

Laity Makes Invaluable Contribution

Following are excerpts from a recent address by Pope John Paul II to participants in the Fourth Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for the Laity and the Committee for the Family.

In the first place, I would like to express to you my sincere thanks for the readiness and the generosity with which you agreed... to put yourselves in the service of the Holy See while assuming different responsibilities within your respective organizations. Coming from all the regions of the world, you bring to it the riches of the multiple experiences of your associations at the local, national and even international level.



Your indispensable contribution has two poles. On the one hand, through listening and dialogue, you have to pay particular attention to the aspirations, the needs, and the challenges manifested in the lives of laymen as persons, in their families, their movements, their Christian communities, and also their different social and cultural commitments. In this way too you help the Holy See to acquire better and better knowledge of the context in which it exercises its pastoral government.

On the other hand, you have to evaluate the very varied

experiences of the laity in the light of Revelation and Christian Tradition, taking care that they take place in a spirit of fidelity to the Word of God and to the Magisterium of the Church, in order to reaffirm the Catholic identity of the associations, revive their evangelizing impetus as a response to the deepest expectations of men and peoples, and encourage them to integrate their specific apostolate, in an active and fruitful way, in the dynamism of the pastoral mission of the Church and her communities.

I can already assure you that I will receive and consider with great interest the results of this... assembly which has studied the present-day situation of the associations of the faithful, in particular the movements of laymen, in the life and mission of the Church.

I will confine myself to reminding you what I said on the occasion of my first apostolic journey, to the Catholic organizations of Mexico, and through them, to all lay organizations: "As until today, and increasingly better, may your associations form Christians with a vocation of holiness, staunch in their faith, certain in the doctrine proposed by the authentic Magisterium, firm and active in the Church, united in a deep spiritual life nourished by frequent reception of the sacraments of Penance and of the Eucharist, persevering in testimony and evangelical action, consistent and effective in their temporal commitments, constant promoters of peace and justice against all violence and oppression keen in critical discernment of situations and ideologies in the light of social teachings of the Church, trusting in the hope of the Lord."

Today I cannot develop these short but exacting reflections which contain the fundamental guiding threads of the life of the associations of Catholic laymen. These associations are schools for the formation of Christians; they encourage them to act like yeast in dough within the People of God, in order to bring forth new vocations in the service of the Gospel. In close communion with the Church, they do not isolate themselves in a self-sufficient movement of elites, but they offer a potential of charisms in view of the growth of the People of God in all structures and pastoral activities, under the direction of the bishops.

But Christians must also be the yeast in the dough in the midst of family, social, economic and political life in the various nations, and also on the international plane, in order to evangelize cultures, in their very roots, in order that there may come about better conditions of peace and justice, and the complete development of persons and peoples, so that it will be possible in this way to catch a glimpse of the fruits of brotherhood, in common recognition of divine sonship. Such demanding tasks cannot be assumed unless Christian laymen and associations of the faithful in general bear a vigorous and

enthusiastic testimony to Catholic identity, ecclesial communion, the formation of new men according to the Gospel, and concern with evangelization.

Let us be convinced that only the density and depth of religious experience, of the spiritual life of movements and associations as well as of their members, will make it possible to meet these requirements.

Vatican to Reconsider Galileo Conviction

Vatican City (RNS) — The Vatican will review the case of Galileo Galilei, the 17th Century Italian scientist and astronomer condemned as a heretic by the Roman Inquisition for teaching that the earth revolved around the sun, a Vatican official announced here.

case in connection with a study of science and atheism.

Addressing more than 200 prelates at the world synod of bishops, Bishop Poupard said the action was being taken in accord with "the precise wishes" of Pope John Paul II.

The announcement came just about a year after the pope told a distinguished gathering of scientists and cardinals that Galileo had been "wrongly" condemned.

Galileo was first condemned by the Rome Holy Office in 1616 for defending a comprehensive theory formulated a century before by the Polish astronomer Copernicus that the earth revolved around the sun, in flat contradiction of the prevailing view that the earth was the unimoving center of the universe.

The Italian astronomer, after assembling the first telescope and studying the planets, concluded that the Copernican heliocentric theory was fact.

The Holy Office, however, declared that the Copernican view was "philosophically foolish and absurd and, formally heretical" since it contradicted the Bible in many places, according to the literal meaning and according to the common exposition and interpretation of the holy fathers and learned theologians.

Seminary Board Adds Members

Two new members have been added to St. Bernard's Seminary's Board of Trustees.

Father Richard Tormey, pastor of St. Mary's in Bath, and John Horvath of Andersen and Co. of Rochester, will bring to 22 the number of persons on the board.

John Greisberger of Greisberger, Zicari, Hale and McConville, P.C., has been elected board chairman. Vincent Lenti, administrative director of the Community Education Division of the Eastman School of Music, is vice chairman.

Other officers are Bishop Matthew H. Clark, chancellor; Father Frank E. Lioi, president; Nimi Ibrahim, secretary, and Thomas F. Banaszewski, treasurer.

NFP Schedules Review Session

The Natural Family Planning office has scheduled a review session at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 18, at the Bishop Kearney Education Building at St. Mary's Hospital. Gary and Judi Neuderfer, certified instructors, will present the session.

They will review the method and rules to follow during breastfeeding, and will lead a discussion on abstinence, helpful hints and other topics.

The session is limited to couples involved with breastfeeding who have been instructed in the NFP program since January 1978. Registration is required by calling the NFP office, 464-8705. Any others interested in instruction also should call the office.

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