

Al Walz Retires To Parish Work

Albert G. Walz, manager of Trant's Inc., the diocese's oldest religious goods store, has announced his retirement effective Saturday, Nov. 21.

Walz, 65, would have celebrated his 40th anniversary with the company in January. He is the last of the original group of employees that worked under Esther Trant, foundress of the business.

Walz began his tenure at the store's Clinton Avenue location in 1942. Since then he has seen the business through various times, including the recent move from downtown Rochester to its present location on South Avenue.

Walz resides in Greece and is a member of St. John the Evangelist Parish there.



WALZ

Though he is retiring from Trant's, Walz will continue a less rigorous schedule working as a parish assistant for Father Joseph D'Aurizio at St. John's.

Fr. John Reedy

Looking for the Lord



A New Style of Leadership

As a group, the American bishops rarely come up with a new style of religious leadership; they tend to be cautious, reluctant to move away from their traditions.

But a new style of teaching does seem to be emerging in the wave of statements from individual bishops who are denouncing as immoral such national policies as the development of the neutron bomb, the huge investment in the MX missile, even the continued stockpiling of nuclear weapons.

The substance of these statements has been appearing in this paper during recent months. Here I want to look at the change in style which I find both inspiring and potentially dangerous.

It has been rare for an individual bishop to speak of his own authority in denouncing a national policy.

And there is no moral consensus yet formulated on these matters of nuclear weaponry, in fact, a committee of the National Conference is presently engaged in the effort to develop a statement which the bishops can issue as a joint policy. On other issues, most bishops would regard it as bad form to anticipate the work of such a committee and proclaim their own moral judgment.

But that's just what has been happening here.

Moreover, on complex social, economic, and technical matters, the bishops tend to be wary about their own lack of expert knowledge; they usually want to consult with people who do have technical knowledge before taking a public stand.

But these bishops seem to be saying: The threat to human life is so great, the moral issues are so grave, that I cannot allow myself to be silenced because I do not have the knowledge of a nuclear scientist combined with that of a member of the National Security Council. Some moral issues are so

compelling that they demand a response. To delay is to reject my responsibility.

Clearly they are not speaking as technical experts; instead, they are speaking out of their own convictions about the message Jesus taught.

They have been willing to use the authority they have as leaders, teachers of the Christian community.

While I'm sure that there is some organized effort to promote these statements (the Pax Christi group would certainly encourage them), I don't believe that this is a programmed development. Most of the statements have the ring of personal moral conviction. They sound like the products of men wrestling with their own consciences.

The dangers? This is a type of moral analysis which is unfamiliar to most Catholics. We are familiar with the kind of close reasoning which goes into the moral judgment on abortion and the annulment of marriages. These condemnations, however, leap beyond the impossible mix of specific facts and issues. They say: No matter how many unanswered questions are involved, the final dangers are so devastating that they cannot be accepted.

Many Catholics of these dioceses are not going to be able to follow their bishops on these judgments.

And eventually the administration will strike back, probably with a patronizing rejection of "religious do-gooders who don't really understand the situation." This could turn into a rough battle.

I'm not sure where it's leading. In all probability these concerns will be discussed at the bishops' meeting in November. But I doubt that most of these men who have spoken will be willing to back away from their judgments.

And as one who wants to respect religious leadership in the church, I find that encouraging.

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