

Fr. Paul J. Cuddy



On the Right Side

Encampment Not Work of Communists

From an irate reader:

"Our bishop spends paragraphs assuring us that his going to the Romulus encampment does not mean his endorsement of those things we associate with the event. It won't wash. He will be perceived as associating with a group of leftists who deplore just about everything our government stands for.

"Incidentally, they also deplore just about everything for which the Catholic Church stands. This same bunch --

Abzug, et al -- could easily move from the peace encampment to a pro-abortion rally with only a change of placards necessary. I know of no such indignation -- from organized Catholics in our diocese regarding the killing of babies.

"As significant as the groups that are marching is the groups who are not marching. These are angry, frustrated people, who are becoming hostile and belligerent toward the Church and our leaders.

"To name a few: the Ukrainians who recently had their manifestation in Rochester over the little publicized holocaust of some eight million Ukrainians by the Russian Communists; the Polish and Lithuanian organizations who know of the land of their ancestors gripped by harsh communism; the veterans of wars who know of the horror of war better than most of the peace marchers; the Cubans who escaped Castro's Cuba; the Boat People who escaped Viet Nam after we capitulated and the Communists brought on a 'Communist Peace' with all its horrors which continue to this day.

"No one wants war.

But no one wants slavery, excepting slave holders. And it is the enslaving Communists who work diligently to disarm the United States. Our bishop has asked us to speak up. Well, I am speaking. I want to be a faithful Catholic, but I heartily resent this imposition of clerical wills in a manner in which I think they are being manipulated by a great and evil power."

Response:

As Father Kress would say: "WOW!" I do think many of your points are well-taken, but don't you go off the deep end somewhat? For example: "This same bunch -- Abzug, et al -- could easily move from the peace encampment to a pro-abortion rally with only a change of placards necessary."

From reading the list of leaders, I'm afraid there is more truth to this than I should wish. But there will be sincere, peace-loving people who will also be among the groups. I can see a possible good coming from the gathering.

Our bishop has said that he is going to speak of reverence for life in all its phases. This will be a good opportunity for many abortion people, who will be there as pals in a common cause, to hear a Catholic bishop proclaim the holiness of life, denouncing the destroying babies as permitted by law today.

When Mother Teresa was at "The Year of Woman" international meeting in Mexico City in 1975, she got short shrift from most of the dele-

gates. But later when she spoke at Harvard, she stunned her listeners by her unequivocal declaration that all human life is sacred, and killing babies is an abomination.

Where else would these abortion advocates hear a Catholic bishop take issue with their evil, they being present?

While I do not think the encampment is the work of Communists, I do think that many of the sponsors are being manipulated. Let me recommend two books: "The Spike," by Arnaud de Borchgrave, senior editor and chief foreign correspondent for Newsweek, and Robert Moss, editor of "Foreign Report," a publication of the London Economist; and "The KGB," by John Barrons, a senior editor of Readers Digest.

Both expose the techniques from organized communism, to spread "dis-information" about America through the media, politicians, economic enterprises. Did you know that Cuba is a main exporter of cocaine to the states for two reasons: to get cash for Cuba, and to speed the moral disintegration of our people?

Do read these books, please -- at least "The KGB," "The Spike" is awfully sexy and might be offensive to some. These books may disturb you, but we have reason to be disturbed. We are a country greatly manipulated by a dreadful enemy, skilled in the techniques of "dis-information."

St. John Auxiliary Notes 50th Year

Word was received last week that the Ladies Auxiliary Knights of St. John from St. Jerome's Parish celebrated its 50th anniversary Sept. 13 with a banquet.

Organized in 1933, in East Rochester, with 31 members, the group still has three original members still active: Lucille Florin, Margaret Passero and Josephine Yacono.

Principals for the event

were Josephine Miceli, toastmistress; Camilia Haszlauer, supreme past president and now first vice president of the Rochester district, guest speaker; Ruth Martindale, president of the Rochester district; Frances Pilato, second vice president of the district and deputy of the East Rochester auxiliary; Angie Morabito, Mary Guerra, Mary Alfieri, and Mary DiDomenico, arrangers.

YES TO CATHOLIC SCHOOLS!

You've heard about the financial problems of Catholic schools. And, you've certainly heard all sorts of stories about the end of Catholic schools in our nation's cities.

Most Catholic schools have financial problems these days. Here at Saint Augustine's and Saint Monica's, our problems are great, the solutions difficult.

Today, we are struggling to provide Catholic education to children in our central city area -- children who really need this kind of education! We serve families who are often poor sometimes lonely, and always in need of Christ's gentle comfort.

We believe the Lord has given us an important mission. It is not an easy one. But, we are deeply and firmly committed to it.

Today, may we ask you to help us in two ways? If you can possibly spare a few dollars to assist us in our work, we would be deeply grateful. We depend on the goodness and generosity of our friends to continue and strengthen our work.

We'd like to ask you for your prayers, too. Prayer is the most powerful force available to us: your prayers -- and the prayers of thousands of committed people like you -- will surely be noticed by the Lord!

We promise you that we will use your financial gifts carefully and wisely. We promise you, each day and every day.

FATHER BILL BARRETT, FATHER BILL TROTT

Father Bill Trott -- Father Bill Barrett
Saint Augustine's School - Saint Monica's School
841 Genesee Street
Rochester, N.Y. 14611

Yes! I'd like to help. Enclosed is my gift of \$_____ to Saint Augustine's-Saint Monica's CATHOLIC EDUCATION FUND. And, I promise that my prayers will be with you!

(Your Name)

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Clip and mail to the address above. Your financial gift is tax deductible.

Irish Lose Clubhouse

Several Irish organizations have held their final events at the Moose clubhouse on East Avenue.

The Moose sold the property recently and such groups as the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Irish National Caucus and the Hibernian Ceili Dancers, which used the Moose facility, have held their final events there.

Father Bruce Ritter



A lady should never get this dirty, she said.

She stood there with a quiet, proud dignity. She was incomparably dirty -- her face and hands smeared, her clothes torn and soiled.

The lady was 11. My brothers are hungry, she said. The two little boys she clutched protectively were 8 and 9. They were two of the most beautiful children I'd ever seen. Our parents beat us a lot, she said. We had to leave. The boys nodded dumbly. We had to leave, one of them echoed. The children did not cry. After living on the street for two weeks, they did not cry. I struggled to manage part of a smile. It didn't come off very well. The littlest kid looked back at me with a quick, dubious grin. I gave him a surreptitious hug. I was all choked up. I would like to take a shower, she said.

I was in our UNDER 21 Center, checking things out, talking to the kids. They like the Center a lot. What's more, they appreciate it.

A few minutes later a kid who would never win any beauty prizes walked up to me, a typical hugger-mugger nomad, the kind you would never want to meet in a dark alley and the kind you'd like to have beside you if you had to walk down one. Bruce, he said, this is a really nice place, and he began petting me on the shoulder. Thanks a lot, he said, you must have a soft spot in your heart for us kids. I said I did. He said, Bruce, why did you make it so beautiful? I said, because you're beautiful. And he smiled at me. I got more choked up. I can't cry -- it's bad for my image -- so I was glad when another kid walked over and punched me on the arm and said he really liked the plants and the flowers and his friend who came with him said it was better than the Holiday Inn, and then this little girl said, come see my baby, Bruce. He was 6-weeks-old and lying in the middle of one of our comfortable lounge chairs. He was a cute little kid. She was 16.

I get asked tons of questions about Covenant House and our kids, but there are two questions that, no matter who the audience, I always get asked.

The first one, the easiest, is how do you survive in that hell hole. I usually just laugh and talk about how great the kids are and how easy they are to love and what a great bunch of people I live with -- my 90 member lay community that prays three hours a day and is just a real joy to be with.

The other, the hardest, is does it work? How successful are you? The way I answer the "does it work" question depends a lot on who's asking it. On who you are and what

DOES IT WORK?

your own needs are and what you really want to believe and how I can make you believe it.

Professionals in the field of child care get one kind of answer. People who just care about and love kids (like most of you) without the scientific interest of a professional get a different answer. Those who think that somehow all street kids are lazy, shiftless drifters and criminals get a third -- and shorter! -- response.

Professionals like to see the data. I talk to them about our program components and operating principles, discuss the professional credentials of our staff, the demographics of our client population and the types of pathological behavior patterns encountered, and treatment plans.

Most people, though, who really just care a lot about the kids, are more impressed by anecdotal information: facts, true histories, stories that illustrate how a lot of our kids do experience a real change in their ability to love, to be responsible, to speak the truth, and to increase their capacity and desire to be good people, to care about themselves again. I talk about our ability to help about one-third of the kids who come to us make it back off the street: back home with relieved parents, or placed in a good foster home, or in a job with their own apartment, or in the military or Job Corps or another job training program, or back to school.

"Beauty affirms beauty and confirms it and sometimes causes it to happen."

When people who are inclined to be down on street kids ask me the "does it work" question, I get pretty impatient. So I talk more about the reasons why my kids are having such a tough time and why some won't make it. I try to put into perspective our kids' weaknesses and inadequacies. How long did it take us to quit smoking or drinking, or to lose weight? How many times did we promise to be good? How many times did we promise to keep our promises before we did, if we did, until we, too, fell again? I point out that growth and progress are judged depending on where you start from. If you start from the very bottom, then three steps up the ladder is great progress.

So, Bruce, I hear you asking, did Covenant House work for those kids you met in the Center?

My 11-year-old lady and her heart wrenchingly beautiful 8- and 9-year-old brothers? They were easy to help; to place in a foster home where beautiful kids are wanted and loved, and made more beautiful, precisely because they are wanted and loved. My 16-year-old madonna of the streets and her 6-week-old baby? She was easy to help, too, with a successful referral to a first-class mother-child program. For 18 months she'll be taught how to parent the baby she bore. The kid who liked the plants and flowers? He liked the street even

more and went AWOL. God, send him back.

The hugger-mugger nomad, the one who smiled at me? He's still with us but I don't think he'll make it and I think he thinks it's already too late for him.

He petted me on the shoulder; he broke my heart with his smile and he knew why we try so hard to make UNDER 21 not only safe and clean, but beautiful. Because he was.

You see, beauty affirms beauty and confirms it -- sometimes even causes it to happen for a sad-eyed 17-year-old nomad on the skids.

Did we succeed with that kid? Was it, is it, worth spending your hard earned money on plants and flowers and comfortable furniture so thousands and thousands and thousands of desperate kids who come in out of their smoking, ugly, depraved hell can be confronted by that beauty and know, without a word being said that we loved them? And that God does?

Professionals in child care sometimes give me a funny look when I tell them that God is responsible for taking care of our kids and that if any really good things happen to them, He should get the credit. I don't have any problems about using other values and standards to gauge the effectiveness of our program, but I think we ought to get our priorities straight and first praise and thank God for having loved and helped our kids and for letting us help Him with the job.

Pray for me, please. Please pray, too, for my staff and the kids. We pray for you.

I believe that it is worthwhile to bring beauty to our kids. Enclosed is my contribution of: \$_____

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Please send this coupon with your donation to:

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Father Bruce Ritter
P.O. Box 2121
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New York, NY 10108



Because the street is NO PLACE FOR A CHILD

Father Bruce Ritter, OFM Conv., is the founder and President of Covenant House/UNDER 21, which operates crisis centers for homeless and runaway youth.

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