

Fr. Louis J. Hohman



The Open Window

What Is Essential Magisterium?

Until now I have held quite steadfastly to the policy of using only questions sent in by readers. Unfortunately at times there are no questions to answer even though I believe people always have questions and problems which need to be discussed. I intend to address questions which I think people really want to ask. Whenever I do that I will so indicate.

(My question) Many people have asked me why the answers I give to questions generate so much opposition. Why, they ask, would I want to create an atmosphere of conflict and disunity?

I have tried to think through the reasons why there is so much opposition engendered from answers to questions. Invariably the claim is made that the reason is a divergence from the Magisterium of the Church and therefore a kind of disloyalty to the Church. I feel strongly loyal to the Church

and its work in our world and try to obedient to even the minor things with which I disagree. I believe that when it comes to substantive Catholic Christianity that I am in accord with the Magisterium.

This does not appear to many of our readers to be true.

I find an apparent difference on the part of many people as to what constitutes the Magisterium and I must admit that if any of us had to sit down and say precisely what constitutes the essential Magisterium and what constituted mere theological opinion, most of us would not agree or be able to specify in any precise manner. Things which I believe are not part of the Magisterium but simply a part of Church practice, others believe to be a substantial or essential part of the Church's Magisterium. There perhaps can be no agreement on those particular matters.

Another source of conflict is the matter of the distinction of the sin and the sinner. Many times I have expressed my opinion as to the absence

of guilt in persons who perform acts which are objectively sinful. So, for example, a person who commits suicide obviously generates evil. I agree entirely that if that person knowingly and freely chose to take his own life which does not belong to him but to God, he would be committing a serious sin and would be guilty of it. But I very often say from a pastoral point of view, namely, that there are many circumstances in the concrete in life which either reduce or eliminate guilt in many of these areas. If the column were to be simply a statement of law as found in manuals of moral theology then I think I would discontinue writing. Rather I feel I am addressing real people in real circumstances with real problems and there needs attention given to those problems. Perhaps some of my readers have a fear that if I perceive that because of circumstances a particular person would not be guilty, that everyone will immediately jump to the conclusion that it's okay to do this particular thing, whatever it may be.

Overall, I find that discussion of these problems in the concrete is valuable and I would like to continue it. Perhaps we can come to some kind of agreement that we are merely discussing these matters and that they need not be a source of pain to anyone involved, but rather a source of light.

Insights in Liturgy Plan To Be Resourceful

By Pam Schaeffer
Constantly inundated by new material (books, music, workshop offerings, etc.), parish liturgy planners, at times, must experience a dilemma similar to that of a child in a penny candy store with a nickel to spend. Undecided! Confused! What new material being offered will satisfy our community's needs? How can we stretch our budget to cover all that we would like to do? Is this book, record album, magazine subscription, hymnal, etc. really going to be, or do, what the advertisement indicates, or are we wasting our money? How do we sort our priorities?

Fortunately there is a place to turn for those seeking help with problems like these: the Diocesan Office of Liturgy, located at the Pastoral Center, 1150 Buffalo Road Rd., Rochester, 14624; (716) 328-3210.

This year, among the many services already offered by the liturgy office, is a new format of programs incorporating the enrichment of all liturgical ministries (Lectors, Special Ministers of Communion, Pastoral Musicians, Presiders, Ushers, Liturgy Planners, etc.) with the added convenience to parishes (especially in saving time and expense in travel) of scheduling these services in various locations of our diocese.

A booklet outlining the programs we have planned with a brief description of each, the audience it is chiefly meant to serve, date(s), location(s), and registration information will be arriving soon. If you don't receive yours by the end of the first week in September, call the liturgy office.

Liturgy office staff members feel that this approach provides a solution for parishes who find themselves asking questions similar to those listed above. We see the advantages of this new style of delivering services to include:

- Time for study and evaluation — parish leaders will not feel rushed; rather, they will be able to discuss our programs in their entirety, and come to a consensus in light of the ministries in their parish.

- A plug in the communications gap — parishes will find that circulating program and registration information is simplified, because those already on our mailing list will be receiving a copy of our Service Booklet, and others can be informed easily and efficiently through the parish bulletin, newsletter, etc.

- Growth in ministry — parishes that encourage those responsible for liturgical ministry to participate in one or more of the programs that deal with their particular ministry will find their celebrations nourished by liturgical ministers with a growing awareness of their ministry and their responsibility in fostering the community's prayer.

- Availability of outside assistance — parishes and their ministers will sense the liturgy office's support and concern, and discover a wide

range of resources (both in material and personnel) through their participation. For example, the first program offered this year is entitled An Evening of Recollection for Liturgical Ministers. This workshop is for Lectors, Special Ministers of Communion, Musicians, Ushers, Presiders, and Liturgy Planners. Its description says: "For all people involved in liturgical ministry, these evenings will offer participants the opportunity to reflect on themselves as

leaders of prayer. The program will offer input by program leaders, times for prayer alone and shared reflection, as well as group prayer based on the Liturgy of the Hours. Participants will be encouraged to see themselves 'being' ministers, rather than people 'doing a job' in church." You will be able to attend: Wednesday, Sept. 17, at St. Mary's Church, Auburn, 7:30-9:30 p.m.; Tuesday, Sept. 23, at St. Cecelia's Church, Rochester, 7:45-9:45 p.m.; and Monday, Sept. 29, at St. Patrick's Church, Corning, 7:30-9:30 p.m. The cost per registrant is \$5.

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U.S. Pledges \$16.8 Million For Cuban/Haitian Refugees

Miami (RNS) — The U.S. government pledged \$16.8 million for Cuban and Haitian refugees in southern Florida, \$150,000 of that to be immediately available for resettlement of Haitians.

The announcement followed a warning by a coalition of resettlement agencies that no more Haitians would be accepted from U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS)

holding areas until federal funds were released to assist with resettlement.

Father Gerard Jean-Juste, director of the Haitian Refugee Center in Miami, said the conditions in the holding centers were deplorable — overcrowded, unsanitary, and short of shelters and other basic needs.

An estimated 500 Haitians are now arriving weekly in south Florida. One INS holding center, designed for 200 people, was crowded with about 950 Haitians. Another holding center had 150 refugees. Some 230 refugees who have been processed were housed temporarily at a hotel in Miami Beach, and their numbers have grown steadily because resettlement agencies don't have sufficient funds to place them in new homes.

Father Jean-Juste has urged the federal government to clarify the status of the Haitians, who are now designated as "entrants" with permission to stay for six months. Because they aren't classified as refugees, they aren't eligible for the full benefits of federal resettlement aid provided for legal refugees such as the Indochinese.

A group of public and private agencies called the Haitian Coalition has been trying since April to place the Haitians. The U.S. State Department promised \$500,000 in aid in June, but the coalition said it hasn't received any funds yet.

Adoration

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament will take place at Blessed Sacrament Church from noon to 5 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 4. A Rosary is said at 12:15 p.m. and Benediction is celebrated at 5 p.m. preceding the 5:20 p.m. Mass. The intention of the devotions is priestly and religious vocations.

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