

Abortion Stand Disputed

Notre Dame, Ind. (RNS) — A "Call to Concern" issued by 209 Christian and Jewish ethicists which said that "abortion may, in some instances be the most loving act possible," has been called a "political manifesto rather than a professional paper," by Father James T. Burtchael, CSC, a professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame.

The "Call to Concern" was highly critical of the Catholic Church's strong

institutional stand against abortion.

According to Dr. J. Philip Wogaman, author of the "Call," the statement was not "for abortion, but for freedom of choice." It stressed that "pro-life must not be limited to concern for the unborn; it must also include a concern for the quality of life as a whole." Dr. Wogaman said the declaration is "not an anti-Catholic statement," but added that "the bishops have made anti-abortion a major campaign."

Father Burtchael replies that the "rhetoric" of the "Call to Concern" sounds like what one might expect "in a Bronx election." Opposition to abortion, he says, is described as "absolutist," "rigid," "relentless," and "dangerous," while the "signers' position is sanctified" with words such as "sound," "moral," "affirmation," and "professional responsibility."

The 43-year-old theologian states that the Catholic Church's anti-abortion position is "misrepresented" in the Call to Concern.

That position, he says, "is not that abortion must always be morally wrong, but that anyone undertaking it bears the burden of justifying it. One can argue for justifiable homicide in war, self-defense, in abortion, in criminal penalties."

The Catholic theologian's statement takes exception to the "Call to Concern" characterization of "inappropriate . . . institutional mobilization" of Roman Catholic dioceses, including massive financial contributions . . . to the National Committee for a Human Life Amendment.

The contributions, says Father Burtchael, "amount to about \$280,000 this year; half a cent per Catholic; and average contribution of \$1,590 per diocese."



Dear Father Hohman,

I have two questions. The first is what is the Church's position on reincarnation? The second, is cremation acceptable to the Catholic Church?

(Signed) B.C.

Dear B.C.,

The traditional meaning of reincarnation is the coming back in another flesh form in a future life. The Christian Church believes in the resurrection of the body; that is, that we come back to life in our same flesh, reconstituted. The first sense of reincarnation is a teaching of the eastern religions and is not acceptable as an article of Christian doctrine. The second, of course, is part of

CHEZ ST. LOUIS

A cookbook entitled Chez St. Louis will hit the market Saturday, Nov. 12, when the Rosarians of St. Louis Church, who put it together, hold their annual Christmas sale—10 a.m.-2 p.m.

our basic creed. As far as cremation is concerned, it had been prohibited for many, many years because a certain group used it as a way of signifying that they did not believe in the resurrection of the body. Since that is no longer so, cremation is allowed, although the Church has not made any effort to publicize that very widely. I suppose the rationale for that is that wide discussion and publication of the fact would simply lead to the possibility of using cremation as a sign of disbelief in the resurrection. However, it may be used by Catholics and no permission is specifically required.

Actors' Chapel Is Now Center For the Elderly

New York (RNS) — Cardinal Terence Cooke of New York has dedicated the Actors' Chapel in St. Malachy's Church as a new center for the elderly in the theater district.

The chapel, in the basement of the famed church which served as a setting for the movie, "Going My Way," has been transformed into a Golden Age Club.

JUSPAX
Prepared by the Human Rights Task Force of the Diocesan International Justice and Peace Commission.

"You are one of the major voices of the conscience of your country. . . we welcome you and express our most profound respect for the courage and compassion you have shown by struggling against the excesses of left and right, and by leading agencies which alleviate the injustices and sufferings of the victims of political repression. . ."

With these words the president of Williams College (Massachusetts) conferred upon Cardinal Raul Silva an honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity last summer, for his life-long dedication to the cause of human rights. The recipient of the honor is no stranger to many Rochesterians who have participated in and who followed with interest the struggles of the church in Chile during the last four years. As Cardinal Archbishop of Santiago, Chile's capital, Cardinal Silva has led the Chilean Church in a remarkable campaign of service to the people under the most trying circumstances. This prelate has remained untainted by political factionalism, and has managed to maintain an impeccable honesty in speaking the truth without fear, and in servicing the poor and oppressed through an arm of the church called the Vicariate of Solidarity. The activities of the Vicariate range from operating free dining halls for starving children to providing legal assistance to persons under suspicion of political opposition. One of its most valuable functions, however, is to present continually to the Chilean government and people, as well as to the entire world, a truthful, honest, and Christian analysis of the life in Chile under oppressive military dictatorship.

The continuing analysis and denunciations have been effective in improving the situation of many people in need, and offer the only hope for a peaceful transition to a situation in which justice, human rights, and political freedom are again restored to Chile in an atmosphere of peace and understanding.

This type of church involvement, reminiscent of the struggles of the early church, is rather foreign to many of us. It could provide, when individuals participate, a unique source of enrichment and an opportunity to respond to the challenge of being brothers and sisters in a universal (catholic) church. In this spirit let us reflect on the words of Cardinal Silva excerpted from his address at the Williams College commencement.

"To liberate men and women from all oppression is the strongest tendency observed today in modern humankind, and is also the most noble task proposed today to individuals, institutions and peoples.

"It is urgent to rescue the inviolability of all persons, the intangibility of their rights; their right to organize in unions and guilds; their rights to express themselves and to be informed; their right to participate responsibly in decision-making processes; their rights to choose in conscience their way and their truth.

"Justice . . . is love for the rights of others. Only those who make justice their ideal and their permanent commitment, could expect to see their own rights guaranteed. Only in this way the dynamism of a people conscious of their destiny and organized, could serve the cause of justice and peace and not that of anger and violence.

"To make men and women resemble God in kindness is a task common to all people of good will in our times. To join (bring together) moral development with material development, and to seek justice as much as science and technology, are the true challenges facing humankind today; these are the requirements for the survival of the human race on earth, and are the basis of the peace that is so necessary. This is a task for all, it's a difficult and burdensome task, but at the same time a beautiful and dignified task; a task that would give nobility to the life of modern men and women, and that would give them a goal for which to work, suffer, and die."

If you wish to know more about the Vicariate of Solidarity, Cardinal Silva, and the church in Chile, please return this coupon to the Diocesan International Justice and Peace Commission, 750 W. Main St., Rochester, New York, 14611.

- Please send me more information about the church in Chile and the work of the Vicariate of Solidarity.
- Please let me know how I can join my brothers and sisters in the church in Chile in their struggle for human rights, justice and peace.

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