

THE OPEN WINDOW



Fr. Louis Hohman

The following letter was addressed to the Editor but referred by him to me:

Dear Sir:

I and I am sure many others would appreciate a rebuttal or explanation of Mr. Sidney Harris' column in a recent Democrat & Chronicle stating that the Disciples of Jesus not only did not write the Gospels accredited to them, but never did meet Jesus personally. I don't doubt they probably didn't personally write the Gospels — they could have dictated them to scribes or asked that they be written, but I am certain they did meet Our Lord. I've read the Gospels to see if what I had been taught was wrong. As I read them I felt sure we were correctly taught. I am sure they were personally chosen, and certainly met Jesus and personally followed Him, and he often stayed in their homes and lodgings.

If you didn't happen to see this column I am sure the newspaper can give you a copy. I believe it appeared on Saturday, Jan. 8. Perhaps you could devote a column to this. I am sure many Catholics, not only Catholics, would like an explanation.

Signed, R.J.S.

Dear R.J.S.,

I did not see the Sidney Harris column you mention although I read him quite regularly. That may have been one of the papers we didn't get during a storm. When Mr. Harris speaks of the Disciples of Jesus not knowing Him personally, he may be right in a couple of instances but certainly not in several others. For example, it is generally acknowledged that the first Gospel written was that of Mark who was the secretary of Peter and therefore was writing Peter's Gospel. Luke was not an eye witness but at the beginning of his Gospel claims that he consulted with eye witnesses before writing anything. The authorship of Matthew is somewhat in question but I don't know of any question about the Gospel of John being written by the apostle.

The point that must be kept in mind in all of this is that none of the Gospels were written for at least 35 to 40 years after Jesus had died. For all those years and, as you realize, that would be the better part of anyone's lifetime, the word was simply passed down by word of mouth as was the prevalent custom in those days when writing was rare and people who knew how to read were relatively few.

The passing down of the Good News by word of mouth was a very natural and normal way of operating and it was only later when someone felt that they should be put down on paper. They are basically the catechetical instruction given to people who were interested in Jesus

Christ and preparing for entrance into the Church. While not every word in the Gospels is to be taken literally, nevertheless we have the certainty of faith that they are the authentic Good News and the teaching of Jesus Christ as well as the presentation of His role in salvation history. There is no doubt of their inspiration by God and, from what I know of Sidney Harris, I rather doubt that he questioned that aspect of the Gospels. As soon as I am able I will check the column which he wrote on this matter.

The main point you need to remember is that whoever wrote the Gospels, it was not necessary for them to have met Jesus personally but rather that the tradition concerning Jesus was accurately passed down to them. I hope you won't be disturbed by this matter because it has very little importance in view of the certainty that the Gospels represent the authentic teaching and the authentic revelation of God through Jesus.

PAPAL RETREAT

Vatican City (RNS)—Pope Paul will take part in private Lenten spiritual exercises, Feb. 27 to March 5, in the Vatican's Mathilda Chapel. Papal audiences will be canceled during the retreat week.

Christophers' Fr. Keller Dead at 76

New York (RNS) — Father James Keller, MM, the founder of the Christophers — a movement that stresses "personal responsibility" through a variety of media approaches — died Feb. 7 at New York Hospital after a prolonged illness. He was 76.

The Maryknoll priest who recruited future priests and raised funds for his order for 20 years, founded The Christophers in 1945. He retired as director in 1969 because of health.



Seton Raises \$47,000

The women of the Seton Branches raised \$47,005 last year for St. Mary's Hospital. The annual ball yielded \$21,800; the sale, \$19,300; a tour of homes, \$1,650, and the fashion show luncheon, which is more a social event than a money-raiser, \$400. Pictured above are the women who had charge of the various events, and who presented checks at a Feb. 5 ceremony: Mrs. Anthony Palermo, left, Tour of Homes; Mrs. Paul Kircher, Fashion Show; Mrs. Larry Stid, Seton Sale; Mrs. Nino Trunfio, Seton Ball. In addition, there were contributions for specific purposes that totalled \$3,855.

Regional Highlights

Northeast

The Northeast Region is planning a special assembly to discuss the Call to Action resolutions, and the response of the parishes in the region to them. The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 12 at Mercy High School Auditorium.

The "Mount Carmel Project", a money raising

program to help that parish out of its financial plight has gone over the \$10,000 mark. According to NERVE, the region's newsletter, a full "accounting of monies received is expected to be presented in March.

The next Northeast Regional Assembly is scheduled for Wednesday, March 16 at St. Joseph's, Penfield.

Tompkins-Tioga

The Tompkins-Tioga region announced that a special program "designed to give parents an opportunity to see their full potential and to share their successes with others," is slated for March 13 at the Women's Gym of SUNY Binghamton. "MOORINGS", the region's newsletter explained that the

"Evenings for Parents Program was developed by Father Tom Gallagher, SJ, organizer of the (Worldwide) Marriage Encounter program in the U.S. and Rev. Lyman Coleman, a Presbyterian minister and director of the Serendipity program.

Registrations and inquiries may be addressed to Bob and Joan Dizer, 11 Gail Dr., Owego, N.Y. 13827.

WHICH WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE... Florida Vacation? New Car?

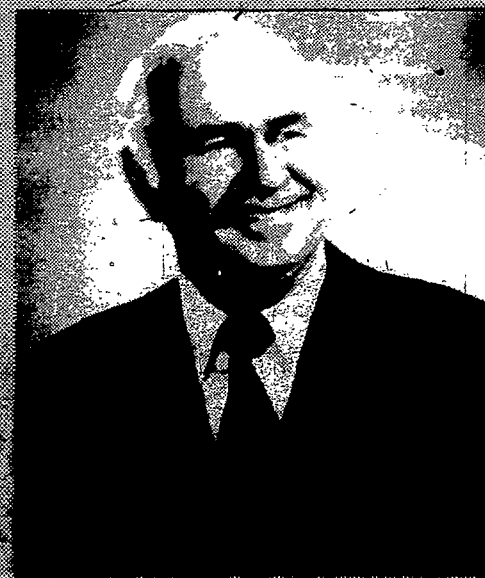
Bob Raymond Sales Mgr. of LOU HOLTZ BUICK GIVES YOU BOTH FOR THE PRICE OF ONE

4 DAYS FOR TWO (YOU PICK THE DATES)

Daytona Beach Florida

INCLUDES:

- Double Room Accommodations in an Oceanfront Hotel on Daytona Beach, Fla.
• 200 of champagne (also served)
• Continental breakfast
• Discount coupons for theme, restaurants and shopping.



BRAND NEW 77 BUICK (YOU PICK THE MODEL)

Skate Cruiser Estate Rally

PRICES START AT \$12,999

36 MONTH OR 36,000 MILE WARRANTY ON YOUR 77 BUICK AVAILABLE

FREE LUBRICATION FOR THE LIFE OF YOUR ENGINE

LOU

Holtz

BUICK OPEL

36 N. UNION ST. OWEGO, N.Y. 13827