

A Rejoinder to Remarks on Education

By Father William O'Malley, SJ
McQuaid Jesuit High School

May I remind Mrs. Nancy Murphy that she may have overlooked a few details in her study of those she accuses, in effect, of heresy and the perversion of youth. She says: "They are also taught that Jesus had the same struggles within himself as any human man; that Jesus had to grow and develop. Why don't they teach accurately the Divinity of Christ (it did not evolve, it did not 'develop')." (C-J, 19 May 76):

First, it is a dogma of the Church that Jesus was not only fully God but also fully human. That is to say that he did, indeed, have "the same struggles within himself as any human man." One of the greatest crises of human life is the search for and discovery of who I am. Unlike what Mrs. Murphy claims, this is not a case of some kind of "creeping divinity." Jesus' divinity did not "develop" — nor do any of those who teach this theory contend that it did. Jesus was God from the very moment of his conception. But just as I was male before I was born (but with no realization of the fact or what it meant until later) so it is probable that Jesus' human consciousness became more and more solidly aware of who he was

Second, may I remind Mrs. Murphy of Luke 2:52: "And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and men." To "increase" one must go from less knowledge to more knowledge. St. Paul also says: "He had always the nature of God, but he did not think that by force he should try to remain equal to God. Instead, of his own free will he gave it all up, and took the nature of a servant." (Phil 2:6-7):

Jesus did not stop being God at the Incarnation. But if Jesus had, at every moment, an awareness of his divinity, did he rule the universe from Our Lady's womb? As he grew and Joseph taught him to build chairs, did Jesus merely tolerate that, knowing as he did far better ways of making chairs? And in the Garden was he merely posturing when he cried out to his Father that he couldn't endure his death? If he were fully aware with the divine knowledge, he would have known that he certainly could and would endure it. At the end, was he merely pretending despair: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me!" Didn't he know he was not abandoned?

Jesus did not give up being God; he gave up the use of the divine insight so he could experience fully what being human means. He must

have known by the circumstances of his birth and his treatment by the temple priests as a child that he was someone special. Then, at his baptism, came the thunderous realization: "You are my son." Immediately afterward, in the desert, it is precisely this newly raised conviction that Evil prays on: "If you are the Son of God." The Agony in the garden proved that, like all of us, Jesus put his trust — not his certitude — in the Father. One can trust only when he does not have utter certitude. While preserving the fact that Jesus was God, this theory which teaches Jesus' growing awareness of his divinity shows Jesus as completely

human — with all its doubts, fears, trust and heroism. And that's a dogma, m'am.

In conclusion, may I remind Mrs. Murphy that all who differ with her grammar school catechism are not just "modernists" and "liberals." The great St. Paul stood up to the very first pope and told him he was dead wrong about circumcising Gentile converts, and Peter changed his mind. If all Catholics had the driving intellectual curiosity about the Message of

Jesus that Mrs. Murphy's article seems to manifest, we would still be back in the Upper Room.

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Community to Mark St. Anthony's Day And Bicentennial

The St. Anthony's Day celebration staged annually in Charlotte since 1912 will have the added aura this year of a Bicentennial event.

The celebration on Saturday, June 12, will begin at 11 a.m. with Father Robert R. Fennessy's Solemn Mass at Holy Cross. Brief ceremonies will follow at the St. Anthony shrine on the church grounds.

The parade will begin at 6:45 p.m. at St. John's Park and end at Ontario Beach, where the traditional fireworks show, at 9:45, will be embellished by pieces designed to commemorate the nation's 200th anniversary. Among the parade units will be the Aquinas and Bishop Kearney bands, Greece Cadets, Shoreliners, Rochester Pipe Band, and various drum and bugle outfits and drill teams.

Reading Teachers Receive Honors

The New York State Reading Association cited two local women at an assembly June 5 in Albany. Sister Madeline Therese, SSJ, received an award of merit, and Ruth Snyder, a certificate of commendation.

Sister Madeline is an associate professor at Nazareth College. Miss Snyder, reading consultant for BOCES Monroe #1, has taught reading at all levels, including the graduate level at Nazareth and at Syracuse and Temple Universities.

115 Complete CERT Course

Some 115 persons have completed Phase I (Basic Teacher Education) of the Diocesan Continuing Education for Religion Teachers (CERT) program. Ten 2-hour morning and evening sessions were held at the Diocesan Pastoral Center on Tuesdays and six three-hour sessions in Newark Valley and Dryden, also on Tuesdays.

These persons and all teachers who have achieved Basic Certification to teach Religion within their parishes, have been encouraged to begin Phase II (Scripture Course) sessions in the Fall. Upon completion of all four phases of the CERT Program, each teacher will receive Master Certification to teach Religion within the diocese.

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exaltation of sex. (They reaffirm) the indispensable duty of all bishops to give answers to the faithful who demand clarity in the face of so much confusion (and they contain) the reminder of the immutable (unchangeable) pillars on which man's moral life is erected (which) cannot be disregarded or considered out-dated.

"The Declaration recalls (also) what the (Second Vatican) Council emphasized regarding the principle criterion of the morality of the sex act — which is a respect for its finality — human procreation. Man cannot make moral judgments according to his personal whim. This criterion (is) the foundation of traditional Catholic doctrine.

"The (body of the Declaration) limits itself to three main issues: premarital relations, homosexuality, and masturbation. (The Church) follows very closely all sociological research — but can never call 'orderly, lawful or indifferent' that which is in itself outside the order of human nature. (And) it cautions parents to prudently give children sex information suited to their age and to likewise protect the young from the many dangers of which they are quite unaware.


"The Declaration states that it is impossible to accept the present tendency to minimize grave sin.

According to some, this takes place only when there is a direct and formal rejection of God's call. (They say) it is too difficult in the sexuality field to arrive at (grave sin) because of varying situation. But the Declaration explains clearly that each and every grave disorder touches the law of love and becomes grave sin. (It) clarifies the true concept of sin, and in constant reference (to the) Pontifical Magisterium (the teaching authority) advises pastors to be prudent in evaluating responsibility without diminishing in any way the teaching of Christ.

"(The Church) appeals again to the bishops, theologians and all priests to teach sound Catholic doctrine, always enlightened by the Magisterium of the Church. We must not allow ourselves to be conditioned by the spirit of the world, or by a fear of appearing to be out-of-date. Let us give the word 'purity' its fullest sense and put it back into circulation.

For a free copy of the entire Declaration on Sexual Ethics, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Nancy Murphy P.O. Box 8450, Rochester, N.Y. 14618.

Life, Liberty and Law



Nancy Murphy

[12th in a series]

The Vatican Declaration on Sexual Ethics was published in Rome, December, 1975. Unfortunately, few American newspapers focused on the contents of this brief but vital document. (One, the Sunday Visitor, ran it in full.) And although world-wide support (even crossing religious lines) is reflected each week in the articles and letters appearing in L'Osservatore Romano, most Americans are unfamiliar with both the document itself and the support it enjoys.

Quoting from L'Osservatore April 1, 1976: "It is an authoritative document which cannot be disregarded by any pastor, be he bishop or priest, or any believer particularly if he has responsibilities in the field of education. It is sad to see that so far, the document has been presented by the media of social communication either in such a reduced form as to escape attention or as in the case of most of the major papers in a negative distorted polemical (controversial) manner. The text was not given. On the other hand, wide coverage is given to the emotional, irritated and irresponsible reactions of groups or movements which, though not widely representative, are extremely loud.

"I address an urgent appeal to Biblical scholars, theologians, moralists, students, educators, doctors, workers in the family apostolate and in the youth apostolate to acquire a full and sure mastery of this document, and to draw from it faithfully. The first six (of 13) articles are the foundation of all the subjects subsequently dealt with. Anyone who neglects them as many newspapers did, deprives himself of necessary understanding of the (Vatican) position. These six articles reaffirm the value of sexuality in life and in the human person, (and) the influence that the present corruption of morals has had on the unbridled

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