

CUF tries to advance church's teaching authority

Continued from page 1

But CUF members do not view themselves as simply critics. At the heart of CUF lies loyalty to the church and, specifically to the pope, observed Dorothy Macaluso, chairman of Rochester's St. Pius X CUF chapter.

"We teach the Catholic faith according to the Holy Father," Macaluso noted.

Rather than rejecting the teachings of Vatican II, Likoudis said CUF is, in fact, an outgrowth of the council.

The organization was formed, "out of the desire of a group of laymen to put flesh and blood on some of the decrees of Vatican II in terms of laymen," he remarked.

It was also formed, in part, to support Pope Paul VI following attacks on his 1968 encyclical, *Humane Vitae*, James Hitchcock observed in his chapter "Catholic Activist Conservatism in the United States," published in the 1991 book *Fundamentalisms Observed*.

Hitchcock pointed out that CUF, in one sense, treats *Humane Vitae* as a litmus test for orthodoxy, "precisely because it was widely rejected and because many clergy claimed it was not strictly binding. Thus those who disobey its moral teaching signal an unwillingness to acknowledge full papal authority and the supernaturalist world view supporting it."

Indeed, CUF strikes some people as an organization obsessed with sexual issues. Enhancing this image is the fact that the group's newspapers and newsletters — including the Rochester chapter's *CUF News* — frequently contain articles on such topics as homosexuality and sex education.

Beyond sexual issues, however, CUF seeks to educate members and other Catholics about a broad range of official church teachings, Likoudis said. Thus, the organization provides copies of Vatican II documents, encyclicals and papal statements.

As part of their educational emphasis, local chapter members are even discussing opening a private Catholic school, Macaluso said, because "people want their children taught according to what we believe is the Catholic faith."

CUF has, in fact, emerged as a defender of Vatican II reforms, Likoudis claimed, noting, "We stand with the



UBI PETRUS,
IBI ECCLESIA;
UBI ECCLESIA,
IBI NOS

Where Peter is,
there is the church;
Where the church is,
there we are

authorized reforms of Vatican II."

In 1981, Likoudis and fellow CUF member Kenneth Whitehead authored *The Pope, the Council, and the Mass*. Their book staunchly defends against traditionalist objections to the council's reforms and the new order of the Mass promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1969.

CUF members are disturbed not by the council's documents and reforms, Likoudis said, but rather by their perception that these official church pronouncements often have been ignored, misapplied or distorted.

"You had a rebellion, in the wake of the council," Likoudis explained, "the effects of which we still feel this day."

One problem, Likoudis argued, is that "the laity have not fulfilled their proper role in church and society."

CUF has tried to fill that role and to promote strict orthodoxy. Its efforts in that area have led to many of the negative perceptions of the organization.

In 1986, for example, CUF members lobbied successfully for the Vatican to overturn the imprimatur on the catechism book, *Christ Among Us*.

As M. Timothy Iglesias described the incident in "CUF and Dissent: A Case Study in Religious Conservatism," in the April 11, 1987 edition of *America*, CUF members argued "that the im-

primatur should not have been given because the content of the book transgressed church teaching."

By overturning the imprimatur, Iglesias said, "the Holy See gave *ex post facto* vindication of CUF's campaign."

But the incident also illustrates one of the reasons that CUF has been criticized, Iglesias noted.

Although the organization claims to respect legitimate authority in the church, Iglesias wrote, "when a 'legitimate authority' commands something distasteful or something that offends CUF's view of the church's true self, CUF's rationalistic ideology can find justification for independent judgment — even dissent — in certain cases."

Likoudis acknowledged that CUF members do, indeed, go over the heads of local bishops at times, petitioning Rome directly when they do not gain satisfaction from local authority on the abuses members perceive.

But Likoudis said CUF members resort to such appeals only after attempts they have tried to bring their concerns to the attention of the local bishop.

"This is supposed to be the age of the laity," Likoudis remarked. "Isn't it ironic that when the laity brings these abuses to the attention of the bishops, they get ignored?"

Bishops sometimes make mistakes in judgment, or rely on subordinates' judgments, Likoudis said, and this can result in activities that violate church teachings. "Bishops are not infallible," he declared.

The pope is infallible, on the other hand, when he speaks as head of the church on matters of faith and morals, Likoudis emphasized. Thus, he said, when perceived abuses are not corrected locally, the pope becomes the final arbiter.

Nevertheless, Likoudis maintained, "We don't go around like vigilantes hunting up abuses."

Macaluso denied rumors about CUF sending members to various meetings — armed with tape recorders or notebooks — in hopes of "catching" violations of church rules. "If I see something wrong, I will say something to the priest," she said, adding that any CUF member who acts as a "spy" does so on his or her own behalf.

But such activities have occurred, Dinges observed.

"Part of the problem is that what's articulated from the (CUF) front office is not necessarily articulated by the rank and file," Dinges said.

A case in point was the controversy surrounding former Seattle Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen.

In the early 1980s, CUF was linked to a letter-writing campaign that led to Vatican investigations into alleged archdiocesan abuses in such areas as the tribunal, liturgical practices, and ministry to homosexuals.

Following that investigation, the Vatican ordered Archbishop Hunthausen to relinquish some of his authority in 1986.

But when representatives from the archdiocese, the archdiocesan priests' council, and even the National Conference of Catholic Bishops objected to the Vatican's actions, papal authorities appointed a three-bishop panel to study the Seattle situation.

That panel — which included Cardinal John O'Connor of New York, whom many view as a defender of orthodoxy — found that while problems did exist in the archdiocese, allegations concerning Archbishop Hunthausen were unsubstantiated. Archbishop Hunthausen was consequently restored to full authority.

Likoudis denied that CUF was officially involved in the letter-writing campaign. Yet he admitted that some members of CUF became overzealous. "In the past, there were difficulties with angry, bitter people who wanted to use CUF for their own purposes," Likoudis acknowledged.

Further, Likoudis said, "Often CUF people are blamed for the unwarranted activities of others. Again and again, it has come to my attention that people will do things and claim to be CUF members, and they have never been CUF members."

Nevertheless, Likoudis observed that CUF members might sometimes come across as judgmental while trying to keep others towing the papal line.

"When you are dealing with severe abuses, it is so clear what the church teachings are," Likoudis declared. "We are called to be judgmental about that."

He allowed that room exists for dialogue on issues about which the pope has not issued a definitive statement. "I think the process of dialogue should be enhanced," Likoudis said. "I think people should be allowed to present their views on some things."

That view seemingly contradicts the notion that CUF members are completely close-minded. At the same time, Iglesias argued, CUF's tactics during confrontations and "dialogue" about church issues helps to foster some of the perceptions of the organization as self-righteous.

Ultimately, Iglesias concluded, "CUF is neither so wicked and dangerous as some of its opponents assume, nor the angel of light that it purports to be."

@bituaries

Sister Bernadine Boss, SSND, 78

ROCHESTER — Sister Bernadine Boss, SSND (formerly Sister M. John Bosco), died of bone cancer in the infirmary of the Sisters of Mercy on March 20. She was 78.

Born in Ogden, Sister Bernadine entered the School Sisters of Notre Dame 56 years ago from her home parish of Ss. Peter and Paul, Rochester.

Her career took her first to Baltimore, Md., where she taught at the schools of St. Joseph and Our Lady of Good Counsel from 1935-1940.

She then moved to Brooklyn, where she was an instructor at St. Rita's and St. Alphonsus schools from 1940-47. She moved back to Baltimore to work at St. Leo's from 1947-58.

New York City was Sister Bernadine's home from 1958-63, when she taught at St. Joseph's in Yorkville.

Beginning in 1963, Sister Bernadine spent the remainder of her career in Rochester, serving as principal of St. Michael's School during the 1960s and early '70s. She also taught at the school of Holy Redeemer.

She served as school secretary at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and as secretary and religion teacher at St. Charles Borromeo. She concluded her career as a secretary in the rectory at Holy Family Church.

Sister Bernadine was also active in Southwest Ecumenical Ministries, and distributed food for the organization at Holy Family Church. She also served as president of the parish's Altar and Rosary Society from 1991 until her death.

"She was into everything," noted Sister Lorraine Burns, SSND, principal of Holy Family School. "People that I talk to said that she was a marvelous school woman. She was very kind to the materially and emotionally poor," Sister Burns added.

A Mass of the Resurrection was celebrated March 23, 1992, at Holy Family Church. Interment took place at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery.

Memorial donations may be made to the SSND Development Fund, 345 Belden Hill Road, Wilton, Conn. 06897.