



Peace Candle Lit

Father William Barrett, pastor of St. Monica's Church, lights the "Peace Candle" during the 11 a.m. Mass on Sunday, May 22. The flame from the Paschal Candle, in the background, was used to kindle the flame which will remain in a prominent place in the church throughout the remainder of the liturgical year.

Fr. John Reedy



Looking for the Lord

When Ambiguity Is a Virtue

Archbishop John Quinn (San Francisco) is a very bright, articulate spokesman for church teaching and policy.

But I think he would have done well to avoid the kind of questions he dealt with at a press conference which followed his return from the meeting at which the bishops approved their statement on war and peace.

According to NC News, the Archbishop answered a question about the moral obligation of a Catholic military person who was ordered to launch a nuclear weapon against an enemy's population.

(He said the order should be refused.)

This led to more of those "what if" questions which reporters love.

What if a SAC bomber were ordered to drop a nuclear bomb?

What about the morality of a SAC crew which is flying around with nuclear bomb — their whole purpose to be ready to drop it?

What about Catholics working in the production of nuclear weapons?

What about a soldier's duty to his country in wartime?

Archbishop Quinn has very deep convictions about the moral dimensions of nuclear weapons. These convictions were clear in the series of amendments he presented in Chicago. All of his amendments tended

to strengthen the judgment against nuclear weapons and nuclear strategy.

Still, I think it was unwise for him to allow himself to be drawn into a judgment of a series of moral cases.

Some of those judgments flowed necessarily from statements in the pastoral, but the structure of the pastoral demonstrated a great concern for the manner in which this moral teaching should be presented.

Repeatedly, the document distinguishes general moral norms presented as authoritative, and those prudential judgments on which the bishops recognized that moral certainty was impossible. While the bishops expressed their own opinions on these matters, they explicitly recognized that others could legitimately arrive at different conclusions.

Cardinal Bernardin defended "an element of ambiguity" in parts of the pastoral. While ambiguity is not ordinarily considered a virtue, in this matter it demonstrated a sensitivity for the delicacy of the teaching task... and a reluctance to proclaim more than could be justified.

I hope that this kind of sensitivity can be maintained as the teaching of the pastoral is channelled through the pulpit, the classroom and the Catholic press.

We are beyond the day of teaching moral theology by giving the "right" answers to a wide assortment of cases.

Sarah Child



All in the Family

No Reason To Cry Over Spilled Dirt

When:
 ● The mutt knocks over the flower pot dirt on the freshly scrubbed kitchen floor...
 ● I misplace my glasses three times in one day and...
 ● Forget to buy decaf-

feinated coffee after making a special trip to the store for it and...

● The town cop stops me for going through a yellow light that turned red before I made it through and...

● Everybody complains that the station wagon always smells like dog and...

● The extra typewriter ribbon stashed in the bottom of the filing cabinet turns out to be used and...

● It rains for 14 Sundays in a row...

● I find a letter I thought I mailed on the floor behind the bookcase and...

● The cake for the track picnic looks like it failed the high jump and the second effort is just as bad and...

● I can't think of a thing to fix for supper... then I know things could be better.

When:
 ● The dirt from the flower pot vacuums up nicely and...

● The cop tells me to be more careful and lets me go and...

● Frosting covers up a lot of cake mistakes and...

● My husband offers to go out and buy two new typewriter ribbons and...

● The violets and honeysuckle bloom profusely in spite of the rain and...

● Everybody pitches in and helps with the chores that didn't get done and...

● I find the instant decaf mixed with ground regular coffee works just fine and...

● My glasses mysteriously reappear on the dining room table amidst the clutter of copy and proofs and...

● Ammonia water partially camouflages the doggy smell in the car and...

● The head of the house says let's go out tonight and get a hamburger...

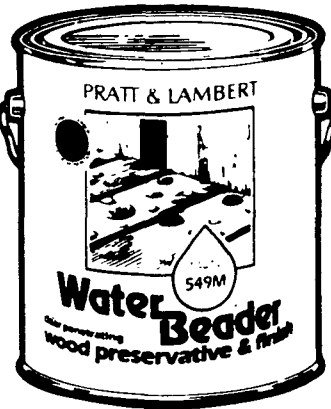
Then I know things are looking up.

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