

Editorial

No to Klan

It is highly unfortunate that it is necessary for a cardinal to speak out against the Ku Klux Klan at this late date. But that is exactly what Cardinal William Baum of Washington, D.C., had to do recently.

He apparently was concerned after reading an article on the KKK in the publication put out by the National Office for Black Catholics detailing the resurgence of the Klan in the Washington area. The archbishop forbade Catholics from joining the hate organization.

Frightening it is that Catholics would join this organization, which has been bitterly anti-Catholic, anti-Jewish, and anti-black. Until 1974, the KKK would not even accept Catholics, but apparently it has sensed what it sees as a racist attitude among some of us and lifted the ban. We hope that the Klan is wrong.

But that Cardinal Baum had to issue his edict may belie that hope. He stated that "racial bigotry ... is a declaration of hostility to God's plan ..."

Blacks had hoped for a stronger stand against the problems of bigotry in the D.C. area and one, Robert L. Robinson, coordinator of the National Black Lay Catholic Caucus, called the statement "just shucking and jiving."

Could be. Undoubtedly, the cardinal, as is the case of much of the Church in the U.S., has been guilty of cunctation as regards racism. But at least Cardinal Baum is addressing the problem and that is a sign of some progress. However, what is more important from our view is the fact that it is still necessary to worry about the KKK. That is more than a little frightening.

ZPG's Latest

The latest project of Zero Population Growth, if a report in the Washington Post is correct, is a campaign against immigration to the United States. ZPG, it seems, is concerned with the influx of illegal aliens and also plans to seek "drastic reduction in legal immigration."

ZPG is concerned about the "human tidal wave depressing our economy," etc., etc.

We hope that people realize that this line is not new. Such navel concern has always been popular with those who are afraid of the Jews, or the Italians, or the Poles, or the Puerto Ricans. It also has great appeal for those who would douse "the lamp beside the golden shore" in favor of miserliness. Those who buy this are the same types who used to stock their bomb shelters with guns to make sure their neighbors couldn't get in.

If we had listened to such drivel in the past we would have deprived ourselves of the likes of Albert Einstein, Werner von Braun, Sergei Rachmaninoff, Leopold Stokowski and you name a few hundred more.

Only time will tell what havoc ZPG's success in dwarfing a whole generation of Americans will have for this country. The fact that schools and colleges all over the country are facing monumental problems with coming reductions is only one area where we will have been hurt. We may well be looking for all the manpower we can muster from wherever a generation from now.

Regardless of that, at a time when most people concerned with humanitarianism are seeking ways for the haves to do better by the have-nots, ZPG seems to be taking the opposite tack. Blind selfishness seems the reason.

Opinion

Parents Are Educators

Editor:

We have long desired to do all in our power to encourage those values which foster sound family life. Thus it is that we recognize and reiterate our belief at this time that it is the parents' right and obligation to be their child's primary educators. And so it is that we do endorse and support bill 2016A — 2461A, since we are aware of the possibility that certain values, especially in the area of human sexuality, might be encouraged in a given classroom, and these values would conflict with those endorsed by the Catholic Church.

We also maintain at this time our firm intent to continue within our Catholic School system the implementation of the sex education curriculum, Education In Love, which is presently in use. We are convinced that the values contained with this particular program do promote an understanding of human sexuality, which can lead both student and teacher to the possibility of a deeper and richer human and therefore, Christian life. Such education is prescribed by Vatican II, in Gravissimum Educationis, and by the American bishops in To Teach as Jesus Did, and reflects again the Church's concern for her people, as we grow in our understanding of God's care for us.

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'Here's Life,' Rochester

Editor:

This year I returned from college to find a group of Protestants conducting a campaign called "Here's Life, Rochester." After having known and shared my faith in Christ with many of the Protestants in the organization (Campus Crusade for Christ) behind this campaign, I have concluded that the Catholic Church is failing as a Christian organization, and the appearance of this revitalized Christianity lays a heavy judgement upon it.

Though we choose not to

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participate in the movement, I think we can learn three vital lessons from it. First the Catholic Church is largely faithless, and it will not survive if it remains so. St. James wrote, "A faith without works is dead." We have works but no faith. Are we any less dead?

Now, by faith I don't mean mere belief in a God (that's too easy); I mean real day-to-day experiential trust. Have you ever been impressed to put such-and-such an amount of money in the missions collection, knowing you won't have enough money left to meet the week's expenses but trusting God to supply your needs? I know this is a poor example, but this is exactly the kind of faith we lack. Real faith is risky.

Another of the Church's problems is that it treats anyone who has been baptized and confirmed to be Christian. This is not only fallacious; it is dangerous. I think it is safe to say that nobody can become a Christian without his will. Yet the great majority of American Catholics were baptized as infants and confirmed without, and even against their wills. In such cases confirmation is reduced to a mere ceremony, and the participants leave it bereft of any real Christianity. Without that personal commitment by faith (real experiential trust), without personally accepting Christ as an act of the will one's baptism also becomes a travesty. After all, baptism is only a vote by proxy.

Once one realizes this it becomes clear how severely the Church has failed in its mission to "make disciples of all nations." The Christian must be continually reaching out to encourage non-Christians to take that first step; expedient ceremonies are not enough. Think of how quick we are to send missionaries overseas while at home there are literally millions of Catholics who might as well know nothing for all the good their Catholic education has done them. Why aren't we reaching out to these people? "If you are ashamed of me before men, I will be ashamed of you before my Father."

Finally, if you are one of those who have not deliberately accepted Christ's sacrifice for your sins by faith (you will know that you are if you feel guilty or uneasy at reading this) go to your Bible as soon as possible and find out just who this Christ is, what he did for us, and what his promises and commands are. Then pray to him, admitting that you are a criminal and telling him that you accept his sacrifice for all your sins. Do this as an act of the will, believing that once it is done your sins are truly forgiven. Only then will you be "saved," and only then will you experience first-hand all that the Christian life is.

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'Build First A School'

Editor:

It was with interest that I read of the Priests Council discussing the Report from



"TEACHING RELIGION IS REALLY GRATIFYING WHEN YOU SEE HOW THEY RETAIN THINGS FROM WEEK TO WEEK."

the Urban Catholic School Ministry Task Force. A few points prompt me to write.

Sister Roberta Tierney notes that "ideally funding for the system should come one third from the parents, one third from the parish and one third from the diocese."

This "ideal" is praiseworthy, provided that ALL CATHOLIC SCHOOLS in the diocese are funded in the same manner. It would be a welcome relief for the schools outside the "Rochester Inner City" to be subsidized by the diocese and be able to pass these savings on to the parishes and the people. For some time it has been the practice for the diocese to support Catholic schools in the City of Rochester through the use of diocesan money while at the same time turning a deaf ear to the plight of schools outside the city.

Even following the disastrous 1972 flood in the Southern Tier, no money could be committed to the schools there, but during this same period over \$200,000 was given to the Rochester innercity schools.

In 1974, at a meeting with a group of Southern Tier Catholics, Bishop Hogan was questioned concerning these expenditures, but no answer was given beyond the statement that he would look into it. He may have looked, but the question remains unanswered. Since that time, further school consolidation has been forced upon the Southern Tier, and in Elmira another Catholic school has been closed. The causes of this closing are both financial and the familial drop in enrollment. Both of these causes could be eliminated with positive action by the diocese.

Through subsidies to the schools from the diocese the financial burden would be eased. Through a position attitude mandated by the bishop and consistently taught from the pulpit, parents might awaken to the fact that only in a Catholic school will their children receive a religion-oriented education for five (5) hours a day, one hundred eighty (180) days of the year.

Father Leonard Kelly, who advocates schools of religion, questions whether it is "right to concentrate on the few to the neglect of the many." Does it not follow that there is really no reason to have "the many?" With schools closing, "the many" increase, and as "the many"

increase, there seems to be a corresponding decrease in vocations, both to the priesthood and to the teaching sisterhood. By investing a sum of money and embarking on a strong program of education for parents, the trend could possibly be reversed with a resultant increase in enrollment, reopening of schools and eventually, with the help of the Holy Spirit, an increase in the awareness, on the part of students, of vocations.

All children born are children of God, and as such deserve the opportunity to be educated in a Catholic school, be they in the inner city of Rochester, or in Corning, Elmira or Geneva. All Catholic parents have the responsibility to insure that their children receive a Catholic upbringing, which should mean an education in a Catholic school where it is available.

To paraphrase our first bishop: build first a school, for without a school there soon will be no need for a church.

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Will Vatican Reverse Ban?

Editor:

We were involved in a discussion group last week. One of the couples insisted that the Vatican will come to accept a much more liberal attitude on contraception, and that the Vatican will reverse its present ban on women in the priesthood.

They said that often in the history of the Church "contrary actions," continued performance by laymen and priests of practices which are contrary to the teaching of the Pope, have evolved into declared doctrine and eventually into dogma.

We are looking for a specific example of a reversal by the Vatican which evolved directly from persistent "contrary actions."

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