

More Opinions

Thou Shalt Not Think?

Editor:

I laughed right out loud when I read the first of your recent batch of letters regarding getting back to the good old basics. Your correspondent expressed shock that a priest would shake hands at the greeting of peace and then distribute Communion without first washing his hands. Wow! He ought to distribute Communion just once! Does he actually think that shaking hands defiles the fingers more than putting them into people's mouths? Hasn't he seen a priest slyly rubbing his fingers around the lip of the ciborium to dry them off? I've long toyed with the idea of writing a little article on the types a priest encounters at Communion time. There are the Pouters, who tuck their chins under shyly and "open" their mouths so primly that the priest has to find the opening by radar. There are the Chameleons who whip out their tongue so fast that it takes sheer faith to make a connection. But most of all there are the Helpers who meet you far more than halfway so that the priest has to count his canonicals after he's extricated them.

Far more respectful to the Host (and most definitely more sanitary) is for the communicant to accept the Host in his own hands and communicate himself. Surely one's hands are not more soiled than his mouth — in both the literal and figurative senses.

I'm really going to have to deny myself the masochistic pleasure of reading your Letters column. I react to closed-mindedness like a bull to a red flag. Something in my tiny cerebral cortex flashes, "Get 'em!" and I charge — into a volley of "Modernist!" (i.e., stupidly believing that the Christian intelligence has had any function since Trent and Benedict XV) and "Eastern Establishment Comm-Symp — Pointy-Headed — Pinko Liberal!" Yep: I'm gonna have to go cold turkey on your Letters column and concentrate on people who still do not subscribe to the Reactionary Commandment: "Thou shalt not think."

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Young Adult Minister Confer

Editor:

The first national conference for young adult ministry sponsored by the U.S. Catholic Conference Department of Education was held this past June 2-5 on the campus of The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. The convener: Reverend Patrick H. O'Neill, OSA, 1312 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C., 20005.

The 15 members who make up the Young Adult Board, on hand throughout the four-day session, have strikingly varied backgrounds in education, research and communications; there was thus provided at several points of the discussion a perspective which is pronouncedly ecumenical and geographically broad. The indications were that their ground-

breaking effort of the past several months is to move steadily to the next stages of planning, etc. A second national conference and also interim regional workshops are being considered.

As to the constituency of the conference at large, all parts of the country were represented, including Alaska. (Based on happenstance conversations only, my impression is that a majority of the approximately 160 dioceses of the United States was well represented.) Many adult ministers were there of course, but also young adults themselves, keenly pursuing their peer ministries, comprised a significant percentage of the gathering. Numerous priests, religious and lay faculty involved in campus ministry shared their expertise at both the plenary and small group sessions. Several others provided input on parish-based ministries.

As well as for these two clearly identifiable communities of young adults (campus and parish) the conference program encouraged consideration of broader-based groupings, e.g., singles who are city-apartment-dwellers, etc. For example, Brother Mike Warren in his key-note address discussed the special needs of the latter scattered group and called for ministers who would be genuinely outreaching (mobile versus sedentarily available).

With a view to the other main speakers, here again the ecumenical note was clear. Outstanding was Dr. Bernard Boelen, Department of Philosophy, DePaul University, Chicago. In a four-part presentation, he shared with us his forthcoming book on the maturing adult, the product of many years of loving labor. His wisdom provided, on the vigil of Pentecost, a most suitable closing. For those many ministers in their many walks of life dispersed to their posts, north, south, east and west, enriched by the Spirit.

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'Murphy Right, Priest Wrong'

Editor:

It's too bad that one has to use valuable space in a Catholic publication to defend the traditional teaching of the Church as expressed by a Catholic columnist, namely Nancy Murphy, against an attack by a Catholic priest, re. Christ's consciousness of His divinity. Nevertheless, Father O'Malley is wrong. His "that's a dogma, Ma'm" is a dogma, all right, but the wrong one. (It refers to His experiential human knowledge, and is therefore irrelevant here.)

Father O'Malley gives no other authority for his opinions but Father O'Malley, but Nancy Murphy's are based on the constant official teaching of the Church such, e.g., as the Decree of the Holy Office, "Lamentabili" of July 3, 1907; another Decree of June 5, 1918; the Encyclical of Pius XII, "Mystici Corporis" of June 29, 1943. As for Sacred Scripture, see John 8:12; John 13:3; John 18:37; Matt. 11:28 and many more. Here at St. John's the texts we use (Loyola, 1975) both in parochial school and

Religious Education classes reflect the traditional teaching of the Church, not the modernist speculations of "Contemporary Theologians."

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Article Seen As 'Baloney'

Editor:

I have a few comments on Miss Wisniewski's article in C.J. 6-16-76 entitled "Dutch priest describes a search for identity."

How can anyone or any organization search for its identity — this is a hackneyed, vague expression that means nothing.

They are good Dutch Catholics, but do not want a Roman Catholic Church — again no meaning.

They are not afraid of conflicts. You can say that again — Seems to me they are searching for disagreements.

Every man has the right to live his own thing — even if a little different from the Church — baloney.

They are indifferent to the means of family planning.

Unmarried couples living together are well accepted as Catholics & welcomed in the churches — again baloney.

They are working for a national church & paying little heed to the One, Holy and Apostolic.

This article is untrue — and misleading because it has not accurately described the Catholic Church in Amsterdam, Rotterdam or any other city.

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Editor's Note: Miss Wisniewski did not write the headline in reference — reporters do not write

the headlines on their own stories. Miss Wisniewski was not trying to describe the Church anywhere but reported an interview with a Dutch priest. The "baloney" views are his.

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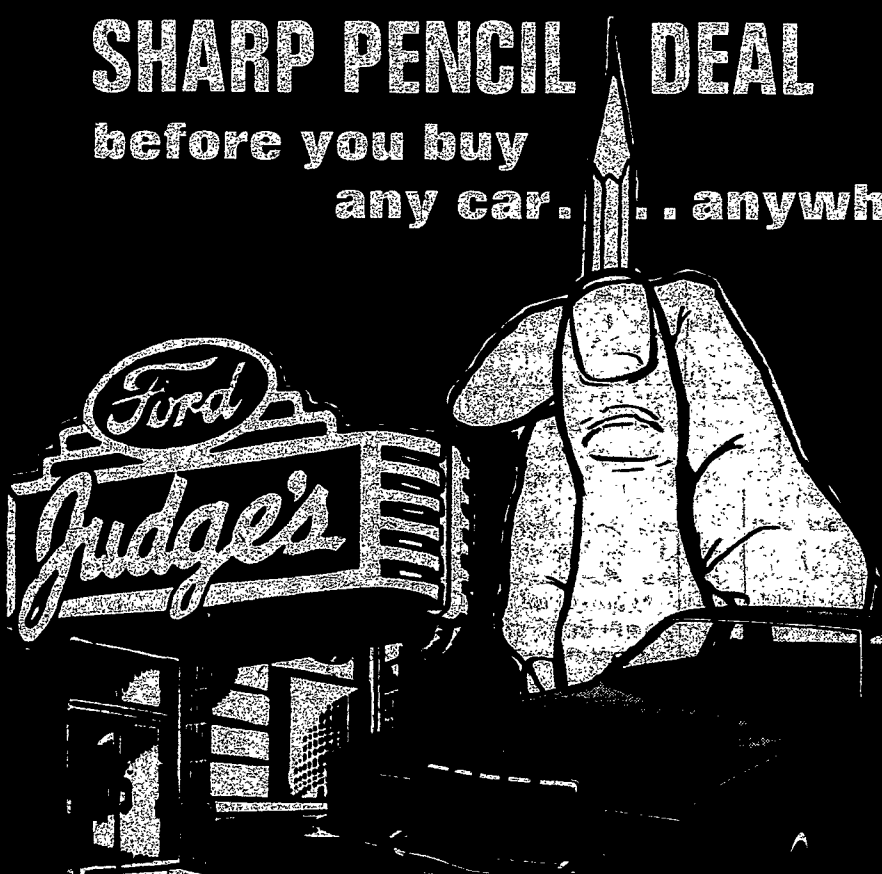
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