

# In Search of Psyche of Church

By Lady Mary Ward  
Religion Today

London — Given by my editor the task of distilling the trend of the times in English churches, I prepared, during my first week in London, by reading about a dozen books written by church leaders.

There were books by the former Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Ramsey, articles about the next Archbishop of Canterbury, "Bob" Runcie, as many are said to call him in newly democratic, non-authoritarian style.

More books by Roman Catholic Archbishop Basil Hume of Westminster Cathedral; by the Orthodox Metropolitan Anthony Bloom; by the present Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Donald Coggan, and also books by and about (the first ever) wife of the Primate of all England, Jean Coggan.

Modern times are evident in the fact that the current archbishop's wife has written a book, and the incoming archbishop's wife, Mrs. Runcie, is an active concert pianist and piano teacher.

And what is the summing up of this attempt to journey into the inner psyche of the Church, as displayed by the thoughts of the elected leaders?

Most noticeable is a trend away from authoritarianism and legalism. There is a humility that exposes the dark night of the soul that even the princes of the Church journey through. There is the reminder that all, lay person or archbishop, have much of the time to pray, "Help thou my unbelief."

But loudest of all in one's memory sounds a phrase that echoes and re-echoes like a

tolling bell on the landscape of the soul. It was said by the Nobel prize-winning little Yugoslavian nun, Mother Teresa of Calcutta: "In the name of the God I cannot see, I serve the brothers and sisters I can see."

And so the elderly nun who ministers to the poorest of the poor in the streets of Calcutta perhaps best illustrates the call of the Church. "Even as ye do unto the least of these...."

In these days of human alienation, of mushrooming divorce rates, divided families, total uncertainties... what is more moving than Teresa's sisters, who are taught to "give, and give, and never count the cost."

The princes of the Church write of course, about faith, and closeness to God. But so many, of finite mind, cannot truly feel this reality. But we can feel the reality of our own needs, and thus by empathy, feel the needs of others. And by sensitivity to the needs of others, we can help to heal the wounds of living that we all bear.

It is what Martin Buber calls the "I and Thou" relationship, and only after we feel for other living beings, both human and animal, and environment, can we begin to have the "I and Thou" relationship which is sensing the reality of God.

It is the difficulty of faith, perhaps, that is making the churches fall on hard times globally. Smaller attendance at church, fewer seeking the religious life. For faith, it is said, is belief in things unseen. And the world is all too much with us, an unending road of demands that drown out the "still small voice within."

There are the hundred and one daily pressures, survival pressures. Having to leap out of bed, to hurry, eat, dress, and face crowded buses, crowded trains, frustrating traffic jams. Days at work (which often must feel like the

curse of Adam), where one jockeys for position, plays (!) office politics and spars with the infighting of co-workers. Then home, at night, to what seems like more problems than the spirit can survive.

Perhaps the loneliness of the bachelor "pad," perhaps the gathering of other bruised spirits from classrooms and supermarkets. How do we manage to remain as civilized as we do?

We will appear "Christian" with a meaning, when we remember to comfort all those we meet, every moment, every day. Archbishop Hume, in his book "Searching for God," written when he was abbot of Ampleforth, says that of course the Christian is required constantly to seek God, but equally the Christian must seek and serve Christ in his neighbor.

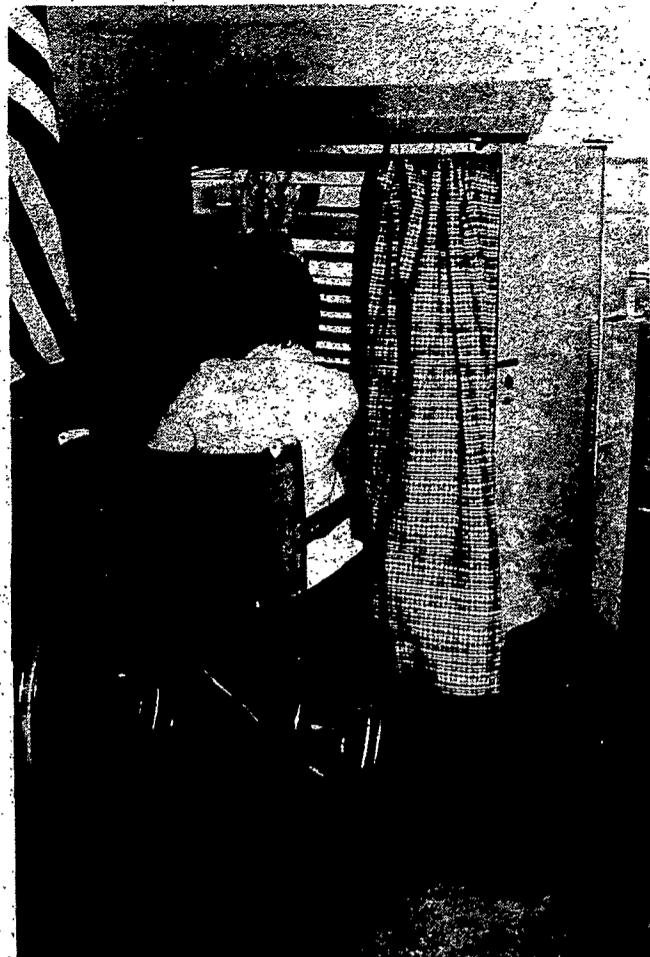
So we should — indeed must — comfort and heal all those whom we meet. Equally we must recognize comfort when it is offered us. It will be a dawning of the City of God when love (agape) is the name of the game instead of competition.

"Equality" is a dangerous word when set against love and compassion. So also "democracy" often turns out to be a launching pad attitude for arguments about "rights." We are all so weary of battles, all so thirsty for love.

First, along the Way is the goodness you demonstrate to your neighbor. All that is needed is will, and determination. Love, after all, is a free-choice act of will.

If we care to hear what the Church is saying, it is saying "show your faith by how you treat those you speak to, or look at, every moment of the day."

And that, dear reader, because it often is lacking, is bothering the psyche of the Church. And there are some who care that it is a bother.



## Cenacle Retreat Scheduled

A Holy Week Retreat is scheduled for April 3-5 at the Cenacle Renewal Center in Rochester. It will be led by David Nowak of the diocesan liturgy office and the Cenacle Sisters. The retreat will begin with Holy Thursday supper and end with Holy Saturday's 7:30 p.m. Vigil Service. The highlights of the retreat will be an explanation of the services and suggestions for private prayer by Nowak, and participation in three of the services at the Cathedral led

by Bishop Clark. For further information those interested may contact Cenacle Ministry Office, 693 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14607. Telephone, (716)271-8755.

## Veterans Honor Hostages

Bath — More than 500 veterans attended ceremonies honoring the American hostages in Tehran on March 9 in the VA Center. Alan Harper, assistant center director, and Albert Szembrot, acting Grand Knight of Rochester Council 178, spoke briefly about the hostages. Father John Howe, VA chaplain, offered prayers for the safe return of the hostages.

The Rochester Council Knights of Columbus visited the VA Center to entertain and distribute gifts to the veterans. This was their 45th annual visit to Bath.

### Puzzle on Page 12

#### PUZZLE ANSWERS FOR SUNDAY, MARCH 23, 1980

I. 7; scribe 2; Moses 3; teacher 4; laugh 5; heat 6; hid 7; time 8; want 9; toy 10; tan 11; humid 12; hay  
Key Passages I. "Teacher," they said to him, "this woman has been caught in adultery."  
II. For I put water in the desert and rivers in the wasteland for my chosen people to drink, the people whom I formed for myself, that they might announce my praise.  
III: I give no thought to what lies behind but push on to what is ahead. My entire attention is on the finish line as I run toward the prize to which God calls me life on high in Christ Jesus.



## Letter From Iran

Monica Ortiz, left, a seventh grade pupil at St. Agnes Elementary School in Brooklyn, stands with classmates and reads a letter she received from U.S. Marine Sgt. Paul E. Lewis, a hostage being held by Iranian militants at the American Embassy in Teheran. The letter, addressed to Monica, was in response to a Christmas

card sent to the hostages along with others by the school's seventh and eighth grade pupils. Another hostage reply, signed by Steve Lauterback, was received by Haitian-born seventh grader Gracita Michael. (RNS)

## Easier to Vote

New voting machines, 27 in all, have been purchased by the Monroe County Board of Elections to make voting easier for the handicapped, county elections commissioners V. James Chiavari and W. Michael Losinger announced this week. With the new machines, election inspectors will be able to lower the ballot panel to allow voting at wheelchair height. The new equipment will be placed at polls identified as having the largest concentration of handicapped voters.

## Glaucoma Tests

Volunteers are needed to help the Association for the Blind with a glaucoma screening program. Glaucoma, detected early, can be treated effectively, and sight saved, the association says. Volunteers can be trained in three hours in the use of a device that measures, by a puff of air, pressure on the eye. Glaucoma screenings usually are conducted between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. weekdays at nutrition centers, senior citizen apartment houses, shopping malls and schools, the announcement says. People who wish to offer their services may call Evelyn Hartigan at 232-1111, ext. 35.

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