

# Bishop's sin is judging another person's soul

By Father Richard P. McBrien  
Syndicated columnist

Arky Vaughan was a good-hitting, fleet-footed shortstop with this line in his career: 10 years with the Pittsburgh Pirates (leading the league with a .385 average in 1935) and four years with the Brooklyn Dodgers (leading the league in runs scored and stolen bases in 1943).

New York's Auxiliary Bishop Austin Vaughan — there is no relation — got his nickname from that celebrated National

League shortstop.

For years, even those who disagreed with Austin Vaughan's theology and his approach to seminary education, warmly referred to him as "Arky."

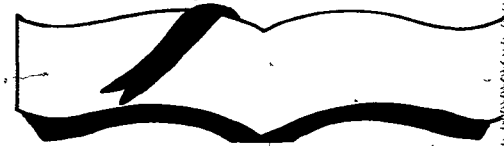
Bishop Vaughan's ultra-conservative views, however, have been widely known within the bishops' conference and the theological community.

One must say in all candor that not many of his fellow bishops would call him, as the *New York Post* did, "a highly regarded

Catholic prelate." In addition, you'd be hard-pressed to find a member of the Catholic Theological Society of America who would agree with Cardinal John J. O'Connor's description of Bishop Vaughan as "one of the finest theologians going."

Indeed, very few outside the bishops' club and the theological guild have even heard of his name, much less his ideas. But now all that is changed.

Austin ("Arky") Vaughan has become



## THE BIBLE CORNER

ghost walking on the water toward us."

The apparition came closer. "Don't be afraid. It is I," the man standing on the water called to them.

"That's Jesus!" John exclaimed. "He's come to save us!"

Peter was not so easily convinced. "Jesus, if it really is you, tell me to come out to you on the water."

"Come here," the man called back. As the other apostles watched, Peter climbed over the side of the boat.

As Peter walked toward Jesus, the winds became so intense that he was nearly blown over. He stopped and looked down at his feet. "I'm sinking! Save me, Jesus!"

In an instant, Jesus was there next to Peter, holding him up by his arm. "Peter, why did you doubt me? What a weak faith you have."

As soon as Peter had climbed back into the boat with Jesus, the storm subsided. All of the apostles were down on their feet before Jesus proclaiming, "You are the Son of God!"

Scripture Reference: Matthew, Chapter 14:13-33.

## ESSAYS IN THEOLOGY

an instant celebrity. He's the bishop who spent 10 days in jail for participating in an anti-abortion demonstration, and who then verbally clawed one of the giants of the political world, New York Governor Mario Cuomo.

The huge headline in the *New York Post* practically screamed the news: "Jailed Bishop to Cuomo: You're Risking Hell." Hell."

In an interview conducted from his Albany cell, Bishop Vaughan characterized Governor Cuomo as "a Sunday Catholic" whose "position" on abortion may send him "straight to hell."

"He is in danger of going to hell if he dies tonight," the bishop declared.

He then compared the governor to a Nazi soldier who "may have objected to the Holocaust but nevertheless supported the German government's right to murder six million innocent Jews."

At St. Patrick's Cathedral soon after his release from jail, Bishop Vaughan expressed surprise that so much attention had been paid to his remarks about the governor.

"All I was saying is what he learned, and I learned, and all of you learned in the first grade: if you commit a serious sin and die without repenting, you go to hell."

What Bishop Vaughan learned in the first grade I can't account for. But he surely must have been taught somewhere in his seminary studies that rash judgment, that is, the act of assuming God's place in judging the state of another person's soul, can itself be seriously sinful.

Perhaps someone will be stepping forward now to warn the bishop that he, too, is on the road to hell for committing the sin of rash judgment.

# Followers of Jesus must always have strong faith, trust in Him

By Cindy Bassett  
Courier columnist

"Peter, we'll never reach the other side of the lake if you don't help us row," John said.

"I've had so much to eat today that I'm as lazy as a fat, old cat," Peter said.

The lake waters were as placid as the passengers in Peter's boat as the settling sun slipped behind the hillside. They were heading for Bethsaida where Jesus had promised to meet them.

"Even now I find what happened today difficult to believe," Philip said to the others. "How did Jesus do it?"

"All I know is that after Jesus had fin-

ished preaching to the crowd, I urged him to dismiss them," Thomas added. "There were more than 5,000 tired and hungry people. I worried about them getting to their homes. But when I told this to Jesus, he simply replied, 'Feed them.'"

"How can we feed so many when all we have among us is five loaves and a couple of fish?" I asked him.

"That's when Jesus told everyone to sit down," Philip continued. "He took our meager offering and blessed it. Then he told us to start distributing the food."

"Everyone, including me," Peter recalled, "had more food to eat than one has in a week! And it's not just me that makes this boat move so slowly. Have you forgotten the 12 baskets of leftovers that we put on board before we left?"

Everyone drifted back to his own thoughts as the boat continued on its steady course across the lake. Sometime during the night, the weather conditions changed abruptly.

Fierce winds churned the lake into such violent waves that the water rushed over the sides of the boat and nearly drowned its passengers.

Suddenly, Andrew screamed with terror. "Look over there!" he cried. "I see a

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