

# Catholic Action the Way

By Father Albert Shannon  
Pastor, St. Mary's, Waterloo

**Point 1:** The peace-movement issue is clear — there are two sides.

- a. One side wants peace through weakness.
- b. The other side wants peace through strength.

**Point 2:** I have often meditated on the nonviolence of Jesus. As I see it, that nonviolence was 30 years of obedience to His Father's will and three years of reparation for sin, ending in His freely dying as the Lamb of God foretold by Second-Isaiah.

Our Lady of Fatima has asked that we do both these things: be obedient, especially to our Holy Father; and make reparation for sin by the five First Saturday devotions.

**Point 3:** The bishops have called for action in their pastoral: "We are called to move from discussion to witness and action." Sadly, I see too many abusing the pastoral, as some do Scripture, to bless every damned error that arises regarding peace. There are two kinds of action: secularistic and Catholic.

a. **Secularistic or humanistic action** is action that does not begin with God, nor lead to God and moral conversion. The Women's Encampment is this kind of action: it is a purely human solution based solely on human resources. I cannot in conscience align myself with this kind of action, especially when it ignores the moral law under the shibboleth of peace. Paul warned: "Bad company corrupts good morals." (1 Cor. 15/33) How often the prophets warned God's people against alliances with Godless powers; Isaiah warned Ahaz against allying himself with Assyria instead of trusting in the Lord God.

I believe Sisters aligning themselves with the Women's Camp, well-intentioned as it might be, is a disservice to religion and a scandal to not a few. I also believe that for the Office of Social Ministry to endorse carte blanche the proposed October demonstrations an egregious blunder. Catholic action, not secularistic action, should be our guiding star.

b. **Catholic action** is action that begins from God and leads to God and to His peace — a peace the world cannot give. Such is the action outlined by the Mother of God at Fatima. When the bishops call for action, the presumption is that it is a call to Catholic action. When a bishop calls for the building of a school, the presumption is that it is a Catholic school.

That is the action we have been employing in Waterloo: the Mother of God's peace plan for the world. But from the

response of some, I cannot but feel that some put more trust in human resources than in prayer.

As our Blessed Lady desired, we are praying the rosary, publicly! We have consecrated our parish to the Immaculate Heart of Mary in obedience to the Holy Father. We have enrolled our whole parish in the scapular. We have asked our people to fast, as well as to abstain, on Fridays, as the bishops suggested in their pastoral. In essence, we are acting in a Catholic way.

**Point 4:** Some dough off Fatima as private revelation. Here, too, a distinction has to be made. There are two kinds of private revelation: personal and common.

a. **Personal revelation** is given for the benefit of the recipient. On April 12, 1947, Bruno Cornacchiola, a fierce Mary-hater, claimed to have seen the Mother of God at Tre Fontane outside the walls of Rome. Like Saul, his life was completely changed by the alleged apparition. We can ignore such revelation if we wish.

b. **Common revelation** is given for the welfare of the human race. To reject such revelation when authenticated and approved by the Church, and when the message is of worldwide import, is, to say the least, rash and culpable. William A. Hinnebusch, CP, wrote: "There are other things besides the solemn teaching authority of the Church that bind a person to accept something. A creature endowed with reason is obliged by his own intelligence to bow to evidence when it is present. (For a jury in a lawsuit to ignore clearcut evidence is to act irresponsibly.) To resist evidence is anti-intellectual. As Pius XII said: 'The time for doubting Fatima is past; it is now time for action.' For a Catholic deliberately to close his mind to such a statement hardly can be without blame."

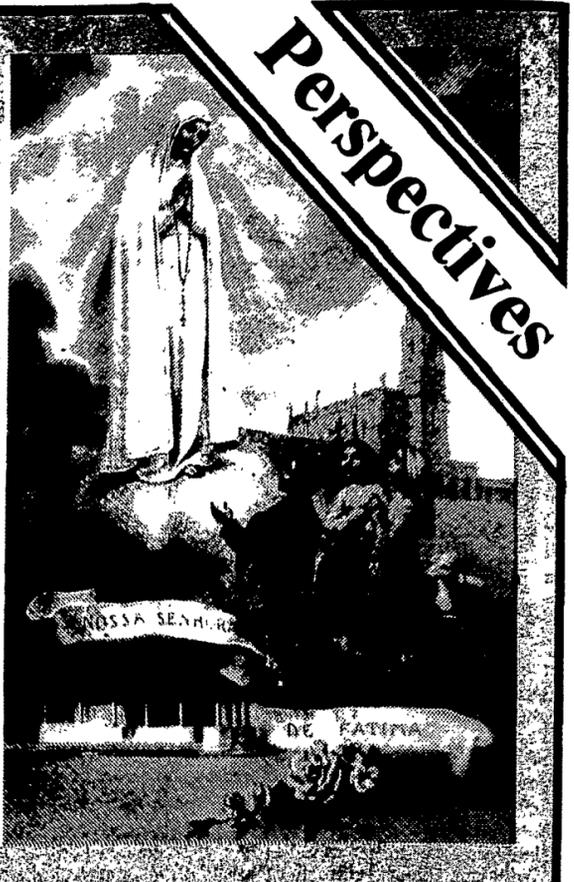
Furthermore, John Paul II himself has declared that the content of the Fatima message is the gospel message. It is the actualization of the gospel in daily life. At Fatima, Our Lady spoke of all the essential truths of our faith: heaven, hell, divine indwelling, Eucharist, penance, redemption and so on.

**Point 5:** We have been criticized for praying the rosary publicly. We can do as much good, it is said, praying in church or in the privacy of our homes as we can do in a public park.

St. Louis de Montfort spends an entire chapter enumerating the reasons for the public praying of the rosary. ("Secret of 35")

We might say that if the secularists use public demonstrations, ought the people of God be less courageous?

Regardless, part of our national problem has been due to the tendency to banish God to the sanctuary. Isn't that what secularism is — getting God out of public life, out of the schools, out of the marketplace?



Charles Rice, dean of law at the University of Notre Dame, has written: "Part of our national problem is due to the tendency to restrict religion to a strictly private preserve, to keep it in the closet and thereby to deny its relevance to the public life of the nation. There is a needed element of witness in praying (in public)." ("Fifty Questions on Abortion," P. 10)

Why not join St. Mary's every Sunday in Lafayette Park in Waterloo for the public recitation of the rosary at 2:30 (in St. Mary's Church, if it rains)? Why not make the five First Saturdays? Why not fast and abstain on Fridays for world peace and the conversion of sinners and of Russia? That's Catholic action, that's what the bishops asked for in their pastoral and Our Lady at Fatima.

## U.N. Conference: Racial Discrimination Not Diminishing

By Jeff Endrst  
NC News Service

A two-week United Nations conference on racism concluded that racial discrimination shows "no sign of diminishing" in the world. The conference specifically criticized South Africa and Israel.

The criticisms of South Africa and Israel were led by Third World countries and the Communist bloc. Western Europe and Canada did not approve specific condemnations of the two countries.

The Western countries argued that racism is a worldwide phenomenon and the conference should not limit the criticism to two countries.

The conference final document concluded that "racism, racial discrimination and apartheid continued unabated and have shown no sign of diminishing." It asked the U.N. General Assembly to declare a Decade for Action to Combat Rac-

ism and Racial Discrimination.

Apartheid is a system of strict racial segregation under South Africa's white-minority government.

The United States, Israel and South Africa boycotted the racism conference, which ended Aug. 13 in Geneva, Switzerland. Prior to the conference the three countries said they would not attend because the conference would be used as a propaganda platform against Israel and South Africa.

During the general debate, Msgr. Giuseppe Bertello, Vatican observer at the conference, said racist theories are contrary to Christianity, but he offered no comments about specific situations.

"Systematic racism is unjustifiable. The human species has an essential unity. All people are created equally," said Msgr. Bertello, a member of the Vatican observer mission to the U.N. offices in Geneva.

The conference majority

condemned "any form of cooperation with South Africa, and notably the existing and increasing relations between Israel and the racist regime of South Africa."

Another approved resolution condemned "with deep regret, the practice of racial discrimination against the Palestinians as well as other inhabitants of the Arab occupied territories."

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