

New Saint's Grandson 'Was a Kindly Man'

Geneva — Margaret Mapes Clark of Castle Street used to run errands for a grandson of Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton.

He was Archbishop Robert Seton, 84 years old when she was a college freshman.

"He was a brilliant and interesting conversationalist. A kindly man, with a nice sense of humor..." Mrs. Clark told Stella Cecere of the Geneva Times in a recent interview.

The archbishop had come home after 45 years in Rome, and was living in retirement at the College of St. Elizabeth in Convent Station, N.J., which is run by his sainted grandmother's Daughters of Charity of St. Joseph. Mrs. Clark entered the college after her graduation from Nazareth Academy in 1922, and she was a friend of the prelate throughout her college years, she said.

He liked to talk about his life in Rome, she recalled, and one of his favorite remarks was "Italian ladies are beautiful, and I love them all, chastely."

Mrs. Clark, widow of Harold Clark, is a native of Lyons. She formerly worked as a medical secretary. She is active in the affairs of St. Francis de Sales parish and has directed the cancer fund drive here for the

past five years.

Archbishop Seton never knew his famous grandmother. She died in 1821, 18 years before his birth.

Mrs. Clark's 1923 college yearbook has this to say of him:

"Archbishop Seton, who was born eighty-four years ago in New York City, is of noble lineage, claiming as his ancestors the Curzons of Baltimore and the Setons, an old Scottish family. One of the Setons fought with Joan of Arc and was present with her at the coronation of Charles in the Cathedral of Rheims.

"Archbishop Seton received his early education at home under private tutors, until he became a student of Mount Saint Mary's College, Emmitsburg. He received his LL.D. at Notre Dame University and Seton Hall College, New Jersey. He is probably the only American priest ever graduated from the Academia Ecclesiastica in Rome. He was raised to the rank of Private Chamberlain by Pope Pius IX in 1866, and in 1876 he went to Rome where he made his residence until his return to this country in 1921. His literary productions include contributions to the Catholic World and the American Catholic Quarterly Review."

The Church 1975



Fr. Andrew Greeley

I've been in trouble lately for not being constructive or hopeful enough.

When the charge is made, I plead in my own defense that to pretend to hopefulness about American Catholicism is to lie. "But, say my accusers, then you are not Christian, because Christians always hope."

To confuse religious hope with institutional hope is mindless and muddle-headed. It is characteristic of the shallow romanticism which makes me so pessimistic about the future of the American Church.

At issue are three different meanings of the word "hope." It can refer to that virtue which is the other side of the coin of faith. One confidently expects that the kingdom Jesus preached will finally be achieved and that one's work for that kingdom has not been in vain. Such hope is expressed by all Christians daily in the words "thy kingdom come." It is not an easy hope, not a superficial enthusiasm. St. Augustine had it when he died with the barbarians at the gate who were about to destroy North African Christianity. Thomas More had it when he put his head on the block, knowing that the old faith was doomed in England for centuries to come. We can have it today even though we know that American Catholicism is rapidly falling apart.

A second kind of hope comes from the religious situation in which one finds oneself: There have been times in human history when religious issues were not important, when the confidence of humankind in its ability to control its own destiny was so powerful that religion seemed irrelevant. One such era just ended. We are now in the first phases of a new era when questions about the meaning and

purpose of human life have begun to take on an almost obsessive importance. At such a time, one can reasonably hope that religion will play an extremely important role in human life—in the long run.

But in the long run, as Lord Keynes remarked, we will all be dead. It is the short-run future (20, 30 years) of the institution called American Catholicism for which I find little ground to hope. The Church has a heritage and a tradition filled with resources which could respond to the desperate yearnings of contemporary humankind. When I was younger I was convinced that we couldn't blow such a marvelous opportunity.

I underestimated the collective capacity of American Catholics for always doing the more stupid thing. We've blown it—not because we were fated to, not because the odds were against us, not because the opportunities weren't there but because we were too lazy, too self-indulgent, and too dumb to see and respond to them.

Consider: We have a theory of human nature and human society which believes that freedom and trust among human beings is possible. So our left wing eagerly embraces oppressive Marxist socialism. We have the oldest and most glorious mystical and contemplative tradition in the Western world. So our right-wing turns to fundamentalist Protestantism for the foolishness of charismatic romanticism.

Our inner-city parochial schools are practicing the most generous form of Christian charity in the century, and we are phasing them out so bishops can play with closed-circuit TV. Our outer-city parochial schools are still immensely popular with the faithful—and of proven effectiveness—so we don't build new ones.

Our leaders have been masters of the American game of compromise, consensus, and coalition for a hundred years; and now the present leadership issues a bicentennial program which rejects the American democratic experiment in the name of a "hate America" liberation theology imported from a continent which has never known political freedom.

In the midst of this I should spout hopeful platitudes? Thank you, but my name is not Pollyanna.

Communion Respect Life Program Slated

Ithaca — At Immaculate Conception parish parents of second graders recently have received information outlining the home and parish program for Eucharistic initiation. The teachers, Sisters and Priests are hopeful that they will benefit the children as they grow in Christ. In order to provide the individual attention and personal care, not offered in large-group instructions, the home and parish program will be followed again.

It is felt that cooperation is not only essential but the accomplishments of prior programs prove the program's worth.

A series of sessions for the parents of the First Communion candidates has been scheduled with the hope that the children will be ready for the Eucharist by Christmas. Both parents are urged to take an active part in their child's preparation.

Sessions are as follows: Session one: Immaculate Conception School, room 108 on Monday, Oct. 6; Wednesday, Oct. 8 and Friday, Oct. 10.

Session two, also at the school and in room 108, will be held Tuesday, Oct. 14; Wednesday Oct. 15; or Friday, Oct. 17.

Both sessions will begin at 7:30 sharp and end at 10:00 p.m.

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Family Life is the focus of the 1975 Respect Life Program, which gets underway this weekend here and elsewhere throughout the country.

The National Conference of Catholic Bishops chose this approach for two reasons, Bishop Joseph L. Hogan explains in a letter to be read from the pulpits Oct. 4 and 5. First, because "education for justice and social harmony is learned first of all in the family," the letter says, and secondly, "the welfare of society is very much dependent on the stability and well-being of the family."

Masses this weekend will emphasize the dignity and humanity of the unborn child, and the child's right to life. Bishop Hogan has authorized pastors to permit members of Right to Life committees to collect money "for their very worthwhile program."

The Respect Life program "is open-ended, beyond the first liturgical observance," Father

Robert Collins commented. His Office of Family Life has forwarded to the parishes an outline of topics "which human development or education committees can use as they see fit," he said.

The topics include marriage, children, the aging, death and dying and the roles and rights of women in society and in the Church.

FUTURE SHOCK

St. Paul's Church, 783 Hard Road, Webster, will present a three-part series on Future Shock, Tuesday evenings, October 7, 14 and 21, from 8 to 9:30. The series will include a showing and discussion of the film, Future Shock; a slide show entitled Toward the Year 2000 and a "future simulation" exercise, with discussion. This series will be led by Thomas Proietti and a team from St. John Fisher College. Refreshments will be served. There is no admission charge.

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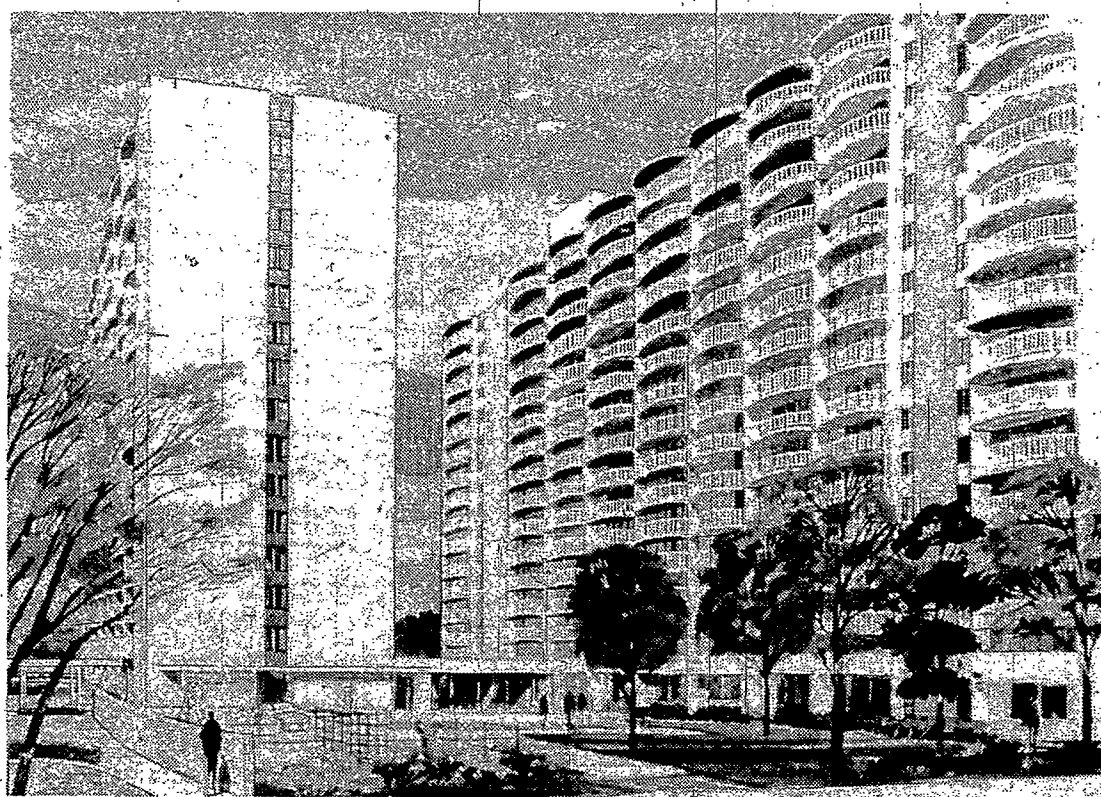
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