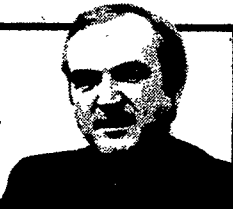


Father Richard P. McBrien

Essays in Theology



Resolution of the Seattle case

The case of Seattle's Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthausen has finally been resolved. And it has been resolved in a way that reasonable people resolve serious and contentious differences: by compromise.

Many people don't like compromises, but in this case one has to consider the alternative.

Had this matter been resolved without compromise — that is, to the complete and total satisfaction of Archbishop Hunthausen's supporters — the Vatican would have had to admit publicly that it had made a terribly serious error when it gave credence to the complaints of a tiny, irresponsible band of right-wing Catholics in Seattle.

It would have had to express profound regret for all the trouble its action had created and it would have had to ask the forgiveness of the Catholics of Seattle for casting so negative a shadow over Archbishop Hunthausen's pastoral integrity, over the pastoral integrity of his principal pastoral associates and over the Archdiocese of Seattle as a whole.

Finally, the Vatican would have had to restore unconditionally all of Archbishop Hunthausen's episcopal faculties and, at the same time, reassign Bishop Donald Wuerl to some bureaucratic post far from Seattle.

There would have been no coadjutor bishop, and no commitment on Archbishop Hunthausen's part to continue to try to implement the terms of Cardinal Ratzinger's highly critical letter of September 30, 1985.

Such a solution, however, was never a realistic possibility. The Vatican could never have made such a public admission of error. (Whether it *should* have done so is, of course, another question.)

Hunthausen supporters who would have preferred a "no-compromise" solution have to remember that "no-compromise" works two ways. Such a solution could also have been totally prejudicial to the archbishop.

The Vatican could have adopted Pilate's attitude when the Jews demanded that he change the inscription on Jesus' cross: "What I have written, I have written."

In other words, Bishop Wuerl would remain in place, retaining full authority in five crucial pastoral areas. And if Archbishop Hunthausen didn't like it, he would have to resign.

This "no-compromise" solution, too, was never a realistic possibility. The wretched pastoral situation in Seattle would have worsened, and the morale of many clergy, religious and active laity

throughout the United States would have fallen even more sharply. The Vatican knew that, and so the way of compromise was the only realistic alternative.

In every compromise, each side wins something and loses something. What did Archbishop Hunthausen win, and what did the Vatican win?

The archbishop has had all of his episcopal authority restored. That's a major victory for him (and a major defeat for the tiny group of right-wing Catholics who tried to bring him down).

Secondly, his new coadjutor, Bishop Thomas Murphy, of Great Falls, Montana, is a sympathetic man. Unlike Bishop Wuerl, whose strongly conservative reputation preceded him, Bishop Murphy will not come to Seattle with his mind already made up against Archbishop Hunthausen.

Throughout Bishop Wuerl's stay in the archdiocese, Archbishop Hunthausen's enemies fed Bishop Wuerl a steady stream of complaints about pastoral abuses in the archdiocese.

That will stop. Bishop Murphy is not likely to encourage such communications, and those individuals who bitterly oppose Archbishop Hunthausen will know that it would be a waste of time. Bishop Murphy is not one of The Wanderer's favorite bishops.

But in every compromise, you give as well as receive. Archbishop Hunthausen has conceded a great deal in accepting a coadjutor, even a good one, under these circumstances. No matter how one looks at it, the appointment is a reflection on Archbishop Hunthausen's pastoral performance.

Secondly, the archbishop has had to renew his public pledge that he would seek to implement the terms of the Ratzinger letter. Since the letter was so critical of the pastoral situation in Seattle, the archbishop is conceding that things have not been completely right in his archdiocese.

What did the Vatican win? It won what Archbishop Hunthausen lost.

The Vatican appointed a coadjutor bishop of its own choosing, and it secured from Archbishop Hunthausen the public promise that he would seek to implement the terms of the Ratzinger letter.

One hopes that this will be the end of the Hunthausen case, and that the Archdiocese of Seattle can now get back to being what it was before all this began: the Body of Christ trying, like all the rest of us, to be faithful to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to the mission of his Church.

Father Paul J. Cuddy

On the Right Side



The message of Medjugorje

To Father Alexander Bradshaw, St. John of Rochester:

Several of our parishioners went over to St. John of Rochester for your June 3 lecture and handsome slides of Medjugorje. Mrs. Lucy DiCesare is an elementary school teacher and one of our good CCD teachers. Our conversation went like this.

Me: "How did you like Father Bradshaw's talk on Medjugorje?"

Mrs. DiCesare: "Oh, it was wonderful!"

Me: "I was well impressed by it, but think it would be better if half an hour shorter. Two hours is a long time. Most people's staying power runs low after an hour."

Mrs. DiCesare: "Oh no, Father. I was sorry when he finished. He was so eloquent at the end, describing the message of Our Lady. I think everyone thought the same."

And many did feel the same. Your eloquence and conviction were gripping. So there you are.

The reason I suggested cutting the talk by half an hour is this — I want it to be heard by many people. The six Fatima apparitions came in 1917, yet word did not reach the States until nearly 30 years later. When I was chaplain at Sampson College near Geneva in 1947, I gave a nice booklet on Fatima (by Don Sharkey) to each person at our two Sunday Masses — some 400 people, students and faculty. A lady came to my office about four months later and said: "I have a niece in Chicago who hadn't been to confession for several years, had stopped going to Mass, and was living a kind of loose life. I sent her the Fatima book. She was so moved by it that she went to confession and Holy Communion, and now not only goes to Sunday Mass but often during the week. I do want to thank you for that book on Fatima."

It took 30 years for the Fatima message of prayer and penance to reach the States. But in the ensuing 40 years, radio and TV communication has become so rapid and so widespread that the Medjugorje events, which began only six years ago, are encircling the country. The TV has given some coverage. Widely spread are the two million copies of the tabloid published by Lutheran newsman Wayne Weible, describing the six seers, the village and the milieu as well as the accounts of millions

of pilgrims, curiosity seekers and, skeptics who have visited the village. Above all, Weible describes the villagers' spiritual transformation, which has occurred through messages that coincide with those given at Fatima and Lourdes.

At your lecture I sat next to a 23-year-old youth. This was our conversation:

Me: "How did you happen to come tonight?"

Youth: "I heard it announced and, since I am a skeptic, decided to know what was said."

Me: "It's good to be a little skeptical; it makes you dig for what's really true."

Youth: "What are these Lourdes and Fatima events they speak out? I've never heard of them."

Astonishment? Dismay? I wonder if it is typical of our youths to be blank on two great modern revelations from Our Blessed Mother. Forty years ago, Franz Werfel, a Jew, wrote "The Song of Bernadette," which was made into a beautiful film that is shown on TV nearly every year at Easter-time. Yet this nice youth knew nothing either of Lourdes or Fatima! I took his name and am sending him some material about both.

I realize that there are some, even clerics, who are skeptical about Fatima and Lourdes, and *a fortiori* of Medjugorje. I also know that one can be a faithful Catholic without accepting them. But with the evidence of these apparitions, what a loss it is for Catholics to reject what seems clearly to come from God.

When Father Gobbi the founder of the Marian Movement for Priests, was in Webster June 8 (nearly 1,000 lay people attended and 70 priests from six dioceses participated in a rousing cenacle devotion), I asked Father Gobbi his opinion of Medjugorje. He said he had been there six times, had talked with the seers and is convinced that the revelations come from our Blessed Mother.

It is good news that you are coming here to Holy Trinity on August 4 to give your lecture. Whether you tailor it, as I think you should, or elaborate on it as Mrs. DiCesare and others prefer, is up to you. In either event, you will have an interested group of listeners, most of whom have a profound devotion to the Mother of God.

United Way sponsoring Hispanic human-services conference

Registration is now open for a conference on Hispanic human services, sponsored by the United Way of Greater Rochester.

The day-long conference is scheduled for Saturday, June 27, at the Educational Opportunity Center, 320 Andrews St., Rochester. The conference is entitled, "La Primera Conferencia de la Familia Hispana En Los '80s" ("The Hispanic Agenda: Prospects for the Future").

Those attending the conference may choose two from a total of eight workshops offering a variety of topics. Special emphasis will be placed on health, educational, employment and housing problems facing Hispanics today, and the outlook for the future. Specific topics will include: the status of educational opportunities in the city's elementary and secondary schools; prevention and treatment of substance abuse; teen pregnancy; job readiness and career development; and the housing crisis facing Hispanics.

Guest speaker at the conference will be representative Olga A. Mendez from New York's 30th State Senatorial District.

The conference fee will be \$7 per person, which includes the price of lunch. The registration deadline is June 22.

Contact Nydia Padilla at (716)454-2770 for information.

Thousand Islands tour slated

The Finger Lakes area separated, divorced and widowed group is planning a June trip, which includes a cruise around the Thousand Islands and a tour of Gananoque in Ontario, Canada. The group will depart from Perkins Restaurant in Geneva on Saturday, June 27, at 7 a.m.

People interested in registering for the trip should do so right away. Please contact Hazel at (315)789-6640 or the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry at 789-2686 for details.

Ministry internship available

The parishes of Corning and Painted Post are seeking candidates for an internship position in youth ministry. The two-year position offers training, housing, health insurance and a monthly stipend. Interested candidates who wish to explore a career in youth ministry should contact the diocesan Office of Youth Ministry at (716) 328-3210 for information or an application form.

Volunteer directory available for teens in Monroe County

Rochester-area teens aged 13 to 18 who are looking for summer volunteer experience are invited by WPXY-FM and the Red Cross to use the 1987 Red Cross Teen Volunteer Directory.

The directory lists summer volunteer opportunities available to youth at 70 non-profit or-

ganizations in Monroe County. Each listing includes a brief description of the agency, volunteer duties needed, days and hours, and required ages.

Directories are available at the Red Cross. For a free copy, call (716) 461-9800, ext. 259.

Tickets available for RPO fest through Parents Anonymous Center.

To raise funds for Parents Anonymous — a non-profit organization for the development of parenting skills and healthy families — board members and friends of PA are selling tickets to the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra's 1812 Festival. The performance features an exciting fireworks display, scheduled for August 1 at the Finger Lakes Performing Arts

Lawn and shell seats are available for both adults and children. Special tickets for both seating areas include a gourmet picnic dinner prepared by the newly opened Lodge at Woodcliff.


Call (716) 454-5066 for information.

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