to 25 minutes of Abp. Sheen on tape, while the confessions were going on. There were 84 children and 117 adults at Mass, mostly campers.

When I was an Air Force chaplain during WWII at Napier A.F. Flying School in Dothan, Ala., a young student pilot flunked his navigation test. He was sad, but his mother wrote to him: "It is better to fail the test now, then to land in Berlin when you're trying to reach London." After Mass I got directions to Cato, 17 miles away. The directions were uncomplicated, so I drove along leisurely enjoying the beauty of the farms and orchards. Finally to the left

Day Care Center May Be Opened At Sacred Heart

A day care center for children of working parents will be set up in the east wing of Sacred Heart School if enough people want it.

C. Richard Jones, chairman of a parish council committee studying this possibility, said last week that the center could be opened this Fall. There is no such facility now in the populous cathedral neighborhood. The school is on Flower City Park, between Dewey and Lake.

The center would be non-sectarian, licensed by the state and staffed by professionals, he said. It would operate from 7:30 in the morning until 5:30 in the evening, to take care of children aged three through five years. A full day's program, including hot lunch and snacks, would cost about \$8, Jones said, noting that charges are similar, sometimes higher, in other day care centers.

Additional information may be obtained by calling Mary Stevenson at 254-8845, or Jones, at 458-3404. They would like to hear from interested parents before Aug. 10.

SCHOOL SALE

Holy Redeemer School will hold a sale of school equipment on July 18, from 7 to 10 p.m. and on July 19 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Included in the sale will be student desks, cabinets, folding chairs, office chairs, teachers desks, instructional materials and equipment, office supplies, tables, religious articles and bookcases.



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