

For priests, it's 'At 70, out you go,' and then what?



ON THE RIGHT SIDE

By Father Paul J. Cuddy
Catholic Courier columnist

What is it like to be a "retired" priest in the diocese of Rochester? There are some 260 "active" priests. There are 80 retired priests, sometimes adjectivized as "inactive."

The Holy See in Rome makes retirement age at 75. So do most of the dioceses of the States. Rochester mandates 70 as the retirement age. Most priests at 70 have a lot of mileage to be utilized for our people. Some priests are straining at the bit to be

retired at 70. Others wish to continue to serve in the pastorate as they have been doing. There is much hue and cry about shortage of priests. However diocesan policy is firm: "At 70, out you go."

A certain complexity is added by the question: "Go where?" As one priest mused: "Most men when they retire, they go home. When I was retired I had to leave my home of many years and find some rectory which would be willing to take me."

Retired priests have four options:

1) to continue to live as a resident, or perhaps as a semi-assistant in the rectory of the parish from which he has been discharged. Frequently this is not feasible. Few pastors are anxious to have the emeritus around, watching changes of policy, personnel, administration, liturgy. Few retired pastors are comfortable observing the changes. Hence come tensions, even though rarely expressed. Grand exceptions

are Father Joe McDonnell of Newark and Father Thomas Brennan of Corning.

2) to move into another rectory either as a resident without any parish involvement, or as a partial assistant. This is more common, and at least the tension between the old pastor and new is eliminated.

Many splendid priests have done just this, to the advantage of the people. Some examples: Monsignor Richard Burns at Holy Cross, Fathers William Burns of Waverly, Tom Cleary at Horseheads, Joseph Donovan at St. Ambrose, Benedict Ehmman at Holy Apostles, Francis Feeney at Holy Spirit, Elmer Heindl at St. Charles, Ray Heisel at Mother of Sorrows, Val Jankowiak and Alex Stec at St. Stanislaus, historian Robert McNamara and Monsignor Quinn at St. Thomas the Apostle.

Then we have Fathers Joseph McNamara in Groton, Thomas McVeigh at Lourdes, Bernard Newcomb at St. Ceci-

lia's, James O'Connell at Good Counsel, James Slattery and John Riddington at St. Louis, Paul Wohrab in Spencerport. All have good health and the will to serve in their priesthood.

3) Others elect to live in their own homes as have Fathers William Gaynor, Al Shamon and John Nacca in Auburn, Henry Adamski in Dundee, Bart O'Brien and Joseph Egan in Horseheads, Gus Hanna and Don Murphy in Rochester, as well as Monsignor John Albert. Father Dick Stanton is in Lansing, Al Horr in Wolcott, Walt Carron in Geneseo. Nearly all assist at sundry parishes. Add to them Father Jim Tierney in Hornell and Gerald Kelly of Canandaigua and Florida.

4) Others have elected to leave the diocese, either for reasons of health or to continue priestly work elsewhere. Among these are the Scripture professor, Father Elmer McNamara who has charge of Kendall parish in the Diocese of Buffalo; and Father Gene McFarland, who works six months in Tampa, Fla., and returns to our diocese for six months, assisting at the Geneseo parish. The Gefell twins are in Ogdensburg diocese. Fathers Hempel Matuszewski went to Florida for health reasons. Father John Morgan, as healthy as a teenager, continues his vocation in charge of a senior citizen complex in Pine Hurst, S.C., and has his avocation of golf cared for in an ideal locale, combining the best of two worlds.

People ask me: "Are you glad to be 'retired?'" The answer is 'Yes.' While I am in residence at St. Alphonsus, Auburn; with a cheerful community of six priests, I am sometimes invited to supply at several parishes in the diocese. Without work in the priesthood, it would be a great cross.

Vatican II identified authentic enemies of faith

By Father Richard C. McBrien
Syndicated columnist

The Second Vatican Council made a remarkable concession in its "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World," namely, that believers themselves are frequently responsible for the growth of atheism.

"Hence believers can have more than a little to do with the birth of atheism. To the extent that they neglect their own training in the faith, or teach erroneous doctrine, or are deficient in their religious, moral, or social life, they must be said to conceal rather than reveal the authentic face of God and religion" (No. 19).

Specifically, Christian faith "needs to prove its fruitfulness by penetrating the believer's entire life, including its worldly dimensions, and by activating the believer toward justice and love, especially regarding the needy" (No. 21).

Against the council's view, some Catholics stubbornly insist that internal criticism of the church is the primary cause of defections from the faith. According to this theory, the so-called "simple faithful" are confused and scandalized by dissent, and so they leave the church and even abandon belief in God.

In light of the council's teaching on the causes of atheism, however, it would seem that the case is just the opposite. It is not the expression of criticism and diversity that turns people away from religion in general or from Catholicism in particular, but rather the suppression of criticism and diversity, as well as the failure of religious people to practice what they preach about justice and love.

Indeed, the secularist's prejudices against religion are challenged, not confirmed, by the behavior of those who are secure enough in their faith to subject their own religious institutions to the same critical scrutiny they apply to temporal institutions.

On the other hand, the secularist's prejudices against religion are confirmed, not challenged, by the behavior of other sorts of religious people who pride themselves on their devotion to tradition and their loyalty

to religious authorities.

Take this item from the March 21 issue of *The New York Times*, for example:

"JERUSALEM, March 20 — A group of Jewish women trying to hold a prayer service at the Wailing Wall were attacked today by rigorously Orthodox men and forced to flee when the police fired tear gas to disperse the attackers.

"Several women were knocked to the ground and one suffered a gash on her neck when a Hasidic man threw a heavy metal chair at the heads of the praying women ...

"The 40 or so women infuriated the rigorously Orthodox men by trying to hold morning prayers while reading from a Torah and wearing prayer shawls. Orthodox Jewish men insist that women are forbidden even to carry a Torah scroll, and that only males have the right to don the shawls."

Does not such behavior "conceal rather than reveal the authentic face of God and religion"? Who is more likely in this instance to have "turned off" the secularist to religion: the women who tried to pray at the Wailing Wall, or the devoutly religious men who screamed at them, blocked their path, and threw chairs on their head?

The papers have been filled these past several weeks with reports and commentaries about the Ayatollah Khomeini's death sentence pronounced upon the British novelist Salman Rushdie for daring to criticize, even fictionally, important aspects of the Muslim religion.

There have been stories of death squads commissioned to seek him out, with the promise of a martyr's reward for those who die in the attempt. One Muslim figure has already been murdered, probably because he had publicly denounced the Ayatollah's edict.

Does not such behavior, carried out in the name of all that is holy, also "conceal rather than reveal the authentic face of God and religion"?

And, finally, there have been instances — non-violent, to be sure — in the Catholic Church where leading theologians have been censured and removed from their teaching positions or silenced for allegedly



ESSAYS IN THEOLOGY

dissident views, and where even respected bishops have been subject to public humiliation for allegedly deviant pastoral practices.

And, at the same time, the Church and the media have been abuzz with concerns about loyalty oaths and the tightening of ecclesiastical controls over Catholic colleges and universities.

Who fosters secularism in such cases — those who struggle along the paths of theological inquiry and who try to minister even-handedly to all members of the flock, or those who censure, suppress, and punish them?

When some of us wring our hands over the growth of secularism, we should review the words of Vatican II on the causes of atheism and ask to what extent we ourselves might be part of the problem.

Volunteers needed to staff stands at Festival of Lilacs

Volunteers are needed to staff a number of concession stands at the Festival of Lilacs, May 12-21. A percentage of the net profits from the stands will go to the Easter Seal Society of Monroe County.

Those who would like to donate time during the festival should call 716/232-2540 for information.

GRANDÉ-VILLE

GV HOME FOR ADULTS

The Latest Concept In Residential Living For The Adult Citizen In A Park-Like Setting

- 24 Hour Staffing
- Library
- Latest Smoke & Fire Detection System
- Lounges
- Housekeeping Services
- Chapel
- Green House
- Hobby & Craftroom and more

Future Reservations Now Being Accepted

All Inclusive With Meals Daily Rates From: **\$41⁰⁰** private **\$38⁰⁰** semi-private

For Further Information Call: Joseph A. Frate, Director
555 MAIDEN LANE (Near Mt. Road Blvd.) 621-6160

BOOKS ON THE BIBLE

By Father Lawrence G. Lovasik, S.V.D.
Divine Word Missionary

- THE BIBLE ILLUSTRATED — Highlights from the Old and New Testament. 140 full page etchings of the world-renowned illustrator, Paul Gustave Dore (d. 1883). Extra large & heavy type \$ 8.95
- CATHOLIC PICTURE BIBLE — Stories from the Old and New Testament with 110 reproductions in color. Hard cover \$ 8.00
- THE LORD JESUS — The life of Jesus according to the Gospels with 140 pictures. Hard cover \$ 6.00
- THE STORY OF JESUS — A large-format book with full colored pictures for young readers. Hard cover \$ 5.00
- GOSPEL READINGS — In "Today's English Version" with 63 pictures. 200 pages. Large type \$ 6.00
- PRAYING THE GOSPELS — 183 meditations in prayer form on the life and teaching of Jesus Christ. Full Scripture text from "Today's English Version" of the New Testament. Part I. Youth and Beginning of Public Life. Part II. Public Life. Part III. Passion and Resurrection. Each Part \$ 3.00
- DAILY THOUGHTS IN THE WORDS OF JESUS — 237 sections from the Gospels in "Today's English Version" \$ 4.00
- ST. JOSEPH'S FIRST CHILDREN'S BIBLE — Highlights from the Old and New Testament. Illustrated in color \$ 5.00
- HIGHLIGHTS OF ST. PAUL — The best-loved portions of his epistles. Extra large type \$ 4.00
- NEW TESTAMENT PRAYERS — Prayers according to the Gospels and Epistles. Based on the love of God and neighbor \$ 1.50
- PRAYERS FROM THE PSALMS — A selection of the finest portions of the Book of Psalms in prayers. Extra bold type \$ 3.00
- SUNDAY GOSPELS — For each Sunday of the year, with Gospel text, commentary and application. Cycle A; Cycle B; Each Cycle \$ 5.00
Cycle C (New Edition) \$ 8.00
- CATECHETICAL SUNDAY HOMILIES — According to the new Catechetical Directory with Texts from Vatican II for all Sunday Gospels of Cycle A; Cycle B; Cycle C. Each Cycle \$ 3.00

CASSETTE TAPES ON THE BIBLE

- Two meditations of a half-hour are recorded on a single cassette tape. Each series in a vinyl album container.
- GOSPEL READINGS SERIES — Four cassettes \$20.00
- THE PASSION OF CHRIST SERIES — Three cassettes \$15.00
- BIBLE STORIES — The Old Testament. Four cassettes \$20.00
The Gospels. Four cassettes \$20.00

(Add \$2.00 for Postage)
Address all orders to:
Father Lawrence Lovasik, S.V.D.
211 West 7th Avenue
Tarentum, PA 15084

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY

China selections in...
Belleek • Royal Tara • Donegal

Many Other Gift Items...
Jewelry • Glassware • Linen

IRISH FINE BONE CHINA

IRISH PARTIAN CHINA

Irish Import Shop

3821 Ridge Road West (Corner Elmgrove) (716)225-1050
OPEN 6 DAYS