

Book Defamed Pius XII, Italian Court Rules

Rome (NC) -- After a legal battle lasting 10 years, Italy's highest court has ruled that a book by American author Robert Katz defamed Pope Pius XII when it portrayed

him as negligent during a massacre of Italians by Nazi soldiers in 1944.

Meanwhile, an Italian magazine reported that Pope Pius secretly met with the

German commander in Italy in 1944 to urge an early surrender to the allies.

In striking down a 1978 appeals court decision, the supreme court upheld an earlier finding that the book, "Death in Rome," defamed the honor and reputation of the late pontiff.

Katz was fined and sentenced to 13 months in prison after the original trial, but the prison sentence was later suspended.

The book described the rounding up and execution of 335 people, including many Jewish Italians, by the Germans after a bomb explosion in Rome killed 35 members of the German secret police.

The book portrayed Pope Pius as able, but unwilling, to act to stop the reprisal massacre.

The legal action -- a penal and not a civil case in Italy -- was initiated by a niece of Pope Pius, who said the book misinterpreted and deformed the historical facts.

Among the witnesses at the trial were Italian Foreign Minister Giulio Andreotti and the head of the German secret police in Rome at the time, Col. Herbert Kappler.

Trial witnesses argued that Katz's thesis was un-historical, and that there was no evidence Pope Pius could have known about the reprisal before it took place.

On Sept. 30, the same day the supreme court made its ruling in the Katz case, the magazine Gente reported that

Pope Pius tried in a secret meeting to convince the commander of Nazi forces in Italy to give up. The report said the meeting took place a year before the Germans finally surrendered.

The magazine based its report on an interview with the commander, Gen. Karl Wolff, now living in West Germany. Wolff said his secret meeting with the pontiff occurred at the Vatican on May 10, 1944, two months before Rome fell to the allied forces.

The article quoted Wolff as saying Pius XII offered to act as an intermediary in negotiations with the allies. Wolff said he considered acting independently on the pope's advice but did not do so.

Wolff was sentenced in 1962 to 15 years in prison for war crimes, but was released after he suffered a heart attack in 1971.

"No one ever made such a profound impression on me. I was so struck by the passion and goodness of this man that in my heart I already felt with repugnance the useless bitterness and hatred of the Italian civil war," said Wolff about Pope Pius.

Music Workshop Offered

The diocesan Office of Liturgy will sponsor a workshop for pastoral musicians titled "A Reading Session of New Music" from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. in three locations: Tuesday, Oct. 18, at Holy Name, Rochester; Wednesday, Oct. 19, at St. Mary's, Auburn; and Tuesday, Oct. 25, at St. Mary Our Mother, Horseheads.

Music directors, singing groups, congregation members and cantors will find music provided by GIA Publications, North American Liturgy Resources, and Corporate Music.

Fee for the workshop is \$10 per person and participants will keep the music used during the session.

Anyone needing more information should contact the Office of Liturgy, 716/328-3210.

Volunteers Needed to Fight Child Abuse

Volunteers are needed to staff the 24-hour Parents Anonymous, crisis hotline. This can be done from the volunteer's home. Forty hours of training are provided and will begin soon.

Parents Anonymous is a nonprofit organization staffed primarily by volunteers to combat child abuse. Further information is available from 454-5060.

OTETIANA POW-WOW

All adult scout leaders are invited to the annual Otetiana Council's Pow-Wow, beginning at 9 a.m., Nov. 19, at the Barker Road School in Pittsford. More than 600 leaders are expected at the meeting with the theme "Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow 1983."

Fr. Paul J. Cuddy



On the Right Side

The Roast Continues

Two clerical wags of our diocese, Father William Burns of Waverly-Elmira and Father William Gaynor of Auburn took the occasion of the 75th birthday of the columnist of "On the Right Side" to do a written "roast." It's too funny not to share. Here is part.

Transcript of press conference held at the conclusion of the "Cuddy-study", a three-day seminar to honor the 75th birthday of the Rev. P.J.C., columnist, tour guide, etc.

Most columnists begin their careers as reporters which train them in accuracy and precision. They may go into specialized reporting, a politics or education. Finally, as columnists they are able to give the public their expertise acquired by such discipline. May we assume this is how Father Cuddy became a columnist?

No. He did not pursue this tedious route. However, lest you conclude that this lack of previous training has been a handicap, on the contrary, it has liberated him from trite conventionalism and enabled him to use language in new, innovative ways. Likewise, not being harnessed to a speciality has freed him to give his views on any subject that strikes his fancy. He is, therefore, as columnists go, a true original. Some hail him as "the Grandma Moses of the painted word."

We gather the impression from the joyous accounts in Father Cuddy's column about his visits at parishes to fill in for ailing or vacationing priests that it must be a great blessing to have him on these occasions. True?

It's a mixed blessing. Father comes to a parish, not just to fill in. It is more apt to say he OCCUPIES it, wearing many halos. He is a pamphleteer, a tape crusader -- in which two capacities he manages to turn the church into a miniature supermarket. Besides, he is the VIP columnist perceiving the parishioners as potential fodder for a future column. The good people, knowing this and striving to obtain the Cuddy "Good Church-keeping Seal of Approval" are under great strain. Market analysts have detected a marked rise in the purchases of valium and cooking sherry coincident with his "invasion."

He seems so rigid. Isn't it surprising that he did not make the military a life-long career?

Those familiar with both forces, the Cuddy

and the Air Force, are inclined to feel that the separation of the two was probably mutually agreeable. Father Cuddy is not rigid. Firm is a better word. He has simple beliefs, namely that one magisterium is sufficient for the Church, just as one quarterback suffices in the backfield of a football team; and that a trendy adventurism in the areas of theology and liturgy is a source of confusion to God's people. Aside from these and related positions, he has always been regarded as extremely free-spirited. Those who know him well have likened him to a fellow Auburnian of an early era, Father John McGrath, the history of whose exploits in the realm of amiable eccentricity is among the most cherished traditions of our diocese.

Father Cuddy's column has had a long run. To what can this be attributed?

His longevity as a columnist has been due mainly to what is known in media circles as the "Cosell Co-Efficient." Thus ABC head, Roone Arledge keeps reminding us, Howard Cosell is not universally loved. He is also hated. But no one is INDIFFERENT to him. Hence his high ratings. With Father Cuddy much the same applies. Due to his high IQ (Ideological Quotient) he has an almost perfect readership. He is a conservative's conservative as well as a terminal traditionalist. His readers on the Right will cheer while those on the Left will jeer. Some in the Center will shake their heads in bewilderment, but EVERYBODY reads him. Like Mrs. Berle said of Milton: "Adore him or abhor him, but please don't ignore him!"

What are Father Cuddy's long range plans?

1. To live for the day when every woman religious will be completely swathed in a religious habit -- preferably of heavy wool. 2. To work for the re-establishment of a no-frills liturgy in the Roman rite, with the elimination of "Fancy Danism" -- and lest he, heaven forbid, be considered a mean old male chauvinist, he would also abolish "Fancy Danielle-ism." Short range include: 1. To locate another guileless altar boy who has an uncle who is a priest, hopefully another with one of those "nebulous" middle management positions. 2. To meet Sister Theresa Kane and beat her two out of three in an arm-wrestling contest.

CYO Sticking To Regulations

The Catholic Youth Organization's Athletic Committee has announced that although the state has changed its rule to allow outside competition for junior and senior high school athletes, the CYO will retain its rule barring such double participation.

The rule reads that "any player who, during the current basketball season, has played or is playing on any public or private school team is ineligible to play CYO basketball."

The history of CYO basketball has been to serve the boys and girls who would not otherwise have an opportunity to play. Last year, 135 teams played CYO basketball. Applications are being taken for this year's teams. Further information is available from the CYP, 454-2030.

Health Seminar Scheduled For Women

Preparing women to maintain a high level of well-being throughout their lives is the focus of a "Well Women's Health" seminar planned by the American Red Cross from 7 to 10 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 25, at the Red Cross, 46 Prince St.

Course discussions will cover the unique emotional, mental and physical aspects of womanhood and the changes experienced during a woman's lifetime. Guidelines for staying healthy as well as resources on self-defense and discussions on premenstrual syndrome will be offered.

Registration, costing \$3, may be made by telephoning 275-9800, ext. 326.

\$100,000 Collection Of Slides Donated

A collection of 328,000 travel slides has recently been donated to the Rochester Public Library, according to Linda Bretz, library director.

The collection is a gift from Reenie and Stanley Feingold, co-owners of Visual Horizons, a worldwide producer and supplier of audio-visual and photographic equipment.

"The collection of slides is possibly the largest single gift donation ever made to the Rochester Public Library," Ms. Bretz said.

The collection represents the largest of its type in the world and if purchased by the library would exceed \$100,000, not including the cost of the original film,

processing and mounting, and professional shooting time, estimated at another \$100,000.

"This is like Howard Hughes' will," said Winn McCray, head of the library's History and Travel Division.

The library's current slide collection of 8,000 took 15 years to accumulate.

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