

Father Richard P. McBrien Essays in Theology



Some days I am tempted to think that most Catholic college and university alumni/ae are hopelessly reactionary in their religious attitudes and behavior. It seems that way because the reactionaries are the ones who seem to write the most letters and complain the loudest.

Unfortunately, some bishops, academic administrators and other authority figures often yield to the same temptation — they exaggerate the importance of the disgruntled letter writers and conclude that they are really representative of "the folks out there."

They are not, however, and a recent survey of Notre Dame alumni/ae makes that as clear as can be.

The summer issue of Notre Dame Magazine carries an important article by the editor, Walton Collins, on a recently conducted survey of almost 4,000 Notre Dame alumni/ae. (Incidentally, the survey had a remarkable 72 percent response rate.)

The statistical sampling was composed of a fixed share of each graduating class, in order to reflect as accurately as possible the age distribution among alumni/ae.

Twenty-three percent of the graduates polled were in their 20s, 28 percent in their 30s, 20 percent in their 40s, 14 percent in their 50s, and 15 percent in their 60s and beyond.

In spite of the shift to the right in recent Vatican policy, survey results indicate that Notre Dame graduates are even more progressive in their religious attitudes and behavior than a comparable sample of alumni/ae was in an identically conducted survey 10 years ago. There's been a "front-lash," not a backlash.

Ten years ago, 57 percent of graduates polled thought the Church should allow divorced Catholics to remarry. Today the percentage is up to 79 percent.

Ten years ago, only 31 percent favored the ordination of women. Today the number is up to 56 percent.

Ten years ago, 55 percent of Notre Dame graduates through there ought to be wider consultation with laity and religious in the selection of bishops. Today 69 percent favor such consultation.

Ten years ago, 75 percent supported the U.S. bishops' right to speak out on social issues. Today, the share has risen to 82 percent.

Ten years ago 76 percent agreed that artificial contraception is a morally permissible means of family limitation. Today the percentage is 83 percent.

The figures are about the same today as they were 10 years ago regarding the infal-

libility of the pope (surprisingly, only about half of the respondents in both surveys affirmed it) and the moral permissibility of abortion in some limited circumstances (75 percent said "yes").

Contrary to the complaints one still hears from the far right — and my point here is not to ridicule the far right but only to indicate how small a constituency it represents — 87 percent of Notre Dame graduates are happy with the new English liturgy, up from 73 percent 10 years ago.

Although 43 percent think that the changes made in the Catholic Church since Vatican II are "about right" (up from 38 percent), a surprising 40 percent think more changes are needed (up from 31 percent 10 years ago).

Significantly, only 13 percent now think too many changes have occurred. And that's down from 20 percent 10 years ago.

On the statement, "Notre Dame can be a Catholic university and be independent of control by the Church?" 65 percent agreed. But the age-spread was significant — 75 percent of graduates in their 20s agreed with the statement, while only 53 percent of those 65 and up agreed.

"The fact that religious liberalism among alumni has accelerated rather than retreated over the decade is particularly surprising, given a measurable counter-trend toward political conservatism," editor Collins wrote.

Thirty-seven percent regard themselves as Republicans, compared with only 22 percent 10 years ago. Seventeen percent are Democrats, the same as 10 years ago. And 40 percent call themselves Independents, down from 57 percent a decade ago.

Furthermore, 41 percent view themselves as political conservatives, up from 31 percent in 1976. Twenty-six percent call themselves liberals down from 35 percent. And 32 percent — about the same share as in the 1977 survey — prefer the term "moderate."

This slight shift to the political right might be explained by the fact that "income figures show rising affluence among graduates." On the other hand, the noticeable shift to the religious left might be explained by the fact that alumni/ae "hold more advanced degrees than they did a decade ago."

In other words, with financial success comes a concern for preserving it. With education comes the realization that all of us — Catholics included — are responsible for our own moral decisions. And that means we have to be able to think for ourselves, even on matters pertaining to God and the things of God.

Father Paul J. Cuddy

On the Right Side



Q: Aren't there regulations regarding worship in the Church? I've been to different parishes and find some standard and devotional, and others free-wheeling and upsetting. Aren't there regulations regarding bread and wine used at Mass? I've been at parishes where the priest makes up his own eucharistic prayer and his own rubrics. One priest laughed at my concerns, saying, "Baby, we've had Vatican II. Haven't you heard?" That smug whippersnapper is in his 30s. I am over 60 and resent his condescension and also his familiarity. What can we "babies" do?

A: My sympathy goes out to the laity subjected to the whims of the self-anointed. Just as the state has laws for the common good, to establish and preserve order and to protect the rights of the citizens, the Church has the Code of Canon Law, a code of 1752 brief canons covering the whole gamut of rights and privileges and responsibilities of her members. Regarding your problems, the code is clear:

Regarding the Holy Eucharist

Canon 900 #1: The only minister who, in the person of Christ, can bring into being the sacrament of the Eucharist is a validly ordained priest.

Canon 919 #1: Whoever is to receive the Blessed Eucharist is to abstain for at least one hour before Holy Communion from all food and drink, with the sole exception of water and medicine.

#3: The elderly and those suffering from some illness, as well as those who care for them, may receive the Blessed Eucharist even if within the preceding hour they have consumed something.

Regarding Materials Used for Mass

Canon 924 #1: The Most Holy Sacrifice of the Eucharist must be celebrated in bread and in wine to which a small quan-

tity of water is to be added.

#2: The bread must be wheaten only and recently made, so there is no danger of corruption. (Some years ago, I attended a diocesan Mass at which the celebrant used a chewy bread made with honey. Afterward, there was much consternation and inquiry regarding efficacy and validity. The answer came that the bread was certainly illicit and quite possibly invalid. Such aberrations were quickly discontinued.)

Canon 926: In the eucharist celebration, in accordance with the ancient tradition of the Latin Church, the priest is to use unleavened bread whenever he celebrates Mass.

Canon 928: The eucharistic celebration is to be carried out either in the Latin language or in another language, provided the liturgical texts have been lawfully approved. (This seems to be a nod to the provision in Vatican II that Latin be used. It also disallows the free-wheeling subjectivities of extroverts for whom the Mass can be an occasion for self-dramatization.)

Canon 929: In celebrating and administering the Eucharist, priests and deacons are to wear the sacred vestment prescribed by the rubrics.

Reservation of the Blessed Sacrament

Canon 937: Unless there is a grave reason to the contrary, a church in which the blessed Eucharist is reserved (kept in the tabernacle between Masses) is to be open to the faithful at least some hours each day so they can pray before the Blessed Sacrament.

Canon 942: It is recommended there be each year a solemn exposition of the Blessed Sacrament for an appropriate, even if not for a continuous time, so the local community may attentively meditate on and adore the eucharistic mystery.

Let me help you provide for your future... and the future of others.



A gift annuity with the Propagation of the Faith gives you a generous income during your lifetime and helps the Church carry on Jesus' mission to the world.

Your investment is safe and guaranteed. Falling interest rates do not affect a gift annuity and it gives you substantial tax savings.

Would you like to know more about an annuity, or about remembering the Propagation of the Faith in your will? If you are 50 years of age or older, write to me for more information. I will keep your inquiry in total confidence.

William J. McCormack
National Director

Medjugorje — A Pilgrimage

Come join us Sat., Oct. 10-Sat. Oct. 17, 1987
Live & Pray in the village of Medjugorje, Yugoslavia
Mass, Rosary, Sermon, Confessions Daily
Director: Don Fiorentino Chaplain: Fr. Thomas Celso
Cost: \$4029 includes:
• Round Trip Air: New York/Dubrovnik
• Round Trip transfer, Dubrovnik Airport/
Medjugorje
• 5 Nights in private homes
• Breakfast/Dinner Daily
• One night in Dubrovnik first class hotel
• Dubrovnik/Pilgrimage Tour
• All Taxes • Storage Handling
• Assistance of tour escort during transfers.
For information write or call:
Office of Peace Apostolate, 149 Niagara St.
Buffalo, New York 14224, (716) 394-0059

ROOFING

NEW and REPAIRS

ALL TYPES OF

- ★ SIDING and TRIM
- ★ ALUMINUM CUTTERS
- ★ REPLACEMENT WINDOWS

BOWMAN ROOFING & SIDING CO.

544 COUNTRYSIDE LANE
Established 1912 671-3270

DiMaria Travel

152 MONROE AVE. 271-0100

FOR THE BEST IN TRAVEL ALWAYS

HAWAII, Oct. 3-17th

Acclaimed as Rochester's finest four island tour. Fully escorted from Rochester and featuring our EXCLUSIVE man in Hawaii: Mr. Ed Kahale. Operated by DiMaria Travel ONLY! For information call 271-0100.



Dear Bishop McCormack:
Please send me detailed information about a Gift Annuity with the Propagation of the Faith.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone () _____ Amount Considered: \$ _____
Date of Birth (required information) _____

Please send me information on how I can remember the Propagation of the Faith in my will.

Please mail coupon to me: Bishop William J. McCormack
National Director, Propagation of the Faith
G.P.O. Box 1950, New York, NY 10116 (Dept. C)



The Propagation of the Faith
Supporting the Church's worldwide mission work #344 8/13/87