

New ideas, new departures in the liturgy

REVERENCE

By Rosemary Lauer

NOW THAT the "litniks" have won the battle of the vernacular, those who preside over the liturgy may be lulled into a false sense of security. They may imagine there is nothing more that can reasonably be asked of them and that they can enjoy a few years of freedom from free-wheeling criticism from the pews.

But alas and alack! It has only been proved that if you give them a liturgical inch they will want a liturgical mile. Now it's not enough that the priest prays in a language the pew-holder can understand. Mutterings are rising here and there to the effect that American Catholics - clerical and lay - have for too long been totally uncritical of the manner in which the sacraments are administered and communal worship offered.

Due, it is said, to a combination of slot-machine theology (before the vernacular, it was called *ex opere operato* theology), aesthetic anaesthesia in the seminaries, and universal passivity in the pews, relatively few people in the past were aware of the lack of dignity and reverence in our liturgy.

But the "new breed" Catholic knows all about slot-machine theology but he craves something more than "validity" in the sacraments and the Mass. Having emerged from the passivity of the pews even to the activity of the lectern (though not in every parish), the layman reacts, sometimes rather unpleasantly, when he finds that some of his priests seem to have only two objects in mind in their official functions: validity and American-style expeditiousness. To validity the layman has no objections, but he does more than just wince internally when he comes across the still-too-common examples of irreverent American expeditiousness in our churches.

AN ANNOUNCEMENT in a Chicago church that the seat collection is being increased to 25 cents, because "just as in any other business, a rise in overhead dictates an increase in the cost of the product," sounds very efficient, but slightly un-Christian. More Christian, however, than the installation of turnstiles to take care of the seat collection at the entrance of at least one Ohio church some time ago. A good bit less distasteful, but still quite contemporary-American, is the electronic system in an upper New York church which lights up signs saying, SIT, KNEEL, STAND.

Also very modern and in the American manner is the Joliet, Ill., pulpit which rises and descends like an elevator, making it unnecessary for the preacher to climb any stairs. But most hep of all is the taped Sacred Heart novena service conducted at a Milwaukee church - at least until a few years ago. The advantages were obvious; the priest "conducting" the service was free to wander back and forth between the sacristy and pulpit while the recording led the congregation in prayer.

It is still rather difficult to understand why a fellow spectator at this phenomenon was not more shocked by the electronic reality than by a facetious prediction that the next improvement would be a mechanical arm which would grasp the monstrance and make the sign-of-the-cross over the people.

ONE CAN be grateful that these marvels of modern American technology have not spread to many parishes. However, too many parish priests, in their fervor for expediting things à l'Americain, seem to confuse the sanctuary with the Indianapolis speedway. The champion may well be the downtown Brooklyn priest who said Mass (validly, in all likelihood), made the Sunday announcements, preached a sermon and distributed Holy Communion - all in 25 minutes. As he left the sanctuary he very understandably took a look at the clock in the rear of the church. When one sets a record, one likes to know it.

While there are - and we must be aware of this and thankful for it - many exceptions, especially among the younger clergy, far too many priests give the impression, through their voice and their movements, that offering Mass or administering the Sacraments requires no greater degree of exterior reverence than coaching the basketball team or running for a bus. The "prayers at the foot of the altar" all too often sound like this: URRRRRRRRUMPH. . . URRRRRRRRUMPH - the UMPH being the cue for the acolyte to say his part - and be quick about it. And we have all seen the priest whose chasuble takes off like a kite in the wind created by his celeritous pivoting and his pell-mell peregrinations from one side of the altar to the other. Only the initiate could guess that those frantic wavings over the oblations are signs-of-the-cross.

Sometimes one recalls the Old Testament gentleman who unthinkingly took hold of the Ark of the Covenant to steady it and was struck dead for his sacrilegious lack of reverence - and one thinks nostalgically of the good old days.

The unkindest cut of all is the celerity with which some priests are learning to read the English of the Mass just as rapidly as they formerly read the Latin. In some cases one can hardly tell which language is being used. And the tone of voice is not one to induce an attitude of reverent prayer on the part of the congregation.

OF COURSE, it is difficult not to make a routine, automatic function out of something that is done daily. But it can be done, as witness the Precious Blood Father who, being complimented on the reverence with which he had just offered Mass, said simply, "Well, it's the only thing I do every day that I'm absolutely sure is worthwhile."

When all is said and done, this is all the concerned layman is asking of his priests - that they perform their priestly functions in the manner which would follow naturally - or supernaturally - from a realization that what they are doing and what they are saying are the really important things in their lives. No one wants drama or sentimentality - just reverence; an internal reverence which expresses itself in a voice and manner befitting the sacredness of the action and the holiness of the One being addressed.

Perhaps one can even make a case for the claim that it is this sort of reverence which is truly American, not the headlong dash for the Last Gospel; perhaps one can argue that reverence is truly in the spirit of a genuine pragmatism, that it is most practical to do most carefully and attentively that which has the most important consequences. However that may be, many American Catholic priests might well take a lesson in reverence from the British-oriented Anglicans. There are even those among the new breed who are for this reason particularly anxious for a reunion of the Anglican and Roman communions, so that, to quote one such person, "I could high-tail it to the nearest Anglican church and assist at Mass offered as if it were an act of worship rather than a frantic effort to touch all bases and still clear the parking lot in time."

It may even be the lingering Anglican spirit at St. Thomas More church in Manhattan (formerly an Anglican church) which makes this parish such a liturgical

oasis in a vast desert. The 11 o'clock Sunday High Mass is something to rejoice the heart of those who have traveled the desert for years. One recalls too the events of November, 1963, and the many contrasts between the reverence and effective symbolism of the military ceremonies surrounding President Kennedy's funeral and some parts of the Catholic liturgy that were revealed to all the world on television. (And has the use of Latin in our religious services ever appeared more inane?)

A FEW more such experiences and we may actually take seriously the Sacred Constitution on the Liturgy: "The Church therefore earnestly desires that Christ's faithful, when present at (the Mass) should not be there as strangers or silent spectators; on the contrary, through a good understanding of the rites and prayers they should take part in the sacred action, conscious of what they are doing, with devotion and full collaboration. . . . The rite of the Mass is to be revised in such a way that the intrinsic nature and purpose of its several parts, as also the connection between them, may be more clearly manifested. . . . With the passage of time, however, there have crept into the rites of the sacraments and sacramentals certain features which have rendered their nature and purpose far from clear to the people of today, hence some changes have become necessary to adapt them to the needs of our own times."

The "needs of our own times" include the need of today's American Catholics whose sensitivity to the aesthetic and the symbolic in the liturgy often make their participation in common worship an exercise in mortification rather than the genuine liturgical prayer it should be.

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Father Raymond Misulich of St. Gregory of Nyssa Byzantine church in Washington prepares the offerings of bread and wine at a Byzantine Rite Mass of St. John Chrysostom in the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The liturgy, parts of which were recited in English, was one of the Masses said for Christian

unity during the week-long Chair of Unity Octave devotions at the Washington shrine. In his sermon, Father Misulich urged all Eastern and Latin Rite Catholics not to turn their backs upon others because of the convictions of their faith. - RNS

WOMEN

The following essay expands on questions discussed in last week's issue. One of 42 "position papers" presented to the Canadian hierarchy before the second session of Vatican II, this article has been brought up to date by the author for publication here. Cecelia Wallace is secretary of the Center of Ecumenical Studies, Toronto, Ontario.

By Cecelia Wallace

BEFORE THE second session of the Vatican Council (on Sept. 15, 1963, to be exact) Pope Paul announced that a number of laymen were to be admitted to the sessions of the Council, in recognition, presumably, of the importance of lay men in the Church. No such recognition, however, was yet extended to women, although this was discussed and promoted by several of the Council Fathers. The second session ended with no further indication that women were to participate.

Between sessions the women of the world waited for a further announcement as to whether half the human race were at last to be represented at a council of the Roman Catholic Church. Finally, after the opening of the third session, on Sept. 20, the name of the first woman auditor was announced: Mlle. Marie-Louise Monnet, and later others (eight nuns and seven laywomen in all). This announcement was somewhat dampened by the press, that the women were expected to attend general congregations of the Council only when questions associated with women were debated (one can imagine the paucity of attendance this would entail, considering

the male-mentality of the Church!). Since women have for some time been under the impression that all questions in the Church ultimately concern them (for example the liturgy, the sources of revelation, ecumenism, etc.), as well as laity who happen to be male, this announcement surprised them, although, perhaps, it shouldn't have, considering the attitudes toward women which are still widely present in the Church. Finally, however, and perhaps because a number of women publicly complained about this qualification, the women auditors appeared at all sessions of the Council. There are other avenues through which Catholic women can make their views known publicly to the Council Fathers so, as far as stating them is concerned, their admission to the Vatican Council may not have been absolutely necessary. Symbolically, however, for the image of the Church being projected to women throughout the modern world the issue is of importance, because to many of them, their lack of participation has meant that the Catholic Church still condones their complete subordination to and dependence upon men. This is an image women in the modern world resent and, in fact, there is evidence that they have resented it throughout all of history.

WOMEN TODAY are very much aware of their changing status in society. They are dissatisfied with the male image of women that has constantly been projected throughout the centuries and canonized by much theological thought on the part of saints and scholars. Today, women are no longer in a mood to accept stereotyped images passed down through history about which they were not consulted, or contemptuous attitudes toward their sex, even if these are based on interpretations (which are frequently found to be misinterpretations) of Sacred Scripture.

Religious ideas of women which deprive her (even if unconsciously) of full maturity as a human person with an adult role to play in the Church, the family, and the world because (and not in spite of) her sex will ultimately be rejected. These include attitudes which constantly extol the maternal role of woman at the expense of her other attributes as a human person (and at the expense of the paternal role of men); and also attitudes which pay lip-service to woman's importance as the co-partner of man, while, in fact, denying her the means for fulfilling that partnership in the Church and the world.

Women today do not deny the importance of their maternal role, but they want to be seen in a much larger perspective. . . . as woman, created by God. . . . not for man, in the sense that she merely serves man in the way in which he decrees, but to exist in her own right because man has need of her. This implies the necessity for spiritual, psychological and intellectual intercourse between the sexes in every field for the proper formation of the Church and society, insofar as the human personality plays a part in this. This is a positive, active role, not a passive, negative one. And it implies tension between the sexes as well as their union - a creative tension and union.

NONE OF THE negative attitudes towards women described above appear in the official teachings of the Church. And the writings of recent popes have changed sharply from viewing women's role as confined almost entirely to the family too, not only recommending, but insisting that she enter social and political life and play a full part in the life of the Church. Nevertheless, negative conceptions of woman's role still cling to much of Catholic thought and fre-

quently appear in the works of theologians and other religious writers, even today. The maternal image overshadows every other image of woman, whereas the paternal role of man in the family and the world are rarely mentioned. As a father, man is thought of in terms of "worker" or "breadwinner" (which is precisely the error of communism in regard to the human personality); or as the governor or creator of civilization and society, in which it is erroneously thought he needs no help from woman, in spite of Scriptural indications to the contrary. (cf. Genesis 1, 28, in which the command to increase and multiply and subdue the earth was given to both sexes.)

Another constant theme is that of woman's submission to man as a matter of law, because, by virtue of man's capacity for logic and reason - whereas woman is intuitive - he is more fitted to rule. Such a thesis, which defies rational observation and which would be immediately rejected by any competent theologian, sociologist or psychologist of today, I found defended by an aspirant to the degree of Doctor of Theology as late as 1959, duly annotated by references to Scripture, the early Church Fathers and St. Thomas Aquinas. (1) Needless to say, if many religious thinkers continue to view women in this limited, negative way, they will lose them to secular ideologies and philosophies which appear to them to be more consonant with their own views of their own human dignity (a process which is at work now and is constantly being accelerated). This view subordinates woman to man, as a child to its father and is one in which her freedom to submit (or not to submit) is ignored. Even God does not force woman's submission. The submission of each sex to the other, as enjoined by St. Paul, is a matter of love, not law.

The first human relationship was that between a man and a woman and this was ordained by God. This preceded any other form of relationship in society, religious or secular, even that of the relationship between parents and children. It is necessary, then, to re-examine what this means, because it is fundamental to all of human existence and its significance extends throughout the whole of creation. It can no longer mean today a relationship rooted in ideas developed in a society which was patriarchal (or matriarchal) in structure. The former makes a constant child of woman, the latter a constant child of man. It cannot remain either a structure of society viewed as parental, although this is more balanced in its effects. It must ultimately return to the meaning of the man-woman relationship, before even children are considered, a relationship founded on the difference and the union of the sexes. (2)

THE ESSENCE of the problem in regard to modern woman, then, which the Church and the Vatican Council must face and make some statement upon is that of the need for the Church to initiate or foster a process of theological thought which does not cling to and depend too greatly upon the past, but which constantly examines and re-defines the role of women (and the sexes) as greater understanding of the meaning of sexuality, male or female, and its implications for the Church, the family, and the world is reached. This is a process to which women themselves must contribute, as theologians, as sociologists, as psychologists, and so on. And also it needs to be stated much more forcefully by the Church and the Vatican Council that the role of woman is equal to that of man before God and cannot be dissociated from that of man in any field of human activity, religious or secular. Therefore, no specific areas in which she

may or may not fulfill her role should be laid down for her. This is in line with the thinking of recent popes and many bishops. The feminine contribution, like that of man, consists, not in what she does but in what she is. And much of its essence, and its eventual fulfillment, like that of man, is veiled in mystery.

Another and different reading of Scriptural texts in the light of increasing knowledge - and with an awareness that many prevalent ideas regarding women are the products of the sexual, social, historical, cultural (and often religious) conditioning of theologians - would result in theological interpretations much more favorable to the dignity of women and more in harmony with Christian thinking on the worth and dignity of the person, male or female. Any ideas which have an obvious origin in cultural or other prejudice, even if contained in Scripture, should be discarded. It is now necessary for theologians to examine the Scriptural texts for signs of prejudice concerning women, just as it has become necessary to examine it for references which are derogatory to the Jews - for it is now generally recognized that the Scriptural authors, too, were men of their time.

It is also necessary to examine the whole history of theological thought in order to correct prejudices and misinterpretations of the role of women which are still affecting Catholic life and thought and which make Christian teaching incomprehensible to millions of women, both in the Church and outside of it.

If this is done, under the instigation of the Vatican Council, and under the aegis of the spirit of love and charity present in the Church, surely then we will discover new, deeper, more profound and truly Christ-centered perspectives on the meaning of the sexes, and the meaning of women in the Church, the family and the world. And through these the presence of women at ecumenical Councils will be welcomed not only as auditors, but as consultants, where qualified, to the council Fathers and the bishops of the universal Church. (3)

FOOTNOTES

1. The Exclusion of Women from Holy Orders, by Rev. J. A. Wahl, Catholic University of America, Washington, 1959. Although the author states several times that the sexes are equal, he implicitly denies it by concluding that men are more fitted to be priests than women because they are more logical, less emotional, more intellectual and so on, than women. These are traits regarded in Western culture as the apex of man's reasoning ability. The argument that they define masculinity fails if we consider non-Western cultures. The logical abstractions of the West are alien to the Oriental mind. Chinese philosophers (men) developed a society founded on inter-personal relationships, not on scientific thought and one in which appear many of the "passive" elements normally attributed to women in the West. Are we to conclude, then, following Father Wahl's argument, that Chinese men are less fitted than those of the West to be priests? As women in the West gain access to philosophical, scientific and theological thought, they will increase their ability to handle it. This is a matter of Western education and has nothing to do with the initial capabilities, or lack of them, of either sex. And men of other cultures are often more emotional than Western women. There is not the slightest indication in Scripture that Our Lord felt constrained to use the abstractions of Western thought, because He was a man.

2. We pride ourselves today in Western Christian societies on the relative emancipation we have granted women. In actual historical fact, she was often granted freedom and more involvement in the total life of the community in other societies and previous cultures, for example in the Middle Ages (a fact which historians are just beginning to realize), the apex of record that their children suffered unduly because of this. In fact, they seem to suffer more in our present child-centered North American society.

3. A disappointing incident, however, occurred during the Third Session, indicating how far women have still to go to gain recognition in the Church. The noted woman economist, Barbara Ward, from her home in Ghana, outlined a plan for a world-wide attack on poverty and sent it to the council. This gained the enthusiastic support of Cardinal Suenens, was circulated among 50 key bishops and forwarded to the Pope. A layman at the council, James L. Norris, suggested that Miss Ward be asked to come to the council and speak to the assembled bishops. However, this proposal was turned down as being "premature" and the result was that Mr. Norris presented a proposal for the relief of poverty himself. Miss Ward's proposal was that a permanent secretariat be formed to promote Catholic activity with other Christians in an assault on poverty.

Thus we see that a woman can make suggestions which will be acceptable to the council. However, she may not address the Fathers about it in person. Shades of St. Paul! One wonders what the fine distinction is between writing and speaking in such a case.

LAITY

LONDON (NC) - The views of the laity on liturgical changes are being systematically sought in preparation for the Catholic hierarchy's Feb. 3 meeting on the subject.

Archbishop John C. Heenan of West-

minster, president of the English bishops' conference, has instructed all pastors of the archdiocese to hold parish meetings and to report to him on the peoples' views.

Some other bishops are expected to

follow suit. Bishop George Dwyer of Leeds has already asked his priests to get the feeling of the people both by holding parochial meetings and consulting leaders of lay organizations.

Archbishop Heenan in his message said it is clear that the present stage of the liturgical changes cannot be allowed to remain too long. He said that a "more consistent language pattern" is obviously required.

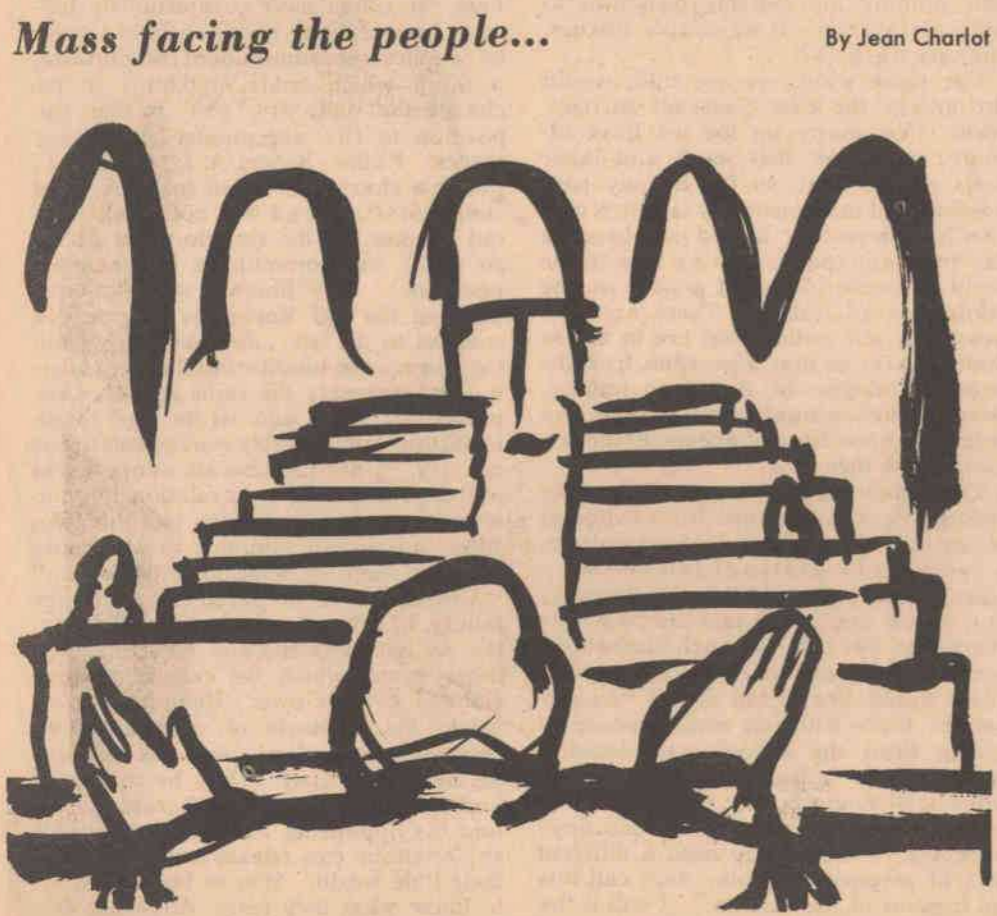
First changes providing for English in the Mass went into effect in England Nov. 29. It was announced that the

second stage in the use of English for such Old Testament texts as the gradual will probably be introduced at Easter. Meanwhile, the changes provided by the post-conciliar liturgy commission in Rome are to become effective March 7.

The weekly Catholic Herald in discussing Archbishop Heenan's call for parish meetings on the liturgy said Jan. 15:

"Discussion at the parish meetings is expected to center round four main questions - the amount of 'bobbing up and down,' as it has been referred to in changing positions from kneeling, to standing, to sitting and so on; and the awkwardness of the transitions from English to Latin, and back; the awkwardness of some of the English phrases used; and the lack of uniformity between parishes over the optional use of the vernacular in weekday Masses. . . .

"The most sensible solution might be to decree that all parts of the Mass said aloud - and the number might be progressively increased - should be in the vernacular."



...on a weekday!

Marisa For documentation when you have finished.

## question ? box

By Msgr. J. D. Conway

Q. I'm confused. I wish someone would straighten me out. The new ceremonies of the Mass are said to bring the Mass up to date and make it more meaningful to people. But although some of the language has at last been changed to that of our country, someone forgot to bring the words up to date. So they are still the archaic ones of ancient times, which are meaningless to modern people.



Although these forms are said to bring the participation of the people in the Mass, many refuse to participate, as they are extremely antagonistic toward having these empty, superficial forms imposed on them, when they want to make the highest use of the time at Mass for prayer, which they don't find much time for during the week, in these times of living and working under pressure.

Perhaps it would be better to concentrate more on substance than on ceremony. It would suit the mentality of the hurried people of the U.S. better if they could leave the frantic world behind them on Sundays for a few blessed moments of quiet-reading of indulged prayers and meditations in well-written modern language, and a sermon of substance by well-trained speakers, instead of having to take part in a spiritual hootenanny with calisthenics!

A. Your lack of enthusiasm for our revised liturgy is reportedly shared by a number of Catholics who find change difficult. A well worn rut is comfortable and secure; blazing trails to progress requires a vision of goals, good will, and confidence. If you are not ready to trust the judgment of the bishops of the Church gathered in solemn council with the pope, your reluctance to jump from the rut and cooperate in moving in the direction of modernity is quite natural.

I have not had occasion to probe the reactions of people outside my own parish, but so far I have heard nothing but enthusiastic praise for the changes. Even some of my oldest parishioners stopped at the church door to express their happiness.

It is possible that you were not well prepared to understand the meaning and purpose of the new changes. Has your parish had general participation of the people in Masses - in Latin - during the past six or seven years, as Pope Pius XII requested? In recent months, when your priests explained the nature of the Mass and the purpose of our participation in it, were you listening with an open mind - or simply being determined not to like it? Have you read the many instructive articles on this subject which have appeared in your diocesan paper and in various Catholic magazines during the past year? Have you attended any study groups or lectures on the liturgy?

I can readily understand that if you face these new changes cold and unprepared they can leave you cold. You can be sure that the changes will endure, and that there will be more in the future. So it will make your religious life more satisfying and fruitful if you start trying to learn and understand rather than letting yourself burn with resentment. Humility is a beautiful Christian virtue.

Some of the things you write are simply not true. There may be a few archaisms clinging to the English of the Mass ("And with your spirit," is one I can think of) but most of the Biblical portions are as modern as they can possibly be without distorting the inspired Word of God. The Epistles and Gospels are so up-to-date that they have not yet been published in Bible form. Try listening more carefully next Sunday! Your ideas of archaism must differ from mine. I am not familiar with a single indulged prayer which is written in good, plain modern English. Say your favorite prayers and make your meditations, by all means, but by giving a little thought to your hurried existence you should be able to fit them into a few moments stolen from parties or TV, rather than from the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

Finally, let me assure you that for those who understand them the new ceremonies are not "empty, superficial forms." Antagonism can make them seem so to a person who makes no serious effort to understand them. Why not give it a good, honest, wholehearted try? And start by doing some study. And remember that a generous community spirit is necessary; the selfish attitude which seeks to steal Mass time for private devotions will never produce participation.

Q. In regard to contraception, do you feel that God judges those with large families the same as those with only a few children? After my having polio plus nine pregnancies, we fell into the sin for awhile. I live in grace now, but the priest spoke so severely in confession I know I shall fear death when it comes. My legs were shaking as I left the confessional. Even yet I feel like an outcast in my religion.

A. When you get to heaven they will not only kill the fatted calf, they will throw a glorious banquet, and the confessor who gave you hell will sit at the far end of the table. No one will tell him to come up higher.

WE ARE NOT  
PERFECTLY  
FREE  
UNTIL WE  
LIVE  
IN PURE  
HOPE

MERTON

ANDER

## Morals and politics

By John Leo

A PRESIDENT who tries to govern by consensus is likely to be a great believer in such things as opinion polls and trial balloons - they are, after all, prime ways of locating the consensus he is supposed to be governing by.

So it is with President Johnson, who sends up so many trial balloons that the newsmen who are forced to launch them often feel they are cogs in the great Johnson machine. The State of the Union message contained a carnival's worth of balloons, but the one many Catholics noticed first was the sentence carrying the veiled suggestion of U. S. birth control aid to underdeveloped nations. "I will seek," said the President, "new ways to use our knowledge to help deal with the explosion in our world population and the growing scarcity in world resources."

I suspect the President is pleased by how



little fire the balloon drew. In 1959, the Draper report to President Eisenhower contained a similar one-sentence suggestion of birth control aid. It resulted in a great clamor in the Catholic press, an attack from the NCWC Family Life director, a strong formal condemnation by the U.S. Catholic bishops, a good deal of non-Catholic opposition and a series of charges, countercharges and TV debates. In short, it brought a national furor. Whatever his private thoughts on the matter, President Eisenhower quickly disavowed the Draper suggestion and the issue died.

Despite a few Draperish proposals from low ranking members of the Kennedy administration, it was widely assumed that the issue would probably not come to a head again while a Catholic was in office. Under Johnson it probably will. Pressure for birth control aid to foreign nations has mounted steadily, not so importantly from the point of view of consensus government, a great many Americans have changed their mind since the flap over the Draper report, including President Eisenhower and a considerable number of Catholics. Dr. Gallup tells us

that 78 per cent of American Catholics favor giving birth control information to anyone who wants it. This is not the same as approving material aid, but it represents a major shift of opinion nonetheless.

THE POLL may have been the chief reason President Johnson thought it worth while to send up a fresh balloon at this time. As I said, I expect he is pleased with the results. Instead of a barrage on the 1959 model it drew only a single shotgun blast from Msgr. John Knott, head of the NCWC Family Life bureau. A regrettable blast it was, defensive and emotional, and my guess is that it confirmed the President's suspicion that the consensus here has indeed shifted.

First of all, Msgr. Knott accused the President of making an "emotional approach" to the problem in the State of the Union message. My own reading of the President's comment, already quoted in full in this column, does not sustain this sort of charge. On the other hand, Msgr. Knott makes a couple of emotional charges of his own: 1) that "popular opinion" says the Catholic Church no longer believes birth control is evil (which is not true); and 2) that the President is "unscientific" and a victim of a "bogey man" for countenancing the demographic projections which indicate a mighty crowded world by the year 2000 unless something is done.

Father Raymond Bosler's *Criterion*, Indianapolis archdiocesan paper, commented in this vein: "The President got his 'unscientific' phrase from demographic scientists. Where did Msgr. Knott get his knowledge on population growth? And how can he be so sure and cocky about it?" The *Criterion* also suggested, as gently as possible, that perhaps Msgr. Knott is a bit out of the mainstream of Catholic thinking on this problem. The Knott statement, said the editorial, "reads as though it were written by a man who is totally unaware of what Catholic theologians and leaders in the council are writing and saying about the problem President Johnson brought out into the open."

There is also question here about whether the head of the Family Life bureau ought to be a Catholic spokesman on international population problems. The areas of competence are quite distinct, and perhaps the offices should be as well.

THERE IS another, more serious question, about whether Msgr. Knott, or anyone else, can determine the political (and hence, prudential) course that American Catholic voters will take on the matter. In his statement, Msgr. Knott said that Catholics will support one course of action, but not another. If he does in fact know which way Catholics as a group will vote, then he is more clairvoyant than I. Personally, I have no idea which way Catholics, Protestants, Buddhists or vegetarians will cast their ballots.

If he means that Catholics cannot vote for birth control aid to people who want it and need it, then he is simply wrong. There are many conditions under which a conscientious and informed Catholic could decide that the common good requires him to go along with the majority whose moral view is quite opposite to his own. You simply cannot go in a direct line from moral conviction to all-out attempt to frame that conviction in political policy.

Episcopal choir to demonstrate proper

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. (NC) - The choir of Christ Episcopal cathedral will demonstrate English proper of the Mass before a Jan. 31 workshop being conducted by the Indianapolis Archdiocesan Music Commission. Organists and choir directors in Indianapolis area Catholic parishes are participating in the program in Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic church.

## Protestantism and unity

By Rev. Martin E. Morly

NOT LONG AGO I sat on a committee which was making plans for observing the January Octave of Christian Unity.

Someone proposed that a paper should be presented on "The Historic Contribution of Protestantism to Christian Unity." One of the Roman Catholics present remarked that he did not think his would go over so well in his community. "Turn a man who is full of contagious diseases loose in a health clinic and you will have a pretty good idea of how Catholics think of Protestants on the matter of unity." To him, or to the people he was representing, Protestantism is a collection of contagious diseases. The essence of Protestantism is its divisiveness, its individualistic self-centeredness, and maybe even its ability to promote cantankerousness.

Blame this picture on old Bishop Bossuet, who almost three centuries ago (1688) in his history of the variations of Protestantism stamped on the mind of Europeans the idea that "variations" and "divisions" represented the heart of the Protestant movement. Any deviation from Roman authority would place a person on the greased skid that led down into relativism and disintegration. Bossuet, however, was a rather sophisticated historian and a great preacher and he can



hardly be blamed for all the primitive translations of the doctrine of variety.

Blame, then, the old Catholic catechisms and the old-line teachers of these catechisms. They often found it easy to skip over all traces of Protestant loyalty to God in Christ, all signs of evangelical piety and doctrinal concern, to get to the one simple point: avoid Protestantism like the plague because Protestantism is the plague. Such teaching is an effective way of holding the loyalty of people: show the enemy in as bad a light as possible; this makes home base look ever more attractive.

BLAME, if you will, the serious Catholic introductions to the churches of the world. If I really want reference to the longest possible lists of Protestant denominations I always turn to the appendix of one or another of the Catholic works. There I will find 27 varieties of Baptists. The "Two-Seed-in-The-Spirit Presbyterians Baptists" are there, with a national membership of 201; and the "Seventh Day Baptists (German 1728)" are there with 150 members. Some colorful titles will be present, such as "House of God, which is the Church of the Living God, the Pillar and the Ground of the Truth, Inc." which, by the way, numbers 4,838 members. In all over 250 such names can be turned up.

Such Catholic introductions are not lying or inventing. But I am not sure they are fair to the vision of church life which devoted Protestants themselves hold. Thus about 18 million of America's 20 million Baptists belong to two largely white and two negro bodies; all the other groups are relatively insignificant splinters or satellites. To note the move from 27 to four is not theologically satisfying to the Catholic (I hope), but it does present some coherent outline of religious life different from the picture of "mere variety and division" which is often promoted.

Blame the Protestants for the picture, too. Or blame them especially. Where there is so much smoke there must be a great deal of fire, and there is. After visiting Bossuet, old catechisms and long Catholic catalogs of Protestant division, one still notes the truth behind their assertions. While division is not the only remarkable feature of Protestantism, it is obviously a remarkable one.

STILL, Protestants can rightfully talk about their contribution to Christian unity. The earliest Protestants did not want to conceive of themselves as adding to Christian problems; they wanted to solve them. Their belief that a sort of primitive Christianity could be restored as the basis for reunion may have been ill-conceived or historically impossible.

They did contribute to the problem they wanted to solve. But many Protestants have always had a bad conscience about the problem and many of them have been working for four and a half centuries to reunify the churches. These efforts have been markedly accelerated for over a half century and they are bearing fruit in organic reunions, mergers, councils, federations, and conversational openings to Roman and Orthodox Catholics.

"The right of private judgment" is a convenient summary of some Protestants' divisive self-interpretation. But Luther and Calvin would have had none of it, nor would most Anglicans of the world. They and countless cousins who share their views make up the majority of world Protestantism. It was during the Enlightenment period when the churchless dictum began to be celebrated. For most Reformers, one was judged by the Scripture and perhaps by the tradition of the Church; he was not lord of the Scripture; his was no autonomous ego that could trample sacred precincts.

On the other hand, unity under a common authority is not the only point to which Protestants attach value in the Church. They do recognize a quest for truth which is never to be relieved, a call to conscience which no imposed authority can relax. I hope they bring something of this old vigor into any renewed and uniting Church.

Not long ago the *Saturday Evening Post* ran what seemed to me to be a silly article by two Baptist ministers. They tried to make it seem that division and competition are a carrying out of the will of God for His Church. They confused the life of administration with the life of the Spirit. Happily, they are not typical.

I have not been trying to say that Catholics would solve their problems by taking on the legacy of Protestant division. I hope, however, that during the Octave of Christian Unity each year they will look at other, more salutary features of Protestant life.

OLD AND NEW

## Good words and bad

By Garry Wills

I find the people strangely fantasized.  
Possess'd with rumors, full of idle dreams,  
Not knowing what they fear, but full of fear.  
- Shakespeare, King John

THE CHALLENGE of today's extremism is not that we have fantasists among us, malcontents, men frightened and therefore violent. All societies have these. Our problem is that we have lost the art of assuaging their fears or disarming their violence. Some have already suggested that the defeat of Goldwater should have made the extremists lie down and peacefully expire; but the kooks were unresponsive enough to go right on thinking what they thought, so the arena of political debate has proved ineffective against them - and more drastic measures must be taken.

But the public arena did not fail. It simply was not tried. It is a point of honor with many liberals not to take the extremist arguments seriously enough to answer them. When Mr. Brent Bozell explained to the Birchers that, even from their own narrow premises, there is no valid argument for impeaching Chief Justice Warren, he was attacked for presuming to discuss the matter at all. Even to argue with extremists is to join them. This is guilt-by-association carried to new - well, to new extremes. And it leaves us with nothing but extreme responses to political fantasy. If we cannot discuss, what are we to do?

The right wing, we are told, would like to saw the East Coast off our continent. Yet many on the left have already sawed off the South and large parts of the West, so far as any consideration of their mentality is concerned. The fundamentalist hatred of Harvard has its counterparts - as we saw in the rapid response of hatred poured on the whole city of Dallas. There are vast sectors of our nation that are to be excluded, so far as that is possible, from the serious dialogue of American politics. Even the professional articulators will not bother to open lines of argument and response with them.

The right-wing fanatic literally cannot distinguish a communist from a liberal of any sort. The left-wing intellectual can, is he cares to, distinguish between a Lincoln Rockwell and a Barry Goldwater. But, as we saw in the last campaign, he often does not care to. Such distinctions bore out educated and educating class. They would like to kill all the "conservative" birds with one stone, instead of giving them the serious consideration given to other "misguided" groups. They will not distinguish, say, the Minute Men (who deserve close legislative scrutiny) from the Birchers (who need a different sort of response). Some dare call this the treason of the "clerks." I call it the mark of the intellectual dilettante - of the men who want to plan a great society

without undertaking any of the dreary tasks of public education this involves.

Fear feeds on ignorance. When the left does not deign to answer the charges of the right, it confirms the fanatics in their suspicion and puzzles even the uncommitted. Furthermore, the man who has not taken the trouble to understand what bothers the "extremists," who does not distinguish the many different strains in the criticism of the Establishment, who puts them all down to pathological "discontent," becomes inordinately frightened when that hazy mass "over there" grows in numbers. He cannot understand this except as an eruption of pure unreason, a thing unpredictable and therefore unmanageable by any means short of coercion. Then, like boxers who are invisible to each other, both sides fail wildly, trying to connect with the menace that could be anywhere in the air around them.

I do not mean, of course, that every fanatic can be won over with sweet reason. But his charges can be robbed of credibility, the puzzlement of others can be allayed. For instance: The liberal tells us that he loves his country with a true patriotism, that the language of the extremists is one of "super-patriotism." But the liberals have not elaborated a rhetoric of their true patriotism, and it puzzles many Americans to have the traditional patriotic language suddenly belittled, with nothing better to put in its place. In language, the opposite of Gresham's law holds - good words drive out bad.

EXACTLY THE SAME thing is true of "anti-communism." The liberals assure us that theirs is the true anti-communism, that the Bircher variety is spurious. But they have conspicuously failed to present their views as a valid answer to people's uneasiness about communism, a thing which lends credibility to the charge that they are "soft" in their opposition to the communist ideas and tactics. Father Robert A. Graham, S.J., put this charge very well in an issue of *America*: "Liberals are not at all without blame for the situation that drives so many anti-communists into extreme positions. The liberals seem to have adopted the old European slogan, No enemies to the left. . . few have applied to the communist totalitarian danger (internal or external) the same zeal they deployed for years against the nazi totalitarianism and nazi-like movements in this country. Until the liberals adopt a less ambiguous position in relation to communism, extremist groups like the John Birch society will continue to win ready credence among average citizens. . ."

Unless he is prepared to admit the failure of our government by reflection, the American intellectual must pre-empt those areas which the extremists have claimed as their own. He must open up again the channels of communication between the academic and the popular segments of society. Only he can do it; and by doing it he will liberate himself and his opponents. The challenge of his explanations can release extremists from their little world. Men at last will come to know what they fear. And what they feared will turn out not to have been, after all, their fellow citizens.

## Formidable conservative

SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL, like Abraham Lincoln, was a conservative of a kind which many modern conservatives cannot abide, and which many modern liberals cannot help but admire. He was

both formidable and human. His roots sunk deep in history, he nevertheless was acutely conscious of the complexities of the world in which he lived. A politician by nature, he was also aware that the machinery of government, like industrial technocracy, can wreak havoc once it fails to subserve human ends. Writing of the events that led to World War I, he said: "Nothing in human power could break this fatal chain, once it had begun to uncoil. A situation had been created in which hundreds of officials had only to do their prescribed duty in their respective countries to wreck the world. They did their duty."

The Churchillian style is not likely to be relegated to the library stacks, so long as men are alive who remember the newspaper photos of that stout figure of an English bulldog with a cigar stalking the smoking ruins of London during the blitz; or who remember the fierce roll of immortal lines that undulated through short wave static across the sea into our breakfast table radios during his finest hour.

Perhaps less well known, but not likely to be forgotten by many of his political opponents, is the Churchillian wit, some of which is collected in Leon A. Harris' recent *The Fine Art of Political Wit*. Churchill campaigned as doggedly against his political opponents as he did against Hitler, although not always with the same success. Campaigning in 1950, he found ready ammunition in some of the technical jargon thrown around by Labor opponents. "There is a lovely one about houses and homes," he told a crowd at Cardiff. "They are in the future to be called 'accommodation units.' I don't know how we are to sing our old song 'Home Sweet Home.'" Sir Winston then sang: "Accommodation Unit, Sweet Accommodation Unit, there's no place like our Accommodation Unit."

On another occasion he said of an unsuccessful Tory candidate's decision to run for another House seat as a Liberal candidate: "It's the only recorded instance in history of a rat swimming towards a sinking ship."

Perhaps the most famous riposte attributed to Sir Winston was his reply to George Bernard Shaw's invitation to an opening of one of his plays. Shaw sent two tickets, saying, "Bring a friend if you have one." To which Churchill replied that he was all booked up for opening night but would be glad to take two tickets for the second performance, "if there is one." - Bud Johnson

