

Give Seniors 'Worthy Place,' Pontiff Urges World Society

Vatican City (NC) — Pope John Paul II reaffirmed the Church's opposition to euthanasia and urged that society give the elderly a worthy place and role in human society.

In a letter to the World Conference on the Third Age, sponsored by the United Nations in Vienna, Austria, the pope said the Catholic stand on euthanasia, contained in a 1980 declaration of the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, is based on the Christian viewpoint of human life.

"Life is a gift of God to men, created by love in his image and likeness," the French-language papal letter said.

"This understanding of the

sacred dignity of the human person leads one to give value to all stages of life," he added. "It is a question of consistency and justice."

Pope John Paul quoted from the 1980 declaration, which said that "no one can in any way permit the killing of an innocent human being, whether a fetus or an embryo, an infant or an adult, an old person, or one suffering from an incurable disease, or a person who is dying."

The pope also repeated the declaration's warning that "it is very important to protect, at the moment of death, both the dignity of the human person, and the Christian concept of life, against a technological attitude that threatens to become an abuse."

Referring to preparatory documents for the conference which will close Friday, Pope John Paul backed several guiding principles expressed in them.

He specifically cited four of the principles: attention to the elderly as such and to the quality of their lives; respect for the right of the elderly to remain active members of society; the desire to promote structures allowing each generation to make its contribution to society; and an appeal to all to seek satisfactory solution to the diverse problems facing the elderly.

"A society truly aware of its duties toward the generations that have contributed to making the history of the nation must set up ap-

propriate institutions," and assure those generations "a place and a role in the human community," the pope said.

"May the leaders of today's world work together for a true promotion of man and lead their peoples along that route," he said.

The Holy See was represented at the Vienna conference by a five-man delegation, headed by Chilean Bishop Francisco Jose Cox Hueneus, secretary of the Pontifical Council for the Family. Msgr. Charles Fahey, director of the Third Age Center at Fordham University in New York was also in the delegation.

RPO Concert In City Park

The Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, under the direction of Isaiah Jackson, will perform at 8 p.m., Friday, Aug. 6, at Manhattan Square Park.

Strauss; selections from Kiss Me Kate by Cole Porter, and Amperito Roca by Texidor.

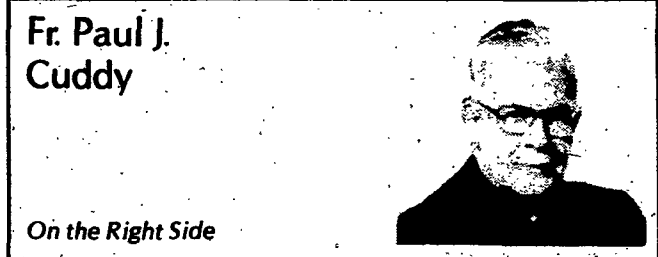
Rain date is Aug. 18.

Selections will be Semiramide Overture by Rossini; Carmen Fantasy by Sarasate; three dances from the Three Cornered Hat by De Falla; Toccata and Fugue, D Minor by Bachokowski; Vocalise by Rachmaninoff; Blue Danube Waltz by

Falling Stars

The Perseid meteor shower should be in best view for diocesan the nights of Aug. 11-13, the Rochester Museum and Science Center has announced.

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Defending The Faith

Mr. Phil Donahue WGN-TV 2501 W. Bradley Place Chicago, Ill. 60618

I am not one of your admirers, but I do recognize what an influence your show has. Erratic Catholics like Father Greeley, the two Sisters of the National Coalition of Women-Religious and such like, who parade as faithful Catholics are much less open than yourself in rejection of the Faith. I am asking that you invite Ralph Martin as a guest on your program. Martin has recently written an important book, "The Crisis of Truth," exposing the undermining of the Church by her own members. His mind would be a good fence against your own. While I think you would have made a superb lawyer, I also think Martin would be quite a match for you, and give us all a good program. He does represent faithful Catholicism. I hope you will honor this request.

To a Disturbed Priest:

This letter is to acknowledge your objecting to my article of July 21, which objected to the Sisters

of the Coalition of Women Religious on the Phil Donahue Show, affecting to represent American Catholicism. If to you I seemed unjust in suggesting that these women have supplanted the Gospel with sexism, and that they represent a theological ambivalence regarding authentic religious life, I would refer you to a book now quite in the fore with concerned Catholics. The book is "The Crisis of Truth," by Ralph Martin.

He is a graduate of Notre Dame University, a Woodrow Wilson Fellow of Princeton, a leader in Cursillo and the charismatic movement, a protege of Cardinal Suenens, and a personal friend of Pope John Paul II. For an illustration of the lengths these anti-Church Catholics will go, turn to pages 34 and 35 and read:

"Twisting of the Scripture to suit a particular purpose sometimes becomes so strained that its practitioners finally admit that their view cannot be justified by Scripture, tradition or Church teaching... They end up rejecting the authority of God's Word or even Christianity itself. This has happened in certain sections of the feminist movement.

"One prominent Nun finally declared: 'The Scriptures are unredeemably sexist... To say that this portrayal (of women) reflects the cultural condition of the age in which the books were written in no way solves the problem. In my view, that explanation ignores the claim made by both the synagogue and church that the books purport to contain God's Word. If the Word of God can be so corrupted by the mores of the culture in which it is received and on a matter of such centrality, it is in need of correction.' (Sister Ann Patrick Ware: an address to an interfaith gathering of feminists in NYC, 1980.)

Some time ago I celebrated Sunday Mass in a hospital chapel. After the homily, a woman in her 20s called out: "I wish to make a statement." A bit surprised, since this is not yet integrated into our Eucharistic Liturgy, I said, "Oh?" She continued, "I think the Lord's Prayer should be changed to say, 'Our Father and Mother, who art in heaven.'" Making a rapid exegesis, I replied, "Well, I'm afraid we're stuck with what we have. That is what was given us by the Lord."

No, I quite reject your objections. It seems to me that fidelity to the Holy Father and the Holy See is integral to the religious life. If Christ gave the commission to His Church, "Go, teach all nations," I do not believe that He left us a Church which is free to denounce the Sacred Scriptures and which would teach contradictions.

Lay Ministry Seminar Termed Successful

Judging from the responses of participants, the national Lay Ministry Seminar at Notre Dame Retreat House recently was highly successful.

The seminar drew participants from as far as Florida and Ohio, though most were diocesan. On the final evaluation form, delegates were asked to rate the seminar overall on a scale of 1 to 5 and the average rating was 4.1.

In general, those at the seminar thought that presentations were so varied and enriching that it was difficult to pick out one part

more helpful than another, according to program officials.

One person said, "I think just meeting the speakers and all other people here and finding out all the things being done gave me a broader vision and lots of encouragement."

Another offered, "The seminar was organized in such a step-by-step way, with each presentation building upon and enriching the last, that I feel unable to select one part to say it was the best."

Although 39 attended parts of the seminar, there were 28

full-time registrants which seminar promoters found expectable because of vacations and other summer-time conflicts. A group discussion at the end offered positive suggestions for improving the next seminar.

Ron Platten, president of Parenthood, Inc., the sponsoring agency, said, "We are pleased and encouraged by the many positive results we have seen. The suggestions for improving the seminar will definitely be taken. We appreciate the support we received, especially from the

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