



**The Church 1975**

Fr. Andrew Greeley

What would it take to make me hopeful about the future of American Catholicism?

Well, a few discreet deaths would be a big help. Even more important would be indications of two virtues, which I almost would be inclined to call "Protestant," except they don't seem to be much in evidence currently among our separated brothers either. Their names are "hard work" and "self-discipline." There is almost nothing wrong with the American Church that



Scholar

Wanda Miller, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Miller and a graduate of St. Agnes High School has been named this year's recipient of a \$100 scholarship from the Sachem Freeman Johnson Memorial Scholarship Fund. Wanda attends Mater Dei College in Ogdensburg. The fund was established last year in memory of the Seneca Chief who died in 1969. The scholarship aids children of American Indian descent.

**Party to Benefit Holy Childhood**

A dinner-dance for the benefit of Holy Childhood School is scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 26, at Mother of Sorrows parish hall, 1777 Latta Road. The cocktail hour will begin at 5 p.m., with dinner from 6 until 8, and dancing until 11. Jan Cursio's orchestra will play.

This is the annual benefit sponsored by the parents of the children at Holy Childhood. The ticket price is \$4.50, with children under five admitted for \$2.50. Reservations are necessary, and may be made with Pat Petit, 342-6977, or Dolores Ohler, 244-4477.

**KOLPING DANCE**

The Catholic Kolping Society will celebrate the 49th anniversary of the founding of the Rochester Branch with a dance in the auditorium of the German House on Gregory Street on Saturday, Nov. 1, 8:30 p.m.

Harold Tausch and his Royal Bavarians will provide entertainment and also play for German and American dancing. Delicious sausage and German potato salad and kuchens will be available as well as plenty of beer and hearty fellowship.

The general public is welcome and tickets are available at the door.

diligent application of these two virtues would not exorcise.

Let us take three examples — religious education (which includes homiletics and catechetics), experimental communities, and social commentary.

It was clear after the Vatican Council that a major change would be necessary in both the content and style of religious education. It should also have been clear that new homiletic and caechetical techniques could not be developed overnight.

Careful listening to the religious questions of our time, patient research on our own theological resources, and intensive study of the implications of the conciliar documents were the order of the day. Commissions and study groups should have been set up to develop long-range programs of gradual and organic change. And everyone should have realized that it would take at least a decade to accomplish the transformation.

Instead, we got instant reform — every year. We moved from salvation history to kerygmatics to self-fulfillment to relevance to charismatics. A lot of half-trained (not to use more vulgar language) characters with summer pastoral institute experience or a half-year in Europe or an M.A. in pedagogy produced documents which were supposed to supplant the Council of Trent and the "Summa Theologica" as the new "answer" to religious education.

They all fell flat on their faces, and most of the so-called "religious educators" ended up marrying each other. Finally, when a serious, careful, and scholarly new beginning was made by theologians like David Tracy, everyone was too tired to listen.

It was also obvious a decade ago that in the new open-ended situation in which the Church found itself, there would be many more fluid and free-floating ecclesiastical structures. It should have been clear that such innovations were fraught with social and psychological uncertainty. Instead of embarking on careful and systematic experimentation, we rushed into one lunatic fad after another, moving from cursillo to sensitivity to encounter to pentecostal without ever counting the costs or measuring the results. Now the whole idea of small-group church — which is surely essential to religious progress in our time — is discredited. And yet it never has been seriously tried by mature people who knew what they were doing and who were willing to commit themselves to the patience and persistence that any new communitarian venture would require.

Another opportunity blown through mindless and impatient enthusiasm.

Finally, it ought to have been possible to put together a program for the Bicentennial which would have seriously assessed the strengths and weaknesses, the accomplishments and imperfections of the American political and social system from the perspective of Catholic social theory. But such a program would have required years of careful effort from a group of skilled scholars and practitioners. The bishops didn't have time.

Instead they served up a half-witted and slapdash mixture of New Left cliché and "hate-American-Third-Worldism" put together by a group of inexperienced and undisciplined young enthusiasts. And of course no one bothered to listen.

There is no time, I am told, for hard work or self-discipline. The crisis is too serious. We don't want it good, we want it now.

Funny, but I kind of think the Holy Spirit would take care of "now" if we worried about "good."



**Octoberfest Gala**

Charles Hetterick, Yvonne and Harvey Limbeck, Gloria Hetterick, Ann and Bill Henegan extend an invitation to Mercy High School Parents' Association Octoberfest which will be held on Saturday Oct. 18 in the school gym. The Crazy Firemen Oom-Pah Band will entertain, and a German buffet of German Potato salad, sausage, kraut will be served. Tickets may be obtained by calling 586-0951.

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