

Episcopalians, Catholics Discuss Inter-Marriages

By general agreement, clergy from both the Episcopal and Roman Catholic dioceses will put on paper their findings after a day-long discussion of the theological, pastoral, scriptural and liturgical aspects of marriage between members of their communions.

The discussion, held at Sacred Heart Cathedral last Friday, drew about 100 clergymen. It was the third such inter-diocesan conference.

Participants analyzed

ecumenical marriages in the light of theology, pastoral preparation, canon law, and officiating at the liturgy.

Participants included Bishop Matthew H. Clark; Bishop Robert R. Spears; Rev. Dr. John C. Wynn, professor of pastoral ministry at Colgate Rochester; Father William Graf, pastor of the Church of the Annunciation; Father Robert J. Page, Milner and Lewis professor of systematic theology at Colgate Rochester; Mrs. Donna Fitch and Frank Staropoli, both of the Catholic Office of Family Life; Father Thomas Hanson,

Catholic Family Center; Father Robert F. O'Neill, Catholic Tribunal Office; Father Robert M. Wainwright, rector of St. Paul's Church; Father Bruce Hansen, Episcopal Commission on Liturgy and Music; Father Robert J. Kennedy, Catholic Department of Liturgy.

The event was organized by Ms. Isabel Galkins, ecumenical officer for the Episcopal diocese, and Ms. Margery Nurnberg, director of the diocesan Commission for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs.



More than 100 attended the sessions at the cathedral. Photos by Terrance J. Brennan

Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

On the Right Side



Problem Priests

From a Female Voice of Conscience:

"Yes, I am alive and well. Your last Courier article forces me to pick up my pen. Your answer to that poor lady was no answer (Courier-Journal, 3/18/81). Isn't it time some of our priests were told the facts of life? Yes. The priest is human, but shouldn't he be one step ahead of us? Granted we have some beautiful priests, but one bad apple spoils the basket. Isn't it true that we accomplish more with honey than with vinegar? It has taken me a long time to realize that the priest, no matter what, is safe in his job."

A reply to Mrs. X:

"It was good to hear from you, especially since I thought you had written me off as a hopeless case. Never do that. Through the years I have read your letters, understood your frustrations and really had a sympathy for your Church problems. I suppose they have been more problems with priests than with the Church.

Now let's analyze your conclusion: "Your answer to that poor lady was no answer." Do you really think

that? Boiled to its essence, what was my answer?

1) Presenting a child to the Catholic community for membership is a serious thing, with responsibilities from those who present the child (parents and god-parents). Do read the text of the baptismal rite.

2) Every Catholic belongs to the universal community which we call the Catholic Church; but he also belongs to a smaller community which we usually call a parish. Within that smaller community, the privileges of the Faith and Sacraments are his by right. But with these rights come corresponding obligations. Just as in civil society, we have a right to civic care: good government, sewage disposal, good roads, police protection, schools, etc. We also have the responsibility of paying for these things through taxes, elections, concern for the civic good. I don't think tax collectors, IRS or others, really concern themselves about the feeling of the recipients of tax-supported things. It's rather impersonal; and I agree with you that we priests, bishops, sisters and others who administer the Church should not have the impersonality of the IRS, but rather the Personality of Christ. But both history and the present often demonstrate the opposite.

But here's the rub. What is a bishop to do with a priest who congenitally lacks kindness or good judgment, who alienates people, though that same priest may be well regarded by others? As far as job security is concerned, it is true with the shortage of priests we are more secure than many in other professions and vocations. But don't you think it is significant that most priests today, after 10 years in a parish, want a change? Much of this comes from frustrations, failures and contestations which have accumulated over the course of 10 years. And many sincerely think the people need a change from them.

I hesitate to suggest a slogan which I frequently use, "Cheer up!" because I think you are not presently emotionally in the mood to cheer up. But may I offer this? Most priests try to give satisfactory service, even if we don't always succeed. Some by personality and temperament will rub people the wrong way. Others will be greatly loved, not because of grace, but because of a natural cheerfulness and outgoing personality. Perhaps we should be grateful for what we do have. Years ago I memorized a little poem which has helped many people. It goes:

From the time that you're born/ 'Til you ride in a hearse/ Things are never so bad/ They couldn't be worse.

Do write again. Your letters give me a lift, and send me to examine my conscience.



Bishop Spears (left) and Bishop Clark share laughter at last week's ecumenical clergy conference.



The panel on canon law and liturgy included, from left, Father Wainwright, Father O'Neill, Father Kennedy and Father Hansen.

SSJs Set Vocations Program

The Sisters of St. Joseph will offer a presentation by Sister Anne Mary Dooley on personal discernment and making decisions, especially in regard to the question of religious vocations, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, April 4 at the congregation's Retreat Center, 4095 East Ave.

Sister Anne Mary is a professor at Niagara University. Her program will include presentations, time for questions, discussion and reflection. The day will close with celebration of the Eucharist.

Information and reservations are obtained by contacting Sister Kathleen Weider, 16 Lake View Park, Rochester, N.Y. 14613; (716) 254-1325.

The day is being sponsored by the congregation's Vocations Core.

HELP TO QUIT

The United Cancer Council will hold a six-session daytime smoking withdrawal program from noon to 1 p.m. beginning April 6 in the council office, 1441 East Ave. The registration deadline is April 3. Further information is available through (716) 473-8230. A \$10 registration fee is asked.

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