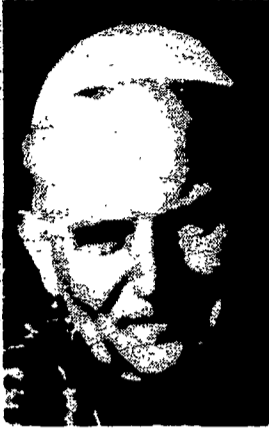


Catechesis Is the Source of Church Vitality

Following are excerpts from the text of Pope John Paul II's address at a recent general audience.

I wish to begin the audience today taking my cue from two phrases pronounced by Christ on the theme of the child. One could say that they form an evangelical program dedicated to the child himself. We are called to reflect in a particular way on this theme during this year which, through the initiative of the United Nations Organization, is being celebrated as the International Year of the Child.



Christ uttered the phrase which all of us know so well: "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for such belongs to the kingdom of God." He spoke these words, we will recall, to the apostles, who considering the tiredness of the Master, wanted rather to act in another manner: they wanted to prevent the children from coming to Christ. They wanted to send them away, perhaps, because they did not want the children to be wasting the Master's time. Christ, on the other hand, vindicated his rights over the children, motivating them from his own perspective.

The second phrase which comes to my mind at this moment sounds very severe. In fact, it defends the child from those who would scandalize him: "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea." This admonition is very stern. But scandal given to any innocent being is a great evil. It results in great damage to the young soul, sowing evil

where there should develop grace and truth, confidence and love. Only He who personally loved the innocent soul of children could express himself in this way on such scandal. Only He could threaten, with such tremendous words, those who cause such scandal.

We must bear in mind the entire truth regarding the child, a truth which emerges from these two evangelical statements, if we are to understand and appreciate the work of the last ordinary assembly of the Synod of Bishops in 1977. The theme, as we will remember, dealt with catechesis, with special reference to the catechesis of children and young people. The synodal session, as usual, had gathered together the representatives of the episcopal conferences of all the world. The rich exchange of experiences found its expression, at least partially, in the final informative document and in the message which the Synod addressed to the Church. At the same time the participants turned to Paul VI so that, using the rich material of the synod itself, he might prepare and publish a personal document, as had happened after the synod on evangelization. The death of Paul VI, and subsequently the sudden demise of John Paul I, have delayed until now the publication of this document.

On the other hand, the problem of catechesis is in itself living and urgent. Catechesis is in fact, one could say, the infallible sign of the life of the Church and an inexhaustible source of her vitality. All of this found expression in the complexity of the work of the Synod, and it shows itself above all in the daily life of the Church: of the parishes, of the families, of the communities. There is no need to repeat here what has already been written and published on this theme with such competence. I intend simply to underline and stress that through the catechesis of children and young people, that eloquent appeal of Christ is

realized: "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them . . ." All the successors of the apostles, the entire Church in her evangelizing consciousness, must work so that, above all, this desire and this appeal of Christ may be fulfilled in the measure requested by the multiple needs of our time. Hand in hand with this appeal goes the warning of the Lord against scandal.

The catechesis of children and young people tends always and everywhere to help the growth in the young soul of what is good, noble and worthy. It becomes a school of what is best and most mature in a human sense, which develops through contact with Christ. There is, in fact, no more effective instrument to protect from scandal, from taking root in evil, from demoralization, from that sense of the uselessness of life, from frustration, than that of sowing what is good, infusing it deeply and vigorously in young souls. Being watchful that such good can emerge and mature belongs to the formative task of catechesis.

One of the most important fruits of the various pastoral experiences with which the synod was confronted is the awareness of the evolving and at the same time organic character of catechesis. Catechesis cannot be limited to the communication of religious information. It must help to set alight in souls that light which is Christ. Such light must illuminate effectively the entire path of human life. Catechesis should therefore be the object of systematic work and of collaboration. The condition for an effective catechesis of children and young people is and remains the catechesis of adults, in various forms, on different levels and on different occasions. This is important above all if one remembers the catechizing task that belongs precisely to the family, and if one considers the development of the problems of faith and morals. Catechesis must, in fact, be tackled particularly by adults, as true and mature individuals.



Bishop Clark speaking to the DPC at the beginning of the meeting at St. Mary's, Waterloo. With him at the head table are, from left, Brother Brian Walsh, chairperson, Judith Ann Kollar, executive secretary, and Judith Slivick, recording secretary.

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parently the members had looked forward to the open forum at the meeting's end.

Among the issues raised were the plight of urban parishes and of the rural poor; the need to support Catholic schools, and the question of how much of a parish's resources should go to support them; and questions concerning the proposed regional liturgy coordinators, regionalism in general, the Stewardship program, and parish pastoral leadership.

After listening to the members, Bishop Clark said that he had gained an appreciation for the variety of views in the diocese.

Responding on the issue of regionalism, he said that he "would like the regions to be very much alive," and added that they need to "live their own life," and don't all need to be the same.

Patricia Defendorf, of the Chemung-Schuyler Region, noted her concern over the selection of a regional coordinator, as she is from a region currently without one. Bishop Clark asked her what specifically he should do. She

responded that he should make sure that the person taking the job wanted it, and wasn't taking it because he feels obliged to do as the bishop asks. Bishop Clark assured her that wouldn't happen.

Bishop Clark noted that he didn't know answers to all the questions raised, but he took notes during the discussion, and assured them that he was listening to what they had to say.

In other action, the council presented a gift to Sister Mary Ann Binsack, in appreciation for her four years as DPC executive secretary.

The council also reviewed four items that were on its agenda last November. They decided that proposals for a Youth Convocation, for a study of a diocesan school board, for study of the survey on women's role in parishes by the division directors, and the DPC's examination of evangelization should be continued at the November meeting.

The DPC also approved resolutions calling for the diocesan priorities used to prepare this year's budget to be used again to prepare next year's, eliminating the need to rewrite them.

New Members

Waterloo — All members' terms on the Diocesan Pastoral Council were extended for this year, but some delegates were unable to continue to serve. As a result, several new members attended their first meeting Saturday.

New representatives of the diocese's sisters are Sister Frances Sweeney, of the pastoral team of Immaculate Conception, Rochester, and Sister Mary John VanAtta of Nazareth Academy.

Father Richard Torney, pastor of St. Mary's, Bath, is the new representative of the diocese's priests.

A new delegate representing ministry to the Spanish-speaking is Tony Alvarez of Rochester. New representatives from the ministry to black Catholics are Valjeanne T. Reese and Toni King, both of Rochester.

Three new members will represent youth: Kevin Foy and Alex Johnson of Rochester, and William Riley Jr. of Geneva.

Pope's Itinerary

Pope John Paul II has a tight schedule for his visit to the United States Oct. 1-7. He will arrive in Boston Monday afternoon, Oct. 1, after a two-day stay in the Irish Republic, and will go to New York, Philadelphia, Des Moines, Chicago and Washington, D.C. There will be open-air Masses in all of these cities.

Religious News Service (RNS) supplied last week "a tentative agenda of the pope's itinerary, gleaned for the most part from each of the local dioceses involved." A digest of the RNS report follows.

Monday, Oct. 1, 3 p.m. — Boston — Arrival, Logan International Airport; reception for about 4,000 guests; prayer service at Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Mass on nearby Boston Common — about 5:30 p.m.; tour of Boston, ending at residence of Cardinal Humberto Medeiros — dinner and over night there.

Tuesday, Oct. 2, 9 a.m. — New York — Arrival, LaGuardia Airport; 11 a.m. — noon, address to United Nations delegates. Evening Mass, Yankee Stadium, the Bronx; overnight with Cardinal Terence Cooke.

Membership Drive

The Knights of Columbus will launch a membership drive in the name of Bishop Charles P. Greco, supreme chaplain, who has been a priest, and a K. of C. member for 60 years. An announcement from the New York State Council says that local councils "will be seeking Catholic men, 18 years of age or older who are interested in involvement in Church, Community, Family, Youth and Non-Sectarian programs."

Wednesday, Oct. 3, 8 a.m. — New York — Arrival, St. Patrick's Cathedral; youth rally, Madison Square Garden; speech, Battery Park; prayer service, Shea Stadium. Departure for Philadelphia, 1:30 p.m.

Wednesday, Oct. 3, 2 p.m. — Philadelphia — Arrival, Philadelphia International Airport; brief reception. Motorcade to Cathedral of St. Peter and Paul; Mass, 4 p.m., in Logan Square, in front of cathedral; dinner, night, with Cardinal John Krol; visit meanwhile to seminary where pope stayed during 1976 Eucharistic Congress.

Thursday, Oct. 4, about 8 a.m. — Philadelphia — Visit to St. John Neumann shrine, to Immaculate Conception Cathedral (Ukrainian Rite); Mass at Convention Hall.

Thursday, Oct. 4, 1 p.m. — Des Moines — Arrival, Municipal Airport, for four-hour visit; Mass at Living History Farms; 5 p.m. — departure for Chicago.

Thursday, Oct. 4, early evening — Chicago — Arrival, brief reception, O'Hare International Airport; to downtown Holy Name Cathedral to greet clergy, women religious; dinner, over night with Cardinal John Cody.

Friday, Oct. 5, Chicago — Early morning Mass for Polish community on grounds of Five Holy Martyrs Church, Southwest side; meeting, lunch, with National Conference of Catholic Bishops, in special session; after-dinner concert at cathedral (probable); over night at cardinal's home.

Saturday, Oct. 6, 11 a.m. — Arrival, Andrews Air Force Base, Washington, D.C.; 11:20, at reflecting pool for greeting ceremony; Mass for clergy, — St. — Matthew's

Cathedral; 1:30 p.m., meeting with President Carter at White House, outdoor reception for members of Congress; 4:30 p.m., meeting with delegates to Organization of American States (OAS); 7 p.m., reception for diplomatic corps at home of Archbishop Jean Jadot, apostolic delegate; over night there.

Sunday, Oct. 7, 8:30 a.m. — Washington — Mass for women religious, Shrine of the Immaculate Conception; 9:30, address to academic community on Catholic University campus; 10:30, ecumenical meeting there, or near by; about 3 p.m., Mass on The Mall, with altar in front of Smithsonian Castle. Departure for Rome.

Polish Falcons To Honor Cathy Turner

Cathy Turner, national speed skating champion, will receive the Polish Falcons sports award for 1979 at their 16th annual sports night dinner-dance, Saturday, Oct. 13, at the Polish Falcon Club, 284 Weyl St.

Turner is a member of the U.S. national skating team and the national indoor champion for 1979. Now 17, she began speed skating at 7 and has won various titles throughout this country and Canada.

The Falcons also will honor Helen Karolczak and A. J. Imiolo for winning the 1978 National Falconettes Doubles Championship in Batavia. Walt Matula also will be honored for winning the Falcons' golf championship.

Ticket information may be obtained by telephoning the club at 266-9540.