

Sister Muriel Curran, SSND



Viewpoint: Sisters Reflect

Thy Kingdom Come!

What is my vision of the Church now and for the future?

When I speak in theological terms, the Church is a mystery of a divine/human institution; a community of believers in Jesus Christ as Lord; the consoling presence of God in human history or as stated in Lumen Gentium: "By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and

of the unity of all mankind."

Scripturally, Acts identifies the characteristics of the early Christian community as committed members, not yet perfect, who are baptized and who delight in sharing their experience and knowledge of Jesus. They are hospitable, generous, open to and accepting of "outsiders" and come together for the breaking of the bread.

When I reflect experientially on who and what the Church is for me, the possibilities are infinite. For the Church is rooted in the experience of "a com-

munity of faith in the significance of what has already happened in Jesus Christ, of love as an expression of the power and viability of that event and of hope in the power of the future to recreate all things new." My pocket calendar attests to numerous experiences within the community of faith, hope and love since I came to reside in Rochester five months ago.

This Church which I know, love and have experienced, has a history which primarily has evolved out of the West. Her theology, liturgy and discipline have all developed against a Western background. It is estimated that by the beginning of the third millennium only 42 percent of all Christians will be living in the West as contrasted with 85 percent at the beginning of this century.

As we move toward the year 2000, I believe we will see more and more the influence of the Southern Hemisphere, particularly Latin America and Africa upon the Church. What specific direction the Church of the Third World will point us to in the future, I can only conjecture. I do believe the global issues of nuclear power, the neutron bomb, abortion, oppression

of minorities, and pollution will challenge us to be vibrant persons of faith, hope and love.

A challenge of equal gravity resides among persons in our neighborhoods and cities who are unfamiliar with Jesus Christ and the local Church of the Diocese of Rochester. My hope is they will ask us the kinds of questions the Aymaran Indians asked our Sisters on the Altiplano of Bolivia: Who do you believe in that makes you believe in us? Who/what is the source of your love that prompts you to live among us and share your love with us? What makes you continue to hope in a future that can be different from what we know?

My vision of the Church, present and future, is rooted in a life-giving tradition, witnessed to by a community of faith, hope and love which will never rest until the enduring values of the gospel of Jesus Christ are universally realized. East and West, North and South will cry out together: Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done... in freedom, justice, peace, love, compassion and reconciliation.

Sister Muriel Curran, SSND, is Vicar for Religious in the Diocese of Rochester.

NFP Sets Info Nights

Information sessions, sponsored by Natural Family Planning Education of Rochester, are scheduled for 7:30-9 p.m., Monday, March 1, in the Kearney Building at St. Mary's Hospital; 7:30-9 p.m., Friday, March 12, in the Main Conference Room at Rochester General Hospital;

7:30-9 p.m., on Monday, March 12, in Room B-310, Lincoln Hall, Community College of the Finger Lakes, Canandaigua.

These seminars are free and open to the public. For more information call Natural Family Planning at 464-8705.

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GIVE A PRIEST TO GOD

IN MEMORY OF YOUR DEAR ONES

Fr. Paul J. Cuddy



On the Right Side

A Letter From An Old Friend

Ray was an airman at San Antonio Lackland Air Force Base, Tex., in 1953. He went on to our Officer Candidate School there, where I was the Catholic chaplain. He had two years of college before enlisting, and he became a Catholic while at Lackland; staunch, devout and knowledgeable. After he left the Air Force with the GI Bill benefits, he returned to college and got a master's in educational administration. He returned to his home state of Washington, and has been an elementary school principal for many years. He married the daughter of a fine Protestant minister. She also became a very intelligent Catholic with the blessing of her father and mother, and the relationship has remained cordial. Their four children all went to the Jesuit high school, where the mother taught music. Ray and I have kept an occasional correspondence for over 25 years, though we have not met since Texas days. Last fall I sent him several Sheen tapes, and included one by Mother Teresa. On Jan. 29, Ray wrote this heartening letter:

"The tapes arrived and have given much satisfaction. I haven't decided how they'll be passed along — but sharing

will give me a chance to extend the good things you offer to others. Yes, Father, our prayers have been answered many times — for our four children are now good young adults. During this very difficult time our kids have grown up good people. We see many signs that they will be 'givers' in this world flooded with 'takers.' The Mother Teresa tape you included is a real bonus. As I listened to it over again, I hear some things differently. The tape is obviously the same. It is I who am changing.

"My favorite Bishop Sheen tape is the one on Simon Peter. Years ago, I heard a fluent young priest describe in a unique way how some who present Christ allow the warmth of His message to escape. He said, 'Some allow the warmth of Christ's message to go up the flue, instead of allowing it to radiate.' Bishop Sheen's presentations are truly food for the soul. Our second son, Andy, teaches in a town near Tacoma. He visits us twice a month. Last visit, I sent 'Simon Peter' back with him. He has a tape deck in his car. The tape impressed him and he wants more!

"During these difficult times I see so much unhappiness. As a school principal, I have a 'window on life' which presents constant evidence of how American people are failing to live Christianity. Children are suffering from this failure. While I am basically optimistic, I am disheartened by so much of the pagan point of view in the American lifestyle today. Your articles, talks and tape communications are a bright ray of light for me. It makes me want to do something similar, something which would be appropriate for a lay person to do."

His wife put a beautiful P.S. to the letter: "Sunday, Ray begins as a cantor at Mass. He is nervous, but he will be great. I am the organist and will transpose to accommodate his range. Andy has a girlfriend who will graduate in June in special education. She is about to become a Catholic."

Parish Sponsors Renewal

Immaculate Conception Parish will be conducting a parish renewal program from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 27, in the school gym.

Titled "Open up Your Heart and Let His Son Shine In," the program will be given by Father Louis Hohman, pastor of St. Vincent dePaul Church, and Sister Jean Rodman, who does parish council education work for the diocese.

CLASSIFIED

\$5.00 for 15 words, 25¢ a word after the first 15 words. Deadline — Friday at noon for next Wednesday's paper. CLASSIFIED ADS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY CHECK OR MONEY ORDER. Send to:

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ANTIQUES

12th ANNUAL ANTIQUE show and sale. March 6 and 7, 1982, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Holy Cross School Auditorium, Lake Ave. and Latta Road, Rochester (village of Charlotte). 33 dealers, hot lunches and dinners available. Donation \$1.50.

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