

Editorials

Which 'Father' Is Correct?

"The production of arms is allegedly justified on the grounds that in present-day conditions peace cannot be preserved, without an equal balance of armaments. And so, if one country increases in armaments, others feel the need to do the same, and if one country is equipped with nuclear weapons, other countries must produce their own, equally destructive..."

"Justice, right reason and humanity urgently demand that the arms race should cease, that the stockpiles which exist in various countries should be reduced equally and simultaneously by the parties concerned, that nuclear weapons should be banned and that a general agreement should be eventually reached about progressive disarmament and an effective method of control."

Compare those words with these by a scientist who said that the neutron bomb "allows the return of civilized warfare, even in a nuclear war."

The man who made that statement is Dr. Samuel T.

Cohen, possessor of the sobriquet, "Father of the Neutron Bomb." He is a senior staff member of R&D Associates, Marina del Ray, Calif., and he expressed that view in an interview with the Wanderer, a Roman Catholic weekly.

That same edition had an editorial on the subject. It hailed one set of views as "a refreshing infusion of good sense and objectivity into the increasingly irrational discussion of this vital issue."

Which "father's" words are "refreshing" to the Wanderer? The Holy Father or the Father of the Neutron Bomb? Sadly, the latter.

These strong and clear words by Pope John Paul II serve as guidance to Catholics concerning the latest nuclear killer — the neutron bomb.

No wonder some non-Catholics are cynical about the Church's pro-life position on such issues as abortion when they can read in a Roman Catholic newspaper an endorsement of a scientific and violent solution to problems rather than a spiritual one. No wonder even Catholics can become confused when a national Roman Catholic newspaper can praise the words of a scientist in clear contradiction to the spirit and letter of papal directives.

You're Needed

Volunteer work to aid others is the essence of good neighborliness and thus, in a very real sense, of good Christian practice.

Volunteerism is one of those wonderful activities whereby all parties benefit — the organization, the volunteer and the people in need who are being served.

A new organization has been formed in Rochester to match the potential volunteer with a setting that best fits the individual. The Volunteer Forum at 50 Prince St. will be offering this free service to those who want to become involved in helping others.

The forum reports that all kinds of volunteers are needed — not only those with special talents or skills but also people with little or no work background who will be trained.

In addition to matching volunteers with needs, the forum will provide consultation, training and support for volunteer administrators and agencies interested in volunteer program development.

No one should feel unneeded — there is work for all. It is worthy work. The telephone number is 275-9800.

and Opinions

Hierarchy Is Christ-Ordered

Editor: Mr. Dombeck's erudite, neo-theological apologia on behalf of the Women's Ordination Conference and other dissident groups opposing the Church's position on the ordination of women and married men deserves a response.

However sincere it might be, this mini-essay is well-laced with theological aberrations. While most knowledgeable Catholics will readily admit that there have been all too many mistakes made through the centuries as a result of the misuse of hierarchical structures within the Church, it was in fact Christ who established the hierarchy when He entrusted the Church to the leadership of Peter and his predecessors. Simply stated, it follows then that if you claim to be a member of the Catholic Church, you acknowledge that the pope and the bishops are those individuals intended by God to lead His Church. When and if it is part of God's plan to include women and married men in the ranks of those eligible to be ordained priests by His bishops, this decision will be manifested through the pope and bishops, no doubt via the divine intervention or inspiration of the Paraclete. There are, however, those of us who grow weary of individuals who take cheap shots at a Mother Teresa, who disrupt ordinations by screaming "we are worthy" and whose ministry has become self-seeking and self-serving. None of us is worthy, and none of those who have not yet been called to formal ordination will not be called until it is willed by God.

Shaking one's fist at God in the authority validly given to the pope and bishops indicates some deficiency in faith, hope and charity. Serenity, peace of mind and true spiritual union with God are to be found in a selfless acceptance of God's will in a spirit of genuine humility and obedience.

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Editor: Mr. Dombeck graced us with an "argument" favoring Catholic priestesses resting on

two noxious postulations: a. that the Presence of Christ "does not occur through the action of the celebrant but through the participation of the entire community of which the celebrant is a member;" and b. "The presider's own charism is acknowledged in the community by ordination; it is not conferred by ordination." Which is precisely why it has been "idly" put forth: a. Besides a congregational presence. "In the sacrifice or the Eucharist (Christ) is present both in the person of the minister, and above all under the Species of the Eucharist... whole and entire, God and man, substantially and permanently." (Euch. Myster. 1.9) The priestly presence differs, also, from that of the laity, not merely by degree, but essentially (ibid, 11). b. "In virtue of the Sacrament of Orders, they (priests) are consecrated in order to preach the Gospel... as well as to celebrate Divine worship" (Lum. Gen. III, 28)...

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Editor: I feel that to neglect to comment on James Dombeck's letter about the Eucharist would certainly be shirking my duty.

Almost the complete second paragraph of his letter ("The liturgical leader... conferred by ordination") just might be true. However, if it is (and I don't know where this takes place; so far not in Red Creek!), it has nothing whatsoever to do with the Mass, the Consecration or Communion. The Consecration is the point during the Mass (liturgical celebration?) when the Holy Spirit, through the ordained priest who is celebrating the Mass changes the bread and wine into the actual body and blood of Christ by transubstantiation. This cannot occur without an ordained priest and this has been so since the first Laying of Hands as recorded in the bible.

Jesus broke many a strong tradition during His short ministry here on earth. A few examples were when He healed a Canaanite woman's

daughter (speaking to a Canaanite was taboo, as well as the fact that she was a woman), when He used the parable of the Good Samaritan for an example to His followers (Samaritans were an ostracized people), curing and healing on the Sabbath, and on and on and on. My point is that if He wanted women to have the power of transubstantiation He would not have been afraid to break tradition to do it. The all-knowing Christ knew exactly what He was doing and we all simply have to have a bit more faith in Him! He has a reason for everything, even if we don't understand it...

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Editor: I would like to address this letter to those who share the mentality displayed in Mr. Dombeck's letter of Sept. 9. I understand that mentality completely and understanding it I reject and denounce it instantaneously.

But I would like to have Father Vincent Miceli elucidate this mentality for readers from excerpts taken from his latest book, "The Antichrist."

These minds "led by agnostic philosophers and theological skeptics, because they have abandoned the supernatural view of reality, looks at God and Revelation in an "immanentist rather than transcendent manner. Hence, such minds concoct evolutionary, immanentist explanations of God, religion, dogma, the sacraments, Scripture, the Church and its Magisterium. All faith, religion and revelation is subjected to criticism by science and personal experience. Divine revelation is imperfect and, therefore, subjected to continued, indefinite progress corresponding to the progress of reason... As experience changes and evolves so must dogma take on new, even contradictory meanings."

"Now the first aim of Catholic modernists, as forerunners of the Antichrist, is to convert the Church of Rome to modernism and then the Universal Church... Like the Antichrist when he comes, they seek to create a Church in their own image and likeness..."

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Editor: "Disagreement, Not Rejection" is a recent example of sincere, well-intentioned but false and subversive teachings which are the fruits from non-Catholic roots of priests and religious: "Ongoing revelations," baseless confidence in communal discernment of the Will of God and the truth of His teaching, believing the Mass is a celebration of the presence of Christ and its being brought about by the action of those present rather than the priest who is considered merely a liturgical leader, are some of the false teachings in the letter.

In accordance with the Holy Scripture, the Catholic Church teaches that public Divine Revelation was completed by Our Lord during apostolic time.

Catholics believe the Church magisterium is the instrument through which Our Lord teaches His Divine truths and the Will of God, free from error as He promised His apostles. Individuals, and communities who hear Our Lord's magisterium are not deceived into evil with Lucifer's guise of good.

The Church teaches that the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is identical with the sacrifice of the cross in that Jesus, under the appearances of bread and wine, offers Himself, body, soul and divinity, as a propitiatory sacrifice, atoning for the sins of the living and the dead. The privilege of offering ourselves to Our Lord as sacrificial victims with Him through the power of the priest, and the promise of eternal life in the communion of saints are the basis of joy and celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

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Editor's Note: Reader Schmitz's letter was printed in its entirety. The other letters, expressing essentially the same viewpoint, were shortened in the interests of space.

We Are All In Priesthood

Editor: Until recent letters appeared in the Courier-Journal (beginning June 24), I was apathetic toward the con-



trovery over admitting women to the priesthood, content with the status quo, giving no heed to the consequences of the shortage of priests. But with each new letter my awareness and concomitantly my concern, has grown.

Regarding the question of whether a woman can "be" Christ or act in the person of Christ, i.e. represent Him in the sacraments, etc., I believe denial of this is tantamount to St. Paul's affirmation that those who are "baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There cannot be Jew nor Greek, there cannot be slave, or freeman, there cannot be male and female, for you all are one in Christ Jesus." (Gal. 3:27; cf. Paul on the Body of Christ, 1 Cor. 12:12f, 27).

So far the only seemingly valid reason for an all-male priesthood is that Christ ordained only men, but even here questions must be raised. It seems to have been forgotten that when Jesus ordained His apostles as priests their chief task was to witness to His redemptive death and resurrection, to evangelize (cf. Ac. 1:8, 15-26; Mt. 28:18ff; Mk. 16:15-20; Lk. 24:46ff; Gal. 1:15f). In that era, women's witness was not recognized as legally valid, which is why the women who saw the resurrected Christ on Easter morning were omitted from Paul's list of witnesses in 1 Cor. 15:3-8. Today, women's witness is valid. Does Christ need more witnesses

today — or does He have enough?

Jesus didn't teach the apostles everything during His earthly ministry; rather, He promised that His Holy Spirit would remain to continue teaching and guiding His Church into all truth (Jn. 14:25f; 16:12-15). Clear proof of this is the vision given to St. Peter, coupled with his subsequent witness of the Holy Spirit being poured out on Cornelius and his household, that taught the reluctant Church years after Christ's earthly ministry that they were to admit to the faith (Ac. 10; 11:1-18). Perhaps the Holy Spirit is granting us a vision today of admitting women to the priesthood because of the great unfulfilled need of so many without the faith.

But regardless of whether women are ever ordained, we are all members of the holy priesthood spoken of by Peter (1 Pet. 2:5, 9), offering to God our spiritual sacrifices (2:5) of witnessing to Christ through our Christ-like conduct (1:15f; 2:11f; 3:1ff) and verbal witness (2:9; 3:15f), which is God's will for the salvation of those who have not yet come to faith in Him (2:12; 15: 3:1, 16f). Our concern should not be which gender performs the work of the kingdom but that His kingdom will come — according to the prayer Christ Himself brought to us all.

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