

Editorials Wondering

The guessing game is on regarding our next pope. Will it be a non-Italian? Will it be a young man? An old man? London odds favor Cardinal Sergio Pignedoli, 5-2. Or should that be V-II?

It is probably all a bit ridiculous because moods and sentiments among the cardinals are difficult to perceive, and might be expected to change after they gather in secret conclave.

Probably at this time the only one who knows the next pope is the Holy Spirit who will have a definite voice in the proceedings.

Some incidentals about the selection are worth pondering. For instance, the Church of late has been broadening its scope to appeal to all races. But isn't it another form of prejudice, ageism, to forbid cardinals over 80 from voting for the new pope?

And one cannot help but notice the absence of women in all the proceedings. Between now and the next such conclave there is a great deal of work to be done if the Church is to continue to fulfill its role of universality in depth as well as breadth.

We are not chauvinist enough to wish for an American to be named. Still we wonder why our cardinals are so peremptorily ruled out. The reason bandied about is that it would be political suicide for the Vatican to choose someone from a world power. Doesn't that preclude the possible best man for the job?

And the whole aura of secrecy in the election is not edifying for the average Catholic. In short Americans object to smoke-filled caucus room selection if its leaders. Shouldn't Catholics feel the same way about election of their popes?

No Choice

Without any ill feeling, we think that many spokesmen within the Catholic Church, including a couple of priests for whom we have considerable respect, are missing the point regarding the Nazi issue that has reared prominently in recent months.

One priest-editor, for instance, feels that the media were duped by the Nazis into giving the planned Skokie demonstration far more notoriety than the handful of Nazi perpetrators deserved. The implication is that we who got editorially excited did more to advance the Nazi cause than if we had merely kept our typewriters silent.

There is some truth in that observation. We realized it at the time we used Courier-Journal space to alert our readers early to the Nazi activity in Illinois - much as we did earlier when a Nazi did reasonably well in a mayoral primary in Milwaukee and with happenings of this monstrous group near our nation's capital.

The fact that the Nazis in the United States are not so numerous is beside the point. At one time, so were their forbears in Germany who were ignored or laughed at for too long. The people who looked the other way have been convicted by history. It is too late for them to admit that they should have done more, said more, written more. With that lesson as guide, we in the Year of Our Lord 1978 would be doubly condemned if we were to be apathetic about Nazis.

Setting aside the fact that good journalism dictates that newspapers and other media must keep the public alert to such events, we must also point out that it is a far, far better thing to risk giving Nazi vermin too much sunlight than to let them secretly undermine the foundations of America.

Risk being gullible? A thousand times over. And if we could change one historical line of those hellish times some four decades ago then we would take the risk a million times a million.

and Opinions

Pope Was A Saint

Editor:
I believe in the Papal Supremacy. I believe in the infallibility of the Pope when he is defining Faith or Morals. I believe that the Cardinals are divinely inspired when they choose the Pope. It is also my belief that if the bishops, priests and laity throughout the world believed this also, there would be no dissension and no division. They would accept the teachings of the Pope as they would accept the teachings of Jesus Christ whose mouthpiece he really is.

Pope Paul suffered through his own Gethsemane and emerged triumphant. Truly he was a saint in our time.

Hilda Smythe (Mrs.)
378 Hampton Blvd.
Rochester, N.Y. 14612

Probe Urged

Editor:
I can only say the obvious - there should be investigation into the

administrative practices of Rev. Charles Mulligan of the Office of Social Ministries to gather information in order to determine if resignation is called for.

Michael Krupiarz
Office of Human Development
Program Associate
750 W. Main St.
Rochester, N.Y.

Modernists Questioned

Editor:
As I read the endless writings of the liberal theologians (Modernists) in the diocese, I cannot help but wonder what new heroic goal is on their agenda now that they have passed the absurd. These brave new thinkers will stop at nothing whatever, so long as their spurious arguments are peddled, often by a worldly press which they share so much in common. Yet they hardly ever realize how ridiculous they sound or how few they convince.

The uncanny force that compels them must be relentless. "No rest for the weary" goes the old saying. And they are wearisome beyond words.

The latest peddling was in the D&C of Aug. 7. Father Henry Atwell wrote a perfect thesis on what to believe if one wanted to be certain that he would never fall into Catholicism. It is truly the perfect guide on "How Not to Become a Catholic." I am sure that Father Atwell must have had some god intention in mind when he wrote the article but alas it must remain a mystery to all but Father Atwell.

Perhaps the reason for this hasty, ill-timed article berating Pope Paul and Humanae Vitae, not to mention a slew of other doctrinal matters, was that the consensus of these modern thinkers awoke them to the fact that the golden moment was not so golden, and perhaps outdistanced them. "Haste makes waste," goes another old saying.

I wonder if, after reading the article, if anyone of them noticed how odd it was. Even in the secular press it was out

of place. Perhaps not, for as Chesterton once observed, "Oddities only strike ordinary people. Oddities do not strike odd people." At any rate, St. Pius X predicted that modernism would surface again. It certainly has. But it is still hard to believe how anyone could be stupid enough to swallow it.

Richard V. Hussar
340 Jordan Ave.
Rochester, N.Y. 14606

Fr. Mulligan Defended

Editor:
This letter is being written as a result of the media focus these past few weeks on the firing of the former director of the Office of Human Development.

The first is the implication that OHD has only become interested in the public power issue within the past year and a half. This is demonstrably untrue. As far back as late summer of 1975 as a result of a specific directive from Father Charles Mulligan,

then OHD director, two people, one a staff member who was at that time the Campaign for Human Development director and the other a volunteer who was a mature and singularly competent student of mine, worked together at some length to familiarize themselves with the issue of public power. They had several meetings with the Genesee Valley People's Power Coalition and always expressed enormous enthusiasm for the work this group was doing. Concurrently, some members of the Regional OHD staff (those working in the non-metro regions of the diocese) were becoming increasingly involved in this issue in their particular areas. This is not to imply that work done by the OHD staff in the past year or so may not have gone beyond that early stage. It does, however, imply that some people currently involved with OHD either never knew or have forgotten their history.

Second, the implication that our diocese, in general, or Father Mulligan, in particular, would be anything but fully supportive of community organizing on behalf of the poor is at least as blatantly false as the first allegation. Evidence to support my statement abounds, however, only one will be submitted and that is the exemplary support given the Campaign for Human Development in this diocese. CHD is an endeavor which has consistently, actively and obviously been close to the hearts of both our bishop and Father Mulligan. It would hardly be an exaggeration to state that without the devotion and endurance of the latter, CHD would have been relegated to the obscure position it occupies in so many dioceses. Let it appear that I've digressed, the reader must recall that one of the two major focuses of the CHD is the funding of self-help poverty groups, more often than not composed of minorities.

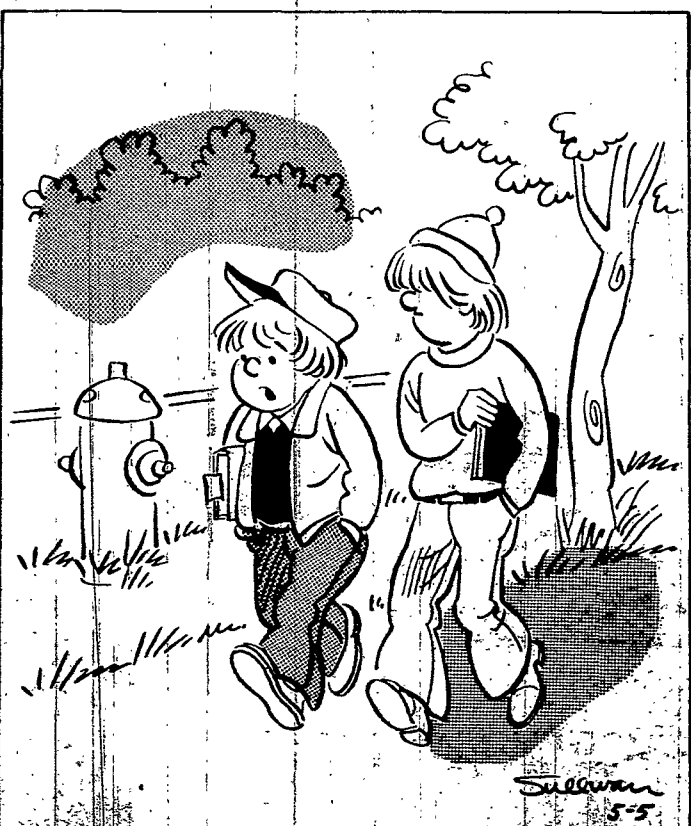
Third, I would like to speak to the charges that the termination of employment took place because the person was of

Native American ancestry and/or lay. I have been associated with Father Mulligan in a variety of capacities for about four years now. Under his direction I served as coordinator of Project Cope, a diocesan study of unemployment funded by Catholic Charities and carried out by OHD; one of the chief organizers and first president of the diocesan-wide CHD Board of Directors (a position which I filled for 2 1/2 terms); and for the past year and a half I've been an extremely active member of the Catholic Charities Planning Committee.

Due to the nature of the work, we've had our share of "knockdown, dragout battles." I've won some and lost some. However, I can honestly say there has never once been even the slightest suggestion of him "pulling rank" in the all too frequent unpleasant lay-clerical tension. In fact, I've often thought he was one of the few clerics I've met who takes Peter's "You are a royal priesthood" seriously.

I have come to appreciate and be deeply influenced by the most characteristic hallmarks of the man - a disarming and gentle simplicity of style; an almost breathtaking reverence for ALL persons regardless of genetic or social endowments; a unique and profound ability to actively listen to each person with whom he speaks; and the most passionate commitment to social justice, save one, I've ever encountered. Perhaps I can summarize best by saying I first knew Father Mulligan as a professional whose intellectual and administrative skills I admired. Over the years I've come to rever him as a priest who has enabled many committed (and often struggling) lay Catholics to go a little further in living out the Gospel of Jesus than they might have without his influence.

Jean H. Cardinal
Associate Professor,
Sociology, Anthropology
Monroe Community College



"YOU KNOW THAT AD THAT SAYS IF YOU WANNA CAPTURE SOMEONE'S ATTENTION WHISPER? WELL, DURING ENGLISH CLASS I CAPTURED SISTER MATILDA."

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We encourage readers to submit opinions but since we try to print letters from as many different contributors as possible we will publish no more than one letter a month from the same individual.