

The Church 1975



Fr. Andrew Greeley

This column wishes to announce the creation of the William of Occam Award for Lunatic Foolishness. The award will be presented periodically to a Catholic publication which has indulged in idiocy above and beyond the call of ordinary stupidity. Nominations should be submitted in writing accompanied by a certificate of good reputation and the approval of the Ordinary of the place of publication.

The first award is presented to the editors of the "Commonweal" who, after having dumped Michael Novak for being "too Catholic," in a superb moment of lunatic frenzy turned over several pages of their journal to the notorious anti-Catholic Leo Pfeffer for a vicious attack on the Catholic Church. William of Occam would be proud of such a logical absurdity of the ecumenical movement. The award will be presented to the editors of the "Commonweal" on the next birthday of the Archbishop of Chicago in front of the chancery office by a pooka of my acquaintance who will parachute from an airplane over Lake Michigan and then pay his respects to Mayor Daley before returning to Pookaland.

(Incidentally, the award will be a dunce's cap carved from Connemara marble. I admit that confuses Occam and Scotus, but what the hell.)

Consider some of the things Pfeffer says about Catholicism to win his "Commonweal" patrons their prize:

1) The Church stopped the passage of the child-labor amendment. (I suppose he never heard of the churchmen who supported the amendment.)

2) The Church stopped aid to the Loyalists during the Spanish

Civil War. (He forgot about the Chicago "New World," which supported the Loyalist cause.)

3) The Church was anti-labor because Cardinal Spellman used seminarians to break the gravediggers' strike (and there weren't any labor priests.)

4) The American Church was apologetic about fascism and mum about Nazism. (Didn't Mundelein call Hitler an Austrian paperhanger, and a poor one at that? Pius XI didn't write encyclicals condemning both ideologies?)

5) The Church didn't silence Father Coughlin. (But it would have been authoritarian to silence Father Berrigan.)

6) The Church was silent on the civil-rights movement. (Good heavens, didn't he see those pictures from Selma?)

7) The Church dominated New York political life. The chancery was the "power house." (New York wasn't bankrupt then.)

8) The Church even today is messing around with Lutherans and Anglicans to create a watered-down universal church with even more political power.

9) The Church is responsible for the return of the Ice Age. (Well, he doesn't exactly say this — but only, I suspect, because he didn't think of it.)

Pfeffer is not merely anti-Catholic, he is anti-religion. He is prejudiced in the strictest sense of the word: he doesn't like organized religion of any kind, and he is willing to distort the facts of history to explain everything that goes wrong as a result of the machinations of organized religion, particularly those of a sinister Catholicism.

He concludes by rejoicing that Catholicism is being transformed; that is to say, it is losing its power. Just as Kit Carson said about Indians, for Leo Pfeffer the only good Catholicism is a dead Catholicism. Pfeffer is delighted that the forces of rationality and enlightenment are finally wiping out the hated foe.

Well, everyone is welcome to his own way of resolving childhood conflicts. Mr. Pfeffer is not particularly harmful to anyone. But for a Catholic magazine to publish such baloney is indeed the height of lunatic foolishness.

Ithaca Immaculate Sets Two Courses for Youths

Ithaca — At Immaculate Conception Parish students in the ninth and tenth grades will meet at the school Sundays from 7 to 8 p.m. where two courses will be offered.

Challenge, one of the courses, is to help the ninth graders to discover the creative relationship between their religious and social lives. It provides students with concepts basic to the achievement of a better understanding of their religious and personal identities. Sister Jean is the instructor.

The second course, Understanding Christian Worship, focuses on worship as a personal value and as a community expression of its relationship to God. It will provide the opportunity to explore the theology of the sacraments. Through various research and activity projects the students are encouraged to develop special liturgies and celebrations on their own, under the leadership of Miss Sandra Bell.

The 11th and 12th grade students who have been in Teen Seminar will have their Reality meetings on Sunday evenings at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Burns.

The other 11th and 12th grade students will be having a special class in Scripture, meeting on the

first Sunday of every month for three hours.

Deaths

Mrs. Leo Wesley

Clementine E. Wesley of Irondequoit died Aug. 29, 1975, at the age of 77. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Sept. 2 at The Church of Christ the King.

Mrs. Wesley's survivors are her husband, Leo; five sons, Leo L. Florian, Francis, Joseph of Olean, and Clement; six daughters, Mrs. Harold (Rita) Richards of Spencerport, Mrs. Robert (Therese) O'Connor, Mrs. John (Mary Anne) Scharr of Canandaigua, Mrs. Richard (Marcia) Calabrese, Mrs. Eugene (Regina) Siesto, and Sister Rose Anne Marie Wesley, O.S.F. of Allegany.

Mrs. Wesley was a Gold Star Mother, having lost her sixth son, Louis in World War II.

Harold R. Baker

Auburn — Harold R. Baker, 64, a farmer and former entertainer, died unexpectedly Aug. 28, 1975, in Auburn Memorial Hospital.

The Mass of Christian Burial was concelebrated Aug. 30 in St. Mary's Church by Msgr. James D. Cuffney and Father James Enright. The scripture readings were given by two of his 11 children, Sister Beverly, SSJ, of Brockport, and David Baker of Seneca Falls. The oldest grandchild from each of eight families took part in the offertory procession.

Mr. Baker, a native of Auburn, had kept a farm on Dunning Avenue Road for the past 36 years. He also worked at Alco Engines for 21 years, retiring in 1972. He and his band, Hal Baker's Nite Owls, entertained at Club Dickman here for 25 years, until it closed in 1962. He was a member of St. Mary's Holy Name Society.

Surviving besides his widow, Agatha Riester Baker, are six sons and five daughters, including William, John, and George of Auburn; Edward of Troy, and Airman Gerard Baker at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida; Mrs. Carol (Margaret) Moulton; Mrs. Paul (Bonita) Hudson; Mrs. Joel (Sharon) Hudson all of Auburn, and Mrs. Harley (Joan) Clingerman of Miami, Florida. Also, 30 grandchildren; his father, Arthur C. Baker of Auburn; a brother, Alfred Baker of Syracuse; two sisters, Mrs. Irene Miskell and Mrs. William (Florence) Crehan, both of Auburn, and several nieces and nephews.


TRINITY ALUMNAE

Mrs. Richard Chapman has been elected president of Rochester Chapter, Trinity College Alumnae, with Mrs. William Modney secretary-treasurer. Mary E. Statt was named to the alumnae board of directors, and the following were chosen to serve as admissions representatives: Mrs. Eugene Bergin, Mrs. Paul Rubery and Mrs. Paul D. Moonan.


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