

Afterlife

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murderers, Brutus and Cassius, along with Christ's betrayer, Judas.

An 18th-century Swedish Protestant scientist, politician and mystic named Emanuel Swedenborg created an exhaustive series of books on the afterlife. His most popular book, *Heaven and Hell*, detailed his reported journeys into the spirit world where, guided by Christ, he observed the fate of the damned and the elect.

Swedenborg emphasized that no one is sent to hell; rather, he said, people condemn themselves to spend eternity there because their lives in this world have rendered them unfit to stand in the presence of the heavenly. Interestingly, he also

Father Edward Callens, SSCC, served as military chaplain, at 78

Father Edward Callens, SSCC, who served in the diocese for more than three decades and as personal theologian to Bishop Lawrence Casey during the Second Vatican Council, died Tuesday, Aug. 28, 1990. He was 78 years old.

A Memorial Mass for Father Callens will be celebrated at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Sept. 8, at St. Peter and Paul Church, 720 W. Main St., Rochester.

A native of Dendermonde, Belgium, Father Callens was born on March 7, 1912, to the late Camille and Virginia (Neeffs) Callens. He made his first profession of vows as a religious of the Sacred Hearts on Sept. 15, 1931. He professed final vows on May 15, 1934, and was ordained to the priesthood at Belgium's Santhoven Seminary on July 26, 1936.

A graduate of Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., Father Callens held a strong interest in biblical archaeology. He was a professor of patristics for many years at Sacred Hearts Seminary in Washington, D.C.; Queen of Peace Seminary, Jaffrey, New Hampshire; and St. Bernard's Seminary in Rochester. He also studied at the Gregorian University and the Pontifical Archaeological Institute in Rome.

During World War II, Father Callens held the rank of U.S. Army major serving as a military chaplain in both the European and Asian theaters. He received several distinguished honors, including silver and bronze stars, U.S. Army commendation ribbon, and the European Theatre Ribbon

Military

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"All decisions should be made by the (United Nations)," said Helen Dike, a Rochester resident.

A Red Cross worker in the European front during World War II, Dike said she was not totally opposed to using force against the Iraqis, but stressed that Bush should temper his actions by attempting to negotiate with Hussein. She also recommended that the United States leave the area as soon as the crisis is resolved.

"I think it's very important that (Bush) has a mind to go home when this thing is settled, and if he doesn't, I'll be the first on the street against him," she said.

Pointing out that she supported such moves as the current blockade against Iraqi shipping, Dike later added that, "I find myself at odds with a lot of these (demonstrators) who said, 'One, two, three, four, we don't want another war,' because I don't think war is certain if we use that blockade to full effect."

When asked to suggest solutions to the crisis, most of the demonstrators mentioned diplomacy and negotiation, primarily through such bodies as the United Nations.

"We feel the military solution imposed by the United States has ... worsened the situation immeasurably," said Diane Wilczewski, a member of the Corpus Christi committee. She said she feared the conflict could develop into a multi-national war involving nuclear weapons.

asserted that marriage existed in heaven and, indeed, was the highest state to which good souls could ascertain.

And as the millennium of Christ's birth approaches, speculations on the nature of life after death abound in U.S. popular culture. Several recent movies contain characters who are dead or who experience death. Two such films are *Ghost* and *Flatliners*, which deal with the disembodiment of the soul, traditional ideas of eternal reward and punishment, penance and forgiveness in the afterlife.

Both movies, along with numerous books on the market about near-death experiences, point to a growing fascination in U.S. society about the spiritual world and a gnawing disillusionment with the fruits of secular materialism. Both trends have emerged since the turbulent and questioning 1960s, according to pollster George

with battle stars.

In his later years, Father Callens was able to develop his interest in archaeology, participating in several excavations in North Africa, particularly to Carthage, where he studied the remains of the early church.

Most of his pastoral ministry took place in the Rochester diocese. During his pastorate of Our Lady of Victory in Roch-

Gallup Jr.

"I would guess that there's a greater interest now (in the afterlife) because of the disappointment of the material world; the failure of materialism to provide a more satisfying life," Gallup told the *Catholic Courier* in a telephone interview from his New Jersey office.

Gallup's 1982 book, *Adventures In Immortality*, detailed an extensive survey on belief in the afterlife. Interestingly, the study showed that U.S. citizens believe in far greater numbers in an afterlife of eternal rewards and punishments than do their European counterparts, Gallup said, attributing his findings to this country's separation of church and state.

But the churches in the United States are fairly stagnant when it comes to welcoming the insights and experiences of those who have had NDEs and want to share them

with their fellow Christians, according to an American Baptist minister from West Webster.

"There's been no attempt to make (NDEs) credible to the theological community," asserted the Rev. Judy Cressy, who claimed to have had an NDE-like experience in 1978. She noted that although many people experiencing NDEs come back with a desire to serve others and live more spiritual lives, the message they carry is not necessarily welcomed by church authorities.

"How would you like it if you were a pastor and you had a parishioner who had actually seen Jesus?" she asked rhetorically.

Those who have experienced a taste of the world beyond the grave may have something to offer the rest of the Christian community, but gaining acceptance will be an uphill battle, according to Kollar.

Those who have had NDEs "have a frustration in relating to anyone who has not had that experience," he said, noting that an NDE could well be a hallucination, and that some people don't believe in a split between the body and the soul.

One thing all Christians can agree on, though, is that Christ promised some sort of eternal life to his faithful followers. "Jesus resurrected," Kollar said. "I'm going to resurrect. That's my hope."

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