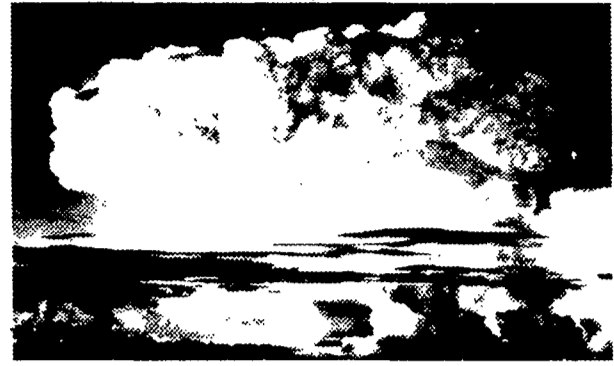


# RAP AROUND

Joan M. Smith, Editor

## Bishop Takes Nuclear War into the Classroom



**Billings, Mont. (NC News)** — Only two students in a class of about 20 juniors at Billings Central Catholic High School said they feared nuclear war in their lifetime.

Thirteen said they had no such fear and the others were uncertain.

The students expressed their views during a visit to their classroom by Bishop Thomas J. Murphy of Great Falls-Billings, who had come to discuss the U.S. Catholic Bishops' proposed pastoral letter on war and peace.

Leaders in Washington

and Moscow are "not dumb enough" to pull the nuclear trigger, said one student.

Another said nuclear war, if it occurred, would probably be accidental because of a computer malfunction.

Some said nuclear

weapons would be more dangerous in the hands of leaders such as Iran's Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini or former Ugandan president Idi Amin.

Most of the class agreed that the bishops were not being excessive in opposing nuclear strikes in population areas and in virtually ruling out first nuclear strikes or tactical nuclear responses because of the danger of escalation.

A boy said the issue is underplayed because nothing has been done to reduce the threat of nuclear war.

Disagreeing with that view, another boy said the issue is overdone because the Russians have never done anything harmful to Americans.

A girl said youngsters become indifferent to the

issue when it is repeatedly emphasized.

Bishop Murphy told the youngsters they should have reverence for life and seek quality of life for the handicapped, retarded and others. He said they should oppose both abortion and nuclear war, because both destroy human life.

Calling the youngsters to prayer and penance, Bishop Murphy said God responds to those in time of need. He recalled that a church he served in the Chicago Archdiocese was packed with praying people for three days during the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 when nuclear war was feared. The U.S.-Soviet confrontation ended without war.

Peace is tenuous because of the amount of stockpiled weapons, Bishop Murphy said. There are 12 tons of TNT for every human being on earth, he said.

The Bishop painted a grim picture for the youngsters of the effects of dropping a 10-megaton nuclear bomb on Billings. Everyone in a three-mile radius would be killed, he said, and one of every two people in a six-mile radius would die, while nine of every 10 would be severely burned.

"Air raid shelters would turn into crematoriums," Bishop Murphy said. "Infection would spread like the plague."

He said a treaty banning the testing of nuclear weapons is needed because the tests "are destroying the earth which sustains us."

In visiting the class, Bishop Murphy was continuing a practice he began when he became head of the diocese almost five years ago. Each year he has taught in each of the junior and senior classes of the three Catholic high schools in the diocese.

## EQUAL TIME

Do you fear a nuclear war during your lifetime?

### AQUINAS

**TOM LOEWENGUTH**  
Senior  
Student Council  
vice president



"Yes. I've read books about dropping the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and from just reading these books and what those people went through is devastating. And we here in Rochester with Kodak are a main target for attack. Most people let the idea of nuclear war slide. They just don't think about it."

**JOE LUCONTE**  
Senior  
football



"No. I don't think Russia and the U.S. will get into a nuclear war because they know they have the power to blow up the world five or six times over. I think there are nuclear deterrents among the two nations. They both know if there is a nuclear war it will destroy the world. They both know there won't be anything left to rule after a nuclear war."

**JOHN KELLY**  
Junior  
Arette



"I don't fear it myself — that it will happen in the U.S.; maybe a limited nuclear war combined with a conventional war in Europe. I don't think it would be caused by a madman. It would be caused by a series of events. Right now it's in a building stage and it takes a major step to start one and stop one and I don't know what that might be. A lot of people realize what a nuclear war could do but no one is educated in the possibility. It's really too complex for people to get a grasp of the reality of nuclear war."

**JIM BERNITT**  
soccer



"Yes I do, because in class we've been talking about how many nuclear weapons the U.S. has and that Russia has as many. There's a base in Seneca Falls with nuclear warheads and it's a prime target. And we would get the impact of a nuclear attack against it. Nuclear war is an everyday fact and people aren't aware of what it can do. They let it slide because they hear so much about it every day."

**CHRIS RUSZCZYK**  
Junior  
soccer



"Yes, because the U.S. and Russia have so many atomic weapons, just one push of the button would destroy the world. It might not be planned but a leader could be a madman or have too much power and want more. Rochester could be hit because of Kodak and Ginna. People realize there is a possibility. All you hear on the news is how Reagan is spending more money for defense."

**JANICE DOANE**  
Junior  
volleyball



"Yes, because all the U.S. spends money on is nuclear weapons. Everything is centered on the bomb. It's a real threat. The more nuclear weapons we make the more Russia makes and if one leader gets angry enough and sets them off, we're all goners. The more people hear about a nuclear war, the more they fear it. The main concern is defense nowadays."

**KAREN FANALE**  
Sophomore  
St. Thomas Club



"I think it's possible because of the continuing competition between the U.S. and Russia in the buildup of weapons. I fear it because of this continuous buildup for defense. If they have all the weapons the probable thinking is 'we might as well use them.'"

**CHRIS HANSS**  
Junior  
volleyball



"No. because I don't think the president or the Soviet leader would set off a nuclear war because they know it would end the world. If there ever is a nuclear war I fear its effects. The common person is indifferent because nuclear war has become a part of everyday vocabulary."



### Winner's Circle

RapAround weekly will run a photo of a group of students taken somewhere in the diocese. One person will be circled and if that person brings the clipping to the Courier-Journal before noon of the Tuesday following our publication date, he or she will receive \$5. This week's photo was taken at McQuaid during lunch. The person circled should bring the clipping to Joan M. Smith, Courier-Journal, 114 South Union St., by noon, Tuesday, Feb. 15, to receive \$5.

### Bp. Clark to Present Mercy Rings

Bishop Matthew H. Clark will celebrate Mass and present school rings to the juniors of Our Lady of Mercy High School, 11 a.m., Friday, Feb. 11, in the motherhouse chapel, according to Miss Patricia Ciarletto, class moderator.

Planning the event are Erin Countryman of Honeoye Falls and Stephany Foote and Maria Gerace, both of Penfield. Sister Anne Curtis, campus minister, is assisting.

the students with liturgical selections and hymns. Along with her school ring, each junior will be given a red carnation to celebrate the event.

### A Call For Stamps

As a fund raiser, the Aquinas Parents Association is collecting Top Value Stamps and would appreciate donations. Stamps can be dropped off at the Development Office, Room 106, Aquinas, 1127 Dewey Ave.

### Art Winners

The blue ribbon finalists in the Sibley's Scholastic Art Awards are: Mark Fisher, and Kathy Maira, Cardinal Mooney; Kevin Kommeth and Erin Schmitz, Bishop Kearney; Geraldine Gordinier, and Karen Cancelmi, Nazareth.

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