

Priests Probe Life Style

Their availability to their people, the extent of their presence as ministers to the needs of their parishioners, is a question uppermost in the minds of a good many priests in the diocese.

This concern came to light during the past month as the priests discussed and wrote reactions to a paper on Priestly Life Style, prepared by the social action committee of the Priests Council.

In March the council was given the paper by Father Ron Stacy. In turn, the council published the document as an appendix with its minutes; and last week Father Stacy revealed the reactions to it.

"There were many questions raised on availability," he said. "Much dialogue came in on it."

The priests were addressing a question raised in the paper, which said, "It seems that in the future, priests should have more freedom in determining their own style of living. One's place of residence and the persons with whom he lives, should become more flexible. The practice of priests living among their people is highly desirable, but the assumption that the priest is totally available to his people at every minute of the day is false. To proceed under such an assumption may ultimately foster resentment on the

part of the priest and has serious limitations which perhaps may foster distance and not closeness to our people."

The paper, described by Father Stacy as a working paper, "very general, pretty open-ended on its conclusions," was drawn up by several priests. It was intended to spark discussion and some reassessment by priests on their life-styles, the priest said.

The document contains extensive reflection on the spiritual values of poverty, communal living and ministry.

The paper also suggests that priests receive a basic salary out of which they would pay for their lodging and food and other living expenses. It questions whether the present system promotes "deep within us the notion that we are 'kept' people and do we resent this?"

This question brought from one priest the charge that the paper is "another insinuitive attempt to change the salary system."

Other concerns the priests voiced dealt with considering the priesthood as a vocation rather than a profession, with distinguishing between material poverty and the spirit of detachment and the need for mutual support among priests, Father Stacy said.

The priest was pleased with the "seriousness with which the guys took the paper."

He acknowledged that, because the paper was a compilation of many different trains of thought, "it was not totally consistent." Responses to it, he said, also were not consistent.

It was the intent of the authors, he said, to open up discussion on the subject. And as one of the responses said, "If the paper was meant to stimulate discussion, it accomplished its goal."

Cenacle Retreats Listed

The Cenacle Retreat House has listed the following events on its calendar.

A general retreat for men and women will be given by Father John Walchans S.J., April 29 - May 1.

From May 12 to 15, Father Sebastian Falcone will present a scriptural retreat for men and women.

Information on the Cenacle's programs is available through 271-8755.

Corpus Christi Registration Is Underway

Learning, discipline and courtesy form a triangle of values imparted to pupils attending Corpus Christi School, according to a letter sent out last week to parents of children in the school and to prospective registrants.

Corpus Christi, now under the fiscal management of a group of laymen, also offers a Title I Reading Lab, Title I and ESAA Math Labs, Speech Therapy, Physical Education and French Language as well as other services such as those of a psychologist and a social worker.

According to the letter, the school offers non-graded primary, intermediate and junior high school education with small classes, friendly atmosphere and qualified, certified teachers.

It is a place "where your children may learn how to live and work in peace together," the letter states.

Registration for the coming year is now open. Information on the school's programs is available through 325-5850.

FOR GERMANS

The Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany, in New York City, will send representatives here May 4 to help local people of German extraction with any problems they may have that relate to their homeland. Consultations will be held from 9 a.m. until noon, and from 3 to 5 p.m., in the briefing room of the Chamber of Commerce Building, 55 St. Paul. Anyone needing particular documents should seek them in advance by writing to the Consul General, 460 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022.

TOWARD TOMORROW



Fr. Henry Atwell

Whenever Pope Paul escapes his keepers and is able to be the kind of man he obviously wants to be he says or does something wonderful.

Recently he spoke about a "sign of hope for the future." These days if any word of hope comes from the Vatican that is a rare day indeed in Rome. And to make that day even more rare than that, the Pope was speaking to a Protestant minister. These days, the Pope's guards don't let very many Protestants in to see the Pope, nor even Catholics who have ecumenical reputations.

Dr. Renzo Bertalot brought the Pope a gift copy of a new interdenominational translation of the New Testament in today's Italian. Dr. Bertalot, coordinator of the translation project, is also a Waldensian pastor. Pope Paul noted in his message of welcome that Dr. Bertalot is the first Waldensian pastor in 800 years to meet a Pope.

The new translation is the Italian counterpart of the American "Good News" translation in today's English. Since 1951, this edition has been distributed to over 50 million readers, a record no other book in American publishing history can match. The complete Bible, both Old and New Testaments, in this Good

News edition was published in December and more than one-million copies were printed in that one month alone.

Similar editions have been published in current language editions in Czech, Hungarian, Rumanian, Polish, German, Armenian, Albanian (although religion is totally outlawed in Albania), as well as the Italian edition presented to the Pope.

Pope Paul told Dr. Bertalot and his associates, "It is a source of joy to meet representatives of organizations zealously dedicated to preparing new translations of sacred Scripture which are easily understood by all." He said such translations are "a sign of hope for the future."

Catholics still tend to lag in reading the Bible and the brief and disconnected passages selected for Sunday Mass don't whet our appetites very much. More than ten years ago, Pope Paul and the world's Catholic bishops at the Vatican Council called for greater biblical interest among Catholics and suggested that here was a subject where Catholics and other Christians could work and study together.

Protestants are still pretty much alone and ahead in this area, however. The world's United Bible Societies have 40 national units, such as the American Bible Society which published the Good News Bible. These societies annually distribute over 100 million Bibles, Testaments or partial sections of the Scriptures in virtually every nation of the world — in many cases assisting people to become literate through such reading.

No wonder the Pope could call all this "a sign of hope for the future."



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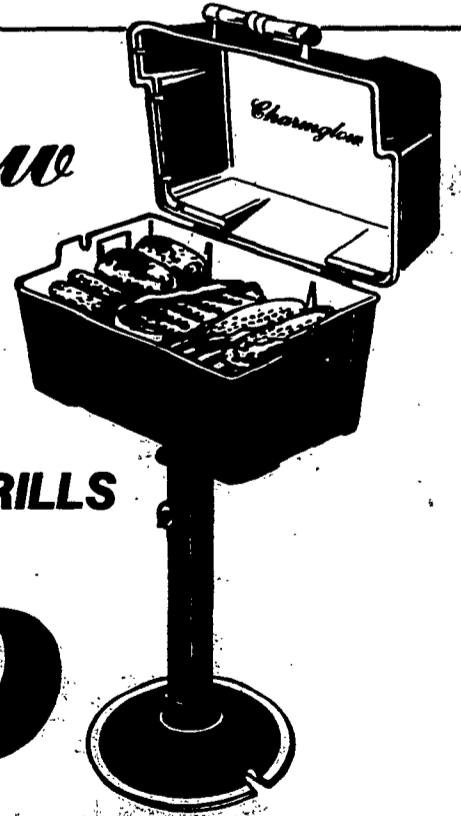


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