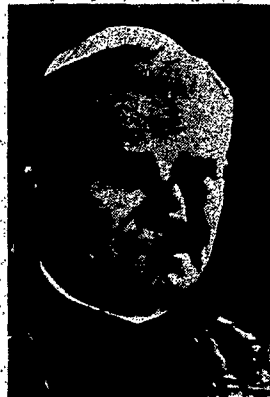


# Be Credible Models of Womankind

Following is the text of Pope John Paul II's address to participants in the 19th National Congress of the Italian Women's Center (CIF).

Beloved Daughters,

In the first place I wish to express my deep joy at being able to meet you today, leaders of the CIF and qualified representatives of Italian women. I greet you all very cordially and thank you for having desired this meeting. It offers me the opportunity to become better acquainted with you and your movement, which does so much in the practical situation of the dear Italian people.



I know I am addressing particularly committed persons, and I offer you right at the start my considerations and sincere esteem. You act in a socio-cultural context, which is that of our time, at once difficult and promising, and which shows itself rich in ferment always lively, but not always positively fruitful.

It seems to me, in fact, that modern society, in which we live and work is suffering a crisis in growth. On the one hand, it offers encouraging examples of striving towards goals of justice, mutual communion, and a higher human level of life. The sense of solidarity and of interdependence is growing, together with a healthy demand for respect of one's own identity and one's own values. Yet, on the other hand, irrational manifestations of selfishness to the point of licentiousness and violence are not rare. Forces that aim at the disintegration of the connecting tissues of society are operating with success, and forms of so-called re-appropriation of life, which lead, on the contrary, to one's own destruction and that of others, are exalted.

We are confronted with generosity ruined by pride, forms of real altruism co-existing with unbridled individualism, acclamation of resolutions in defense of life, and even of ecology, in blatant association with real attempts to humiliate it and suffocate it.

I say this, thinking of the biblical invitation, "Test

everything, hold fast what is good;" in the world, in fact, we must be "innocent as doves," but also "wise as serpents."

In such a society, the Church has a precise function she has received "for building up and not for tearing down." She is to stimulate orderly and complete growth for her full maturity. In this delicate but decisive process, the Church recognizes women's contribution as an essential one. She expects of them unmistakable commitment and witness in favor of all that founds and constitutes man's true dignity, success at the personal and community level, and therefore deepest happiness.

Women have, in fact, their own native charism from God, a keen sensitiveness and a delicate perception of measure, a sense of the concrete and of providential love for what is in the germinal state and therefore in need of thoughtful care.

These are all qualities geared to human growth; and I ask you to transpose the exercise of these precious qualities from the private sphere to the public and social one, and to do so with wise responsibility, making up for the deficiencies of others, correcting deviations, encouraging and promoting factors of common advantage and utility.

It seems to me that your commitment can be carried out in two different and complementary spheres. In the first place, the world of women itself needs the healthy and balanced model of a complete woman. It is a question of asserting just rights so that every woman can honestly take her place in society, both on the human and on the professional plane, beyond all fear and discrimination.

But care must also be taken not to allow claims and proposals, which are perfectly just at the outset, to make way subsequently for degenerated forms of exasperated polemics or arbitrary and unnatural proclamation. It is not lawful to introduce elements of rupture where the Creator envisaged and willed the highest harmony on the human plane.

Secondly, you have also a task to carry out in the wider framework of society, as regards the position to assume in the face of its general definition, and in

particular in regard to the problems of the family. In this area, I congratulate you on your solicitude and on your attitude concerning the problems of preparation for marriage and the defense of life, from its conception, both in moral habits, which have such an influence in the formation, particularly, of the young generations, and in legislation, since the law should not be a mere recording of what is happening, but a model and stimulus for what must be done.

The Church is deeply convinced that the wisdom of legislation is shown most where the most energetic defense of the weakest and most helpless members of society is assumed, from the first moments of life. Therefore, any yielding in this matter is bound to be to the detriment of human dignity itself. And furthermore, while with respect and even love for everyone, care must be taken not to adopt compromising positions of acceptance with ideological forces in conflict with the Christian faith.

Among the weakest members of society, there are also children, the sick, the old, the unemployed, the uneducated, and, generally, all those exposed to various forms of exploitation and abuse. Any initiative you undertake and carry out in these sectors, is certainly worthy of attention or support. One thing is certain: there is a Christian consistency also in public life; a Christian must always be a Christian, at all levels, without wavering, without giving way, in deeds and not just in name.

For my part I warmly encourage you and exhort you to continue along your way, which consists of updated and responsible service for Italian society, both on the plane of a wise arousal of public opinion, and above all on that of concrete human advancement on the cultural, social and welfare level.

Always be characterized by dignity, which is not presumption; by love, which is not indifference; by peace, which is not resignations. And may your commitment always start from deep-rooted interior convictions, which are put in practice joyfully. Let you yourselves, both in the individual and social sense, be living examples, which can be proposed to others, of a credible model of woman, who realizes in herself, or at least tries to realize, the best that human nature and Christian revelation have to offer in this connection.

## More Opinions

### Backs Pope On Kung

Editor:

On behalf of the local chapter of Catholics United for the Faith, I would like to express our deep and profound appreciation and to pledge anew our irrefragable loyalty to His Holiness, Pope John Paul II for his recent censuring of Swiss theologian Prof. Hans Kung.

Far too long has Prof. Kung, and numerous other contumacious agitators so obviously oblivious to the Catholic Faith, been allowed to soil that which has been held sacred for nearly two millennia. Far too long they stunted intellectual growth in Catholic Theology by inculcating their spurious doctrines upon ignorant and innocent young minds, thereby destroying the faith of thousands. They erroneously pride themselves in their intellectual progress, but in truth they are retrogressive due to their intellectual pride. If pride were a virtue and not a privation, they would be saints.

"Heretics," wrote St. Augustine in his City of God, "are those who entertain in Christ's Church unsound and distorted ideas and stubbornly refuse, even when warned, to return to what is sound and right, to correct their contagious and

death-dealing doctrines, but go on defending them" (Bk. 18, Ch. 51). Hence the decision by Rome that Prof. Kung "can no longer be considered a Catholic Theologian nor function as such in a teaching role."

We ask those still supportive of Prof. Kung, who clench their tiny, futile fists of anger at Rome, to fully consider who it is you fight. Hopefully, like Paul, the scales will fall from your eyes also and realize that "it is I Jesus, whom you are persecuting" (Acts 9:4).

We also ask all faithful Catholics to stand by the Holy Father, supporting him in a way worthy of your special calling. In a word, to proclaim the Faith in words and deeds and especially in prayers and petitions for the Holy Father.

As one Catholic Bishop in the U.S. has put it: "This courageous action by the Holy See will help bewildered pilgrims to eternity to set again their course, joyously and resolutely guided by the fixed star of the Magisterium which infallibly proclaim the Deposit of Faith."

And with names as Curran, Tracy, Rahner, Schillebeeckx, Brown, McBrien, etc., under investigation it is apparent that in a very short time indeed, the deadwood and debris obstructing the road

to eternity for many will be flushed to the side and then down the sewer where it belongs.

Dorothy Macaluso  
Chairman,  
St. Pius X Chapter  
Catholics United  
for the Faith

### School Closing Necessary

Editor:

I would appreciate your allowing me to tell how I feel about the closing of Our Lady of Mercy School on Denise Road.

Back in 1957, many families were called upon to leave their existing parish and to start a new baby parish, Our Lady of Mercy. Speaking just for my family, it was a very difficult and painful choice because we loved Mother of Sorrows, having moved into that parish in 1951. But we did what was asked of us along with many other families from the three surrounding parishes. As the years passed, the pain and disappointment of leaving Mother of Sorrows turned more into happiness and joy because we had founded a new family — our baby had grown — and now we were truly a Christian family. New friendships were formed. We were amazed at the dedication and zeal shown by these beautiful people when they were

called upon to give of their Time, Talent and Treasure. But most of all, they gave their LOVE — and that is what has made Our Lady of Mercy the parish it is today, one to be proud of! Over the years, six of our children were graduated from Mercy; our two oldest daughters were graduated from MOS.

My husband and I have, and always will have, nothing but pride and admiration for the many, many dedicated teachers, both religious and lay — for the principals who staffed the school — for our parish staff. But most of all, we think back to 1951 and then remember how it all started and how we grew and we thank God for all the members of our Christian Family that made "Our School" a reality. But like most families, ours too faced a crisis and after many years of indecision, many meetings, many tears of sadness and disappointment — our school will close in June. I'm sure everyone who is truly a member of the Mercy family is saddened by this news, but we cannot let our hearts make us blind to economic realities of the situation!

For more than 20 years we were blessed with a school we can always be proud of. Thank God for that! But now, please members of the Mercy family, don't despair. Forget the disappointment, the bitterness and the anger. Let us not look at the past but to

the future and with God's help, we will again be a family united. Our daughter gave us a wall hanging for Christmas with a saying that reads, "Our family is a circle of strength and love. With every birth and every union, the circle grows. Every joy shared adds more love. Every crisis faced together makes the circle stronger." This is so true for each individual family but isn't it also true for the Our Lady of Mercy family?

Mrs. Helen Mercier  
69 Glenbrook Road  
Rochester, N.Y.

### Theologians Defended

Editor:

I'm very disturbed that many Christians are refusing to listen to Hans Kung and Edward Schillebeeckx. I would like to clarify a few things about them so that people may understand them better.

Basically what these men have attempted to do is to update the Church, so that once again Christianity may be strongly effective in our society and also in the society of countless future generations.

What few Christians realize is that most of the Church's central doctrines and policies being used today are over 1,500 years old and virtually obsolete. Fifteen hundred years or

more ago, when the Church attempted to manifest its basic beliefs of God into doctrines and sacraments, the Church may have been highly influential in the lives of its followers. Europe only has its countless territorial battles and two world wars to account for the fact that the Church's doctrines and sacraments weren't being effective in solving society's problems. How many of you have often thought the recited Creed, a eucharist or a baptism was very beautiful but somehow lacked in really being effective in your life?

In order for Christianity to once again achieve its rightful influence, the Church must seriously update what it believes to be God's saving action in the world, and to manifest this belief in a form in which people today can understand and live out.

This is what Hans Kung and Edward Schillebeeckx are trying to do. They are making Christianity understandable and highly worth living. They aren't men possessed with the devil, nor are they men preaching blasphemy for blasphemy's sake. They are very intelligent men who are sincerely concerned with preserving the Church before it fades away.

Richard Bodensteiner  
1219 Creekside Trail  
Webster, N.Y. 14580