

Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Newsletter

Volume 12 Number 1 Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Newsletter December 1988

Catholic Scholarship, God's Glory and Sanctity

I'm writing this immediately after our annual convention in Boston, and I chose the title given above as a way of introducing the theme that will be focal in our convention for next year.

But before saying something about next year's meeting I want to report briefly on the one recently concluded in Boston. It was, in my opinion, an exceptionally good one. It was, I think, by far the best attended that we ever had, with approximately one hundred and fifty Fellowship members present for the banquet on Saturday evening, when the special Cardinal O'Boyle Award for defense of the faith was given to John Ford, S.J., and the Cardinal Wright Award was given to John Harvey, O.S.F.S., two great priest scholars who embody the ideals of the Fellowship. Cardinal Law honored us with his presence at the banquet and on the next morning was the principal celebrant and homilist at Mass. I want to thank all the speakers at the Convention for the care they took to prepare first rate papers for presentation and discussion during the meeting. I also want to thank Msgr. Clark, Terry Archer, and many others who

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Catholic Scholarship (Continued)

worked so hard to prepare for the convention. And finally I want to thank all those who were able to come to Boston for the great contributions they made to its success. I know that many other members of the Fellowship would have liked to take part but were not, unfortunately, able to do so. As soon as possible we will make the proceedings available so that all members will have a chance to read the many splendid papers that were given.

During the convention the Board met to determine the theme for next year's meeting. It will be "Recovering the Sacred", and it will be an effort to explore, in a scholarly way, the biblical, liturgical, and theological sources of our lives as Catholics, called to give glory to God and to participate in the redeeming work of His Son and our brother. And to do so by carrying out responsibly and faithfully our work as scholars, priests, religious, husbands and wives, or as unmarried men and women in a world that yearns for the good news mediated to us by our Catholic faith. In the months ahead a lot of work will have to be done to prepare for next year's meeting, to identify more specific topics relating to the general theme and the persons who could best articulate these topics in well-prepared papers.

I also think that there should be a change somewhat in the format of the convention for next year. Right after the convention Regis Foster and John Guegen met with me to suggest a format that might make attendance at the convention more attractive for

those members of the Fellowship who are not by profession theologians or philosophers but rather social scientists, humanists, scientists, lawyers and doctors. They suggested that the workshops on Friday afternoon be given over to these areas of scholarly inquiry and that topics taken up in them not be related of necessity to the general theme of the convention. Rather, they should be so designed as to allow Fellowship members in these disciplines to focus on some important on-going work in their own disciplines, approached, of course, from the perspective of a scholar who sees his scholarly work as a commitment of his intelligence to the faith. Philosophers and theologians among the membership could learn a lot by sitting in on such workshops, one would think, and workshops of this kind will provide an opportunity for members in these disciplines, particularly those beginning their work and under the pressure to come up with publications, a chance to do some work that could be used in some way to help their growth in their chosen fields of study. This seems like a good idea to me, and in the months ahead, with the help of the Board of Directors, I will do what I can to meet this need.

I urge all members to continue efforts to interest colleagues, particularly younger ones, to become members and help us in our efforts to give God glory and participate in the redemptive work of Christ by hard scholarly work.

William E. May

We have been informed of the death of a member of the Fellowship, Msgr. Robert Tensing. We ask your prayers for the repose of his soul. R.I.P.

"...Causa Finita Est?"

A keynote of the proceedings of the 37th General Meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops seemed to be a dissonance between rhetoric and reality.

The tension between Rome and America was palpable from the very substance of the issues presented on the agenda. The chief items concerned an American statement on the procedures whereby bishops would carry out their responsibility to enforce the integrity of Catholic teaching; and a Roman draft on the theological and juridical nature of episcopal conferences, whose central thesis was that conferences as such do not possess a munus magisterij. Rome issued a sudden non placet to the American document while the U.S. bishops fired back a non placet of their own to the Roman document.

The inference to be drawn from these facts is that Rome and America are not thinking in harmony. Yet, like a drumbeat, the presentations of the main spokesmen for the American viewpoint were studded with protestations of loyalty, gratitude and agreement with the Holy See. It seemed almost as if any verbal profession of fidelity to Rome was the signal for a substantive disagreement.

In his opening address, Conference president Archbishop John May, referring to Pope John Paul's comments to bishops during their ad limina visits, said, "What has impressed me time and again is the convergence between his aspirations and the initiatives of our conference both past and present. I believe that the words of praise and challenge which Pope John Paul has spoken find a resounding echo in the ongoing work of our conference....What is even more significant and deeply reassuring is that he has indicated we are moving in the right direction."

Bishop Lessard, in presenting his report from the Committee on Doctrine on the document "Doctrinal Responsibility"; Bishop Malone, in presenting the report of his ad hoc committee of former Conference presidents, rejecting the Vatican draft on episcopal conferences; and Cardinal Bernardin, in several interventions from the floor, all reiterated the theme of unity and harmony with the Holy See, even as their actions expressed something less than perfect harmony.

The "Doctrinal Responsibility" statement occasioned an unprecedented and sudden Roman intervention. Bishop Lessard made his report on Monday morning, the first substantive item of business for the meeting, and revealed the stunning news that Archbishop Bovone, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, had sent, only days before, a five-page letter stating certain objections to the draft. In light of those objections, Bishop Lessard's committee had decided to defer discussion of the document until after a meeting between representatives of the Congregation and of the American hierarchy.

Archbishop Bovone's objections centered on the third part of the document which "seems to place Bishops and Theologians on the same level." Archbishop Bovone buttressed this contention with numerous quotations from the document, concluding that it failed to make clear the ultimate responsibility of bishops for the integrity of Catholic teaching.

The news of this last-minute intervention produced visible consternation within the ranks of the dominant faction of the American hierarchy. Cardinal Bernardin rose and, after the obligatory professions of fealty to Rome, complained about the timing of the Roman intervention, suggesting that this mode of action is "confrontational".

Cardinal O'Connor offered another interpretation, noting that the Congregation is understaffed because of budgetary difficulties. Archbishop May, in a reply whose irony was unmistakable, agreed with Cardinal O'Connor that the "limitations" of the Congregation were apparent, but contended that the American bishops also had limited staff assistance, while theological resources are certainly not in short supply in Rome. Stating that the Congregation had the document for "13 months", he seconded Cardinal Bernardin's objection to the timing of the Roman intervention.

While the resentment that bubbled to the surface might really have been rooted in the substance of Archbishop Bovone's comments, the expression of that resentment was limited to complaints about timing, and Archbishop May's "13 months" stood as the figure of record on how long it took the Congregation to make its views known. In an interview following the

session, however, Archbishop Kelly of Louisville acknowledged that the Congregation had received the final draft of the statement only a few weeks before. In his presentation of the Committee report, Bishop Lessard had mentioned that the bishops had received the revised draft in April, and several prominent Catholic scholars had expressed concern that the revised draft had been treated as such a closely guarded secret that copies were not available for review and comment until just a few weeks prior to the bishops' meeting.

Timing, however, is really a peripheral issue. The basic question which appears to divide the dominant American element from the Congregation is the matter of episcopal authority. A year ago, this was the question Archbishop Stafford raised in speaking out against an earlier version of the same document. His position was rejected by a close vote of 92 to 80 last year, and but for the lack of a quorum, it is possible that the earlier version of this statement might have been approved by the bishops at that time.

Since then, more than 70 modifications have been made in the text, and it is not unreasonable to assume that the Congregation was expecting the American hierarchy to correct its own theological errors. Only when it was evident that such correction would not come about without Roman intervention did Archbishop Bovone step into the situation. His letter reiterates the main objections raised by Archbishop Stafford a year ago.

In his presentation of the committee report, with its revelation of the Roman intervention, Bishop Lessard tried to downplay the different perspectives of Rome and America, stating that the objections mentioned in Archbishop Bovone's letter had already been considered and dealt with by the drafters of the statement. Archbishop Lipscomb, a member of the Doctrine Committee, attempted to make the same point in the press briefing following that session. He said that the letter of Bovone was based on a "misrepresentation" (presumably, he meant to say "misunderstanding") of the third part of the statement, and that the statement did not even touch on questions of "dissent" from settled theological questions. He and Bishop Lessard attempted to minimize the substantive problems with the document, suggesting that the criticism from Rome was essentially stylistic. Yet Archbishop Bovone's letter cited 17 specific points at which the text suggests that the authority of bishops is not given adequate strength, and declares that "an attitude which

tends to equate bishops and theologians appears to inspire the whole orientation of the document." Experience shows how dangerous even a single ambiguity can be in any effort to correct theological error.

As a consequence of the dramatic intervention of the Congregation, a delegation of American bishops – still to be named – will go to Rome early next year for a consultation with the Congregation to settle these difficulties. It is expected that a revised version of the statement will be submitted to the bishops for approval at their June 1989 meeting.

The other great controversy raised in this meeting was the response of the American hierarchy to the draft guidelines on episcopal conferences issued early this year by the Vatican. The precise functions of episcopal conferences had been left vague in the Vatican II Decree on Bishops, and the most important unanswered question concerns the teaching authority of conferences. Cardinal Ratzinger, in the interviews published in this country as The Ratzinger Report, had put forward the view that conferences as such have no teaching authority, and this viewpoint is reflected in the draft guidelines. It is a view with which the majority of American bishops appear to disagree.

The drafting of the American response to these guidelines had been assigned to a committee of former presidents of the Conference, and its response, released shortly before the meeting, was remarkably harsh in tone. Over the weekend before the meeting of the Conference, Cardinal Bernardin and Archbishop Quinn revised the draft, softening its language in many places. Nonetheless, even the softened Bernardin/Quinn document reads like a professor's explanation to a particularly dull student as to why he received a failing grade.

Two things must be said in defense of the American response. First, the theological issue under consideration is, at present, an open one and good arguments can be made on either side. Second, the Vatican draft is far from a finished product and, even in the eyes of theologians who support its major contentions, is not well argued. The most sympathetic commentator would have some constructive criticism to offer on this draft, and the critic who disagrees with the basic premises of the draft would find broad latitude for arguing that the Instrumentum Laboris is defective.

While it appears that the American

bishops are not of one mind on the basic theological point of the teaching authority of conferences, the debate at the meeting was taken up more with the tone of the response. When debate on the action item came up on Wednesday morning, one amendment on the agenda was a substitute response prepared by Archbishop Levada. The Levada substitute was finely balanced, avoiding any firm conclusion on the teaching authority issue, commending positive elements in the Vatican draft and, in its criticism, avoiding any appearance of condescension.

This was scheduled to be the last amendment considered. The debate proceeded with the adoption or rejection of several minor amendments, until a cluster of amendments relating to the final paragraphs of the response came up for consideration. The committee recommended acceptance of an amendment offered by Cardinal O'Connor, striking the phrase, "Schema non placet (the draft is not suitable)," and an amendment by Bishop Alfred Hughes which modified a sentence relating to recommendations for developing an alternative draft, and eliminated two sentences recommending that the names of consultants be made public and that those consultants be urged to "study the matter with the greatest objectivity possible."

Other amendments dealing with the same section of the document had been offered by Cardinal Law, and by Archbishop Stafford (joined by Bishops Myers and Wuerl). But Cardinal Szoka had also proposed an amendment under which the entire section would simply be stricken from the response. The Cardinal rose on a point of order, objecting that his amendment had not been included among those scheduled for a vote. Monsignor Hoye responded that the committee had subsumed several proposed amendments, similar in intent, into the Hughes amendment, but permitted Cardinal Szoka to place his amendment on the floor prior to consideration of the other amendments dealing with the same sections of the document.

The Szoka amendment would have deleted the section of the response which instructs the Vatican on the proper method of preparing a document. In Cardinal Szoka's view, this constituted a needless and inappropriate chiding of the Vatican. Cardinal Bernardin rose to declare that this message was an essential part of the American response. The discussion of the Szoka motion proceeded for a considerable length of time, during which

Cardinal Bernardin rose five times to rebut points made by bishops who supported it. Cardinal O'Connor proposed compromise language softening further the tone of the recommendations made in the paragraph under discussion, and the chair ruled that consideration of the O'Connor amendment had been dealt with.

The debate on the Szoka motion had less to do with theology than with a question of attitude. Those who supported it appeared to be arguing that the American bishops should not presume to give formal instruction to the Vatican on how to develop documents, while the opponents seemed to consider such instruction a necessary corrective to defective Vatican procedures. When the question was finally called, the voice vote showed a division too close to call. A standing vote was taken, after which Archbishop May announced that the "nays" appeared to have a majority. Bishop John Nolan requested a count, and a second standing vote was taken, yielding the result of a slim 5-vote plurality for the "nays". Bishop Ahearn then requested a ballot on the question, a procedure that necessitated a break while the votes were tallied.

During that break, a bishop said to me that the videotape of the standing vote which had occurred moments before would be "a perfect picture of this Conference. The ones who stood in favor of Cardinal Szoka's motion are the ones who always stand in favor of Rome, and the ones who stood against it always seem to be the ones who are pulling against the reins."

The result of the vote was announced: 127 in favor of the Szoka motion, 127 opposed. The motion failed on a tie vote - a remarkable dramatization of the present division within the hierarchy, not on a matter of doctrine, so much as on a matter of attitude. The good news from the Romanist perspective is that gaining parity on a question of this kind represents a new high-water mark for the Roman element.

Following this confrontation, the Hughes/O'Connor amendment was accepted without demur, and the Levada substitute came up. Archbishop Levada, knowing that his motion had no chance of passage, withdrew it, explaining that he had put the substitute forward in order to stimulate discussion on the substance of the American response and that, in order to avoid unnecessary procedural complications, it would be best to move to consideration of that document.

Bishop Malone moved acceptance of the whole amended response, and Archbishop Levada argued for rejection of it urging that the bishops engage in a full discussion of the issues involved.

At this point, Bishop Austin Vaughn made a lengthy and most remarkable intervention. He began by criticizing the composition of the committee which had drafted the response. Former presidents of the Conference, he noted, were obviously among the most distinguished members of the Conference, "but they are not distinguished for their ecclesiology." This startling criticism of his fellow-bishops was just a beginning. Bishop Vaughn went on to declare that the committee members were also "not distinguished for their exercise of collegiality," because as leaders they tended to be men of decisive character. The stir among the bishops grew to audible murmurs as Bishop Vaughn went on to compare the task of the committee with the guarding of a henhouse, concluding that this had been a "committee of foxes -- friendly foxes, but foxes."

Blunt speech like this is not customary in bishops' meetings, certainly not in public, and it is possible that Bishop Vaughn tactically damaged his own cause, even if some other bishops might have privately agreed with his assessments. In the context of the entire meeting, however, Bishop Vaughn's frankness was one more symptom of a growing aggressiveness on the part of the pro-Roman minority in the Conference.

He stated his agreement with the basic theological position of the Vatican draft on the question of the teaching authority of Conferences, and that he considered the specific denial of magisterial authority to conferences to be timely from the Vatican perspective. "My guess is they have been scared into this by the actions of several of the Conferences, including our own." He cited several instances in which conferences had adopted positions troubling to Rome: the Dutch conference on the question of clerical celibacy; the tepid response of several conferences to *Humanae Vitae*; the comments of Cardinal Lustiger on the concerns felt among European bishops about the American pastoral "The Challenge of Peace"; and the issuance of "The Many Faces of AIDS" last year by the Administrative Board of the USCC. In addition, he complained the the U.S. Conference had, on occasion, been slow to transmit to the bishops certain statements from Rome. He cited the delay of "more than a year" in the release of a

Roman document on sterilizations in Catholic hospitals, and a delay of six months in the release of Vatican guidelines concerning Eucharistic bread.

Bishop Vaughn also expressed dissatisfaction with the Vatican draft on certain points, including its failure, in his view, to advert adequately to the teaching office of auxiliary bishops. He went on to object to the manner in which the Conference conducts its business. Too many important questions are referred to small committees, he contended, while the meetings themselves do not admit of a free and complete discussion of basic issues. Only a small number of bishops can make themselves heard on any point because of the crowded agenda, and the discussion of significant issues is often constrained by the practice of dealing only with amendments, while the basic premises of texts presented for approval are rarely challenged.

After this rather comprehensive critique, further discussion was somewhat anticlimactic. The ballot was taken on approval of the response, requiring a two-thirds majority. This was achieved by a vote of 205 to 59.

The remainder of the agenda for this meeting was devoted to fairly minor items. Several new liturgical texts for the celebration of feasts in the U.S. Church calendar were approved. Among these only one item occasioned controversy. That was the liturgy for the Bicentennial of the American hierarchy. An early draft, which was not approved by the Liturgy Committee, included several references to the dignity of the episcopal office. These were eliminated from the otherwise unexceptionable text which was recommended by the Committee, and the lack of specific references to the office of bishop was noted by Bishop Vaughn, among others. The liturgical texts did win the necessary two-thirds approval, but only by a narrow margin.

Guidelines on lay preaching, implementing Canon 766 were adopted over some minor opposition which was voiced, in characteristically entertaining fashion, by retired Bishop William McManus. Bishop McManus imagined the circumstances in which Mother Teresa might be present at a Mass, but forbidden to give the homily; yet a deacon "who works as the local bartender" would have a right to deliver the homily.

Bishop DiLorenzo responded that broadening the permission of the laity to preach

at Mass might give "false hopes" to those who favor the ordination of women.

The Campaign for Human Development was put on a permanent basis, after existing as a temporary program for the past 19 years.

Turning to the realm of civil affairs, the bishops approved a statement in opposition to the employer sanctions provisions in the 1986 immigration law, contending that those provisions led to discrimination against immigrants and citizens of "foreign" appearance. In addition, they adopted a very strong and comprehensive statement on religious freedom in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, which included a country-by-country report on conditions prevailing in those countries. And a statement favoring reconciliation with Vietnam was approved.

A press release from Archbishop Roach, chairman of the subcommittee on Food and Agriculture, called it a "tragedy" that some 85,000 warnings of possible foreclosure had been sent to farmers who were in arrears of payment on government loans. And one issue that was not on the agenda was raised by Phyllis Schlafly at an impromptu press conference on Tuesday. Mrs. Schlafly objected to the endorsement of the Dodd-Kildee child care bill earlier this year by the USCC. In response to a question on this subject at a press briefing, Bishop Joseph Sullivan said that the Conference is not wedded to that position, but would be open to tax credit proposals that might help families with young children.

Father Robert Lynch, a long-time staff member of the Conference, was elected General Secretary, replacing the outgoing Msgr. Daniel Hoyer who served in that capacity for seven years. The selection of Lynch, who was the only nominee for the position, signifies no change in policy direction.

In the executive session on Wednesday afternoon there was a discussion of the motu proprio Ecclesia Dei regarding the celebration of Mass according to the Tridentine rite. Archbishop May was not forthcoming in his press briefing, about the discussion in closed session but he did confirm that a letter on that subject had recently been forwarded to the American hierarchy from Cardinal Mayer of the Congregation for Divine Worship.

One noteworthy absence at the meeting was that of feminist agitators. It has become common in recent years to see picketers and other groups of feminists pressing their claim at bishops' meetings, but this year they apparently made a strategic decision to avoid the meeting. However, a statement from an ad hoc Committee of 100 Catholic

Women, commending the Holy Father's recent letter "On the Vocation and Dignity of Women" and condemning feminism as an "alien ideology", was distributed on the first day of the meeting. Among the signers were pro-life heroine Joan Andrews and many other prominent lay and religious women.

The proposed pastoral letter on women was not on the agenda for this meeting. The current schedule for the development of that document calls for a second draft to be released early in 1989, discussion at the June meeting of the bishops, and a possible vote next November.

Archbishop Mahoney reported that the Committee on HIV, constituted in June to draft a new statement on AIDS, was conducting interviews with certain experts and would be meeting in January to draft a document. That statement will be sent to the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for review before it is submitted to the bishops for approval.

The issues that engaged the most attention at this meeting -- the "Doctrinal Responsibility" statement and the response to the Vatican draft on conferences -- present a curious paradox. In both instances, the Roman position is one which upholds the authority and responsibility of the episcopal office, discouraging any devolution of that authority either upwards to a bureaucracy or downwards to theologians. Meanwhile, the position staked out by the American bishops is one which appears to favor a diminution of episcopal responsibility. The Vatican, thus, appears to be pro-bishop while the bishops are tending to move in the opposite direction.

On the "Doctrinal Responsibility" question, the Vatican has stepped in to ensure that the authority of the episcopal office is not compromised. As for the final verdict on the authority of episcopal conferences, that remains to be worked out, and the offices of the relevant Roman Congregations now have the benefit of the advice of their American brothers.

In his closing remarks to the press, Archbishop May, reiterating his theme of harmony between the Holy See and the Church in America, commented that "the Pope is bullish on the Church in this country". Perhaps. But if so, that "bullishness" probably has more to do with the continuing emergence of a vigorous pro-Roman minority within the Conference than with the evident disparity between the aspirations of the Holy See and those of the dominant element within the American hierarchy.

Michael Schwartz

International Council for Catechesis Rome, October 1988

The Meeting

The "Universal Catechism" preoccupied Cardinal Antonio Innocenti when he addressed what is known in Rome as COINCAT on October 27th. The first draft is virtually completed and will be distributed to the worldwide episcopacy by mid-summer of 1989, he said, with final publication expected, if all goes well, a year later, in time to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the closing of Vatican II.

COINCAT is a council, composed of thirty selected worldwide catechetical leaders, including ten bishops, which (since 1973) advises the Clergy Congregation. At this moment, Cardinal Innocenti himself is drafting a paper on Catholic catechesis for use by the universal hierarchy. COINCAT met through the week of October 23-29.

In his first appearance at the meeting, the Cardinal was intent on conveying accurate information concerning the forthcoming "Universal Catechism". It is to be a document for the bishops, he said, unlike the Roman Catechism of Trent which was written for parish priests, and a compendium of the "sacred truths" of the Faith, those "given from above", which of the Church must propound, protect, and defend. This "catechism" is intended, he said, to offset the doubts, denials, and omissions that have pervaded the Catholic community since Vatican II, and is to be used by bishops as the norm for writing local and regional catechetical texts. The book, now under four hundred pages in length, will be positive and principled in its statements on the Creed, the Sacraments and Moral Norms, will avoid theories in favor of stating facts of Doctrine. Its language can be adapted to local cultural forms and methodologies, as long as the "truths" of the Faith are accurately portrayed and taught as such.

The discussion which preceded and followed Cardinal Innocenti's intervention was both positive and negative. Quite interesting were the reports of COINCAT members of how the Church survives in adversity. In China, for example, the Catholic population has grown from three million to six million since Mao's persecution of the Church in 1949. Largely because the persecution itself made the

Catholic Church a known quantity among the billion Chinese who hitherto knew nothing about her. In countries like Yugoslavia and Poland, the Church now enjoys greater freedom to catechize in her parishes than they have in school situations, where Brother Government watches closely. In the more affluent countries, as well as in the Third World, the catechetical enterprise has become extensive and the reporting included catalogues of numbers of teachers, training institutes, degreed programs in countries where the priests and religious have never been numerous and where, as in the West, they are in decline. The earnestness to make catechesis work was clearly in evidence.

The negativism was also impressive. There was little reference, at least in the presence of the Cardinal, to "Catholic truth" and the point was made several times that anything from "on high" was likely to make light of local "experience" or deeply embedded cultural value systems which need to be respected. A Spanish bishop, one of the drafters of the "Universal Catechism", was distressed at this suspicion under which his commission worked and which he seemed to have experienced personally.

The negativism appeared in other ways: suggestions that local hierarchies need latitude from Rome; analyses which blamed the Church in the United States for a bad catechetical situation, which she did not create, e.g., among Hispanics; fears expressed that religious instruction would dominate catechesis to the neglect of base community experience; lack of appreciation in a universal document for the ecumenical dimension, the creation of a "straight jacket" with seemingly fixed formulations. et cetera.

Cardinal Innocenti was gracious with his assurances that the motives of the Holy See were honorable, even though doctrinal, and that the Pope favored legitimate local creativity as long as the faith was handed on faithfully. Rome's problems were likely to be created by catechetical leaders who wanted guidelines, not directives.

The American participants in the COINCAT

meeting included Father Hilary Franco and Father Paul Langsfeld of the Congregation, Father Francis Kelly of NCEA, Sister Maria De La

Cruz of San Francisco, and Monsignor George A. Kelly of St. John's University, New York City.

The Universal Catechism and On-going Catechetical Issues

I - The General Context

It appears that the universal catechism will go far to reassert the identity and message of the Catholic Church, providing its convictions and content reach into the recesses of the Catholic community's teaching/formative apparatus worldwide. This is a larger order but the "catechism" itself was the universal episcopacy's response to a perceived need of the Universal Church. The conditions which prompted this demand, made of John Paul II by the 1985 Roman Synod, will not be automatically corrected, not even mitigated, by the publication of another document. Part of the reason for this is (1) the inability of local churches to face the facts Rome understands very well; and (2) the present uncertainty of how to deal with dissent effectively, and the unwillingness in some quarters to deal with it at all.

We cannot rightfully blame the outside world for bad catechesis or bad Catholics. The outside world has generally been unfriendly toward substantive Catholic Christian truth. Sometimes this hostility challenges episcopal leadership to do better; sometimes it overwhelms, as it did in early Protestant Reformation days. Today we offer media or secularization as excuses for the poor performance of Catholics when in truth those same forces did not obstruct United States' bishops in the 19th and early 20th Centuries.

We live in the age of cover-up, of the unwillingness to face disagreeable facts about our conduct, let alone to admit culpability for wrongdoing and failure. The Church has never been immune from such temptations. And, succumbing comes easy when defenses are down and excuses for failing are badly needed. In the post-World War I era, the Catholic clergy were severe critics of the work of their peers. Beginning in 1925, following Father Gerald Shaughnessy's *Has the Immigrant Kept the Faith?*, one literate priest after another - Thomas Coakley, T.A. Fox, E.F. Garische, Thomas Coogan, M.V. Kelly, John A. O'Brien, Raymond O'Flaherty, Eva J. Ross, Gerald J. Schepp, and a host of others, cried often and loudly - about leakage from Peter's Barque which

they claimed ran into the millions. And they were acting out their super-critical role about priestly performance at the very moment when the Church was about to double its Catholic population, before the opening of Vatican II, from twenty million to forty million, the number of priests from 25,000 to 50,000, religious women from 50,000 to 150,000, school enrollment from two and a half million to five million, and a Sunday Mass attendance of approximately seventy-five percent for adults, a higher rate for Catholic teenagers. The critics role even propelled Father Shaughnessy into the episcopacy, ushering in what has correctly been called the "golden age of American Catholicism", a period when the faithful acted from their convictions about the Church and about the Faith of which the Church was the chief repository.

A little old-fashioned critical honesty should compel today's leading clergy to admit that the signs of Catholic fidelity are down and religious observance with them. Elites might consider this an exercise in polemics, and, as we all know, polemicists of this genre have little standing in contemporary Catholic inner circles. Indeed, they are an embarrassment. The best we can do, perhaps, is to offer suggestions as to how the Church might regain her credibility among the demoralized faithful, and in so doing, impress those interested in the substance of what she has been saying to the people for two millennia.

The Universal Catechism will provide authentic catechetical material, of course, but it will be the convictions of the people to whom it is directed and who will or will not use its message that will determine what Catholic local churches of the future will become. Christ did little about the disciples who walked away, but what He stood for and the kind of shepherds He fashioned to be exemplars for the Apostolic Church, are abundantly evident in the New Testament story. The modern Church can do no less - teach Christ's truth as truth, not opinion or theory; certify and reinforce that truth in the local Catholic community through good pastors, whose lifestyle and governing abilities, added to their personal convictions, provide the promising circumstances under which God's grace might produce its salutary effects.

II - The Issues and the Priorities

The circumstances of the catechism will be promising if (we may presume) that the Church is still committed to and will continue to institutionalize three fundamental justifications for her existence.

1. The Catholic Church alone speaks fully and authoritatively for Jesus Christ.

Catechesis will remain sterile, and will appear hypocritical, if there is any question in Catholic circles about the truth of this proposition. The fundamental reason Catholics believe the Creed or follow the *Magisterium* is the legitimacy of this unique claim by the Church. However else the issue is handled in ecumenical dialogue, Catholics must not be uncertain about this truth - reaffirmed in many places by the Second Vatican Council.

2. Assent to God's Revealed Word - as this is proposed by the *Magisterium* is - the only basis of sound catechesis.

Catechesis must deal with Catholic truth. Reflection on the Catholic tradition is not enough.

Developing psychological maturity, fostering upward mobility or community organization, perfecting secular institutions, are not the reasons for the Church's existence, let alone for her catechesis, except incidentally as an element in evangelization.

Catechesis is often described today as community-building, not indoctrination. What community and for what purpose, one may ask, if not to enmesh in human lives and at least in the community of those who believe the living truth revealed by Jesus Christ and proclaimed by the Church. Since man is largely what he thinks, whatever else he might become, it would be surprising that Jesus would have it any other way. "Pick-and-choose Christianity" may be a fact of life for some Christians, but it is not a living Catholic truth.

3. Eternal Salvation and Christ's Holy Way of Life on earth are the *raison d'etre* of the Church's existence and as such must be preached and supported by ecclesiastical leadership.

We are not dealing here with theological abstractions but with God-given Church

priorities. From the earliest days Catholic religious life in its everyday manifestations has been fashioned around the prophetic vision of Christ: "See first His Kingship over you, His way of holiness" (Mt.6:33) - prayer, the pursuit of virtue, liturgical and sacramental practice, penitential discipline, the exaltation of contemplation in religious community life and in the daily prayer of the universal Church.

Some modern theologians, and social reformers, would radically revise these Catholic priorities downward, blurring the distinction between nature and supernature and stressing Christ's humanity, not his divinity. Paul VI laid the axe intellectually to this revisionism in 1975 with his *Evangelii Nuntiandi*. Eternal destiny and liberation from sin remain the preeminent Catholic goals. The mission of Christ is trivialized when mundane concerns - whether self-fulfillment or economic reform - become the Church's dominant apostolate. Pre-evangelical works - of education, charity, justice - are tools of evangelization, not its *finis operis*.

For the first time in the history of the young Church in America we are having difficulty catechizing, in many cases evangelizing, the latest immigrants to our shores, viz, the Hispanics. We have to face another alarming development - the lack of interest of our young in the priesthood and religious life. Our Sunday Mass attendance is declining, the penitential discipline is in shambles, the unworthy reception of the Eucharist seems to disturb few. And Protestant fundamentalism has begun to attract ethnics and many others. Is it possible that our present shortcomings and our ineffectiveness are related to the loss of a vital Catholic focus? Is Church leadership ready to face the consequences of this loss?

The "Universal Catechism" surely will reassert the historic Catholic priorities and reaffirm the Catholic absolutes. But it may be necessary for the Pope to introduce the text with an exhortation directing not merely recommending how it is to be used.

III - A Question of Good Governance

Catechesis must have a Catholic content and use an appropriate method. It must be carried on realistically, in full awareness of the difficulties presented by secular societies in which the

apostolate is exercised. But the best intentions in the world and the most promising methods are of little account, if catechesis is not conducted and supervised in accordance with the mind and laws of the Church. Bad catechesis is more the result of a poorly governed church than it is of defective materials or poor teachers.

Even in apostolic times, and certainly through Church history, Catholic catechesis has been adulterated by the immoral lives of Christian leaders or from a Church overrun by the evil practices of surrounding secular cultures. There may be some profit in contemplating our situation.

First, relative to the content of catechesis, most bishops assess Catholic priorities correctly, although they may verbalize them differently. But, other bishops prefer the priorities proposed by the American Theological Establishment which is presently in serious opposition to norms promulgated by the Holy See. Confusion of goals among leaders of the United States Church creates a major catechetical problem for pastors. It is a question not fully discussed in meetings of the national Conference of Bishops.

A second problem is more serious. Active permissiveness (not passive awareness) toward virulent dissent from Church teaching in Catholic institutions, and an immoral way of life, both inevitably flow from faulty or erroneous catechesis. Here is a defect hitherto unknown to the Church in the United States, except during its earliest days. Historian Peter Guilday, speaking of that infant American Church, wrote: "It was sadly hampered by the presence of priests who knew not how to obey and of laity who were interpreting their share of Catholic life by non-Catholic Church systems". That state of affairs which prompted Rome to send John Carroll as first bishop quickly disappeared when succeeding bishops took hold. But it has reappeared in our time.

What has happened is that we have begun to take on the worst features of contemporary American political practice. Not only do we have the highest crime rates in the civilized world, but a disintegrating family life amid affluence. Indeed it is alleged that it is increasingly impossible to govern the nation, even with overwhelming popular mandates representing the "will of the people", Unelected "veto groups" and "special interests" using violence, threats of violence or bribery, bend officeholders to their will or infiltrate their administrations or simply intimidate

them into inactivity. The platforms on which they are elected are often never realized. Historically, the Church similarly has been unable to function as Christ intended because princes and kings, later "godless governments", paralyzed the authority of popes and bishops, or otherwise interfered with them. Such debility in Church governance has never occurred here until recently.

Today, new "princes of the Church" have claimed squatters rights over Church institutions, exercising ecclesial authority without portfolio, setting themselves up as a church within the Church. Firmly placed in academe, religious houses, and ecclesial infrastructures, the new "princes" direct Catholics away from Church definitions and norms and instruct bishops to enter the mainstream of "their" Church if the bishops expect to exercise any influence at all over post-Vatican II Catholics. Bishops are advised to be moderate (i.e., to collaborate with dissenters); to negotiate doctrinal differences as if faith and morals were divisible like a wage package; to spread appointments; to have a broadly based administration; and above all, to avoid the hard lines like those coming from Rome.

Since the Church operates under the "mandatum" of Jesus Christ, the proposed package above represents disaster for any catechesis that enjoys the name Catholic. Governance is rightfully an art more than a science. It is exercised best by those with knowledge of and experience with the craft, especially when that talent belongs to rulers who also have good sense and good policies. In times of crises, however, good governance also calls for decisiveness and the proper use of power conferred on rulers by law. Correction of public error and of wayward public lifestyles, especially among priests and religious, would seem to be the minimum exercise of good ecclesiastical governance. They are rarities today. And as for the demand of the First Roman Synod (1967) that in serious cases recalcitrants be removed from office, the instances are so few as to be noticeable. It is Rome that has become the object of frequent correction.

As dissidence becomes a staple of Catholic institutional life, a certain ennui begins to prevail among pastors which additional documents, especially of a hortatory nature, do not alleviate. At some point political decisions of rulership are required on behalf of truth and right, including the local scene once Rome has determined the

policies that must be enforced. We have become so intent on appearing as doers of good works, or being ecumenical or acting democratically, that we oftentime fail to protect our own norms of belief and practice.

Do we not remember that Pope Paul VI's "Credo of the People of God" was dismissed in 1968 as the personal animadversions of a highly placed prelate, nothing more and, though recommended in Catechesi Tradendae, it is not the basis of catechesis in many United States Centers. Pope John Paul II's Familiaris Consortium has been a dead letter for American elites since its promulgation. His recent statement on women is already being set aside in the same quarters as irrelevant to the Church of the future because it is only a personal reflection, binding on no one in positions of command in the Church's infrastructures. In these circumstances, the Universal Catechism, scheduled for 1990, will also be ignored if it reflects the content of these earlier papal statements.

The question of proper governance of the Church must be addressed. The Church is not a debating society where victories and defeats are rhetorical. She is a living body commissioned to achieve certain results, holiness above all. Within the Church true faith and right morals count toward holiness; and the eternal salvation of peoples does, too. The pope and the bishops in union with Him *are* the mainstream of the Church, and those who are not with them are against them - and against Christ. Until this ecclesiastical order is recognized again and maintained by the proper use of authority outlined in the Code of Canon Law, it is difficult to see how we can have anything ahead other than more institutionalized "pick and choose" Catholicism, hardly the good or defensible state of Catholic affairs recommended to the United States bishops by Pope John Paul II during his 1987 visit.

Msgr. George A. Kelly, Ph.D
St. John's University, New York

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The publication of Dr. Russell Hittinger's A Critique of the New Natural Law Theory has caused sufficient discussion and such reasonable disagreement that we plan to publish in our March quarterly issue views that develop different points of view on Dr. Hittinger's theses.

**Presentation of the Cardinal O'Boyle Award for Defense of the Faith to
John C. Ford, S.J. by the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars
September 24, 1988 - Boston, Massachusetts**

**"The mouth of the just man tells of wisdom and his tongue utters what is right.
The law of his God is in his heart, and his steps do not falter." Psalm 37:30-31**

John C. Ford was born in Boston eighty-six years ago on December the twentieth. He entered the Society of Jesus sixty-eight years ago on August the fourteenth. He studied theology at Weston College and was ordained a priest fifty-six years ago.

Father Ford's superiors chose him to be a moral theologian. He did his biennium in moral theology at the Gregorian University, 1935-37. Father Ford was Professor of Moral Theology at Weston College from 1937-48, and simultaneously earned a degree in civil law from Boston College Law School. He was Professor of Moral Theology at the Gregorian, 1945-46; Professor of Ethics and Theology at Boston College, 1948-51; Professor of Moral Theology at Weston, 1951-58, with semesters at West Baden and St. Mary's, Kansas; Professor of Moral Theology at the Catholic University of America, 1958-66; and Professor of Pastoral Theology at Weston, 1966-68.

Father Ford overcame a serious obstacle in responding to his vocation, for he suffered from a severe case of tuberculosis both before and after his ordination. But he became a professed member of the Society of Jesus and participated in its governance in obedience to the will of his superiors.

John Ford was a good student, and those who taught him were already aware that development in moral theology was necessary. So in the course of his intellectual formation Father Ford learned to be an accurate scholar, well-trained in the tools of the trade, clear in thought, powerful in argument, limpid in speech and writing, and determined to leave moral theology better than he found it. Recognizing the need for a higher level of scholarship in the field, Father Ford helped found the journal, *Theological Studies*, and its regular feature, "Notes in Moral Theology".

When the United States and her allies engaged in obliteration bombing during World War II, John Ford wrote an article demonstrating the unjustifiability of those attacks on innocent life, and published the article before the war ended, while the bombing still continued. Vatican Council II endorsed Father Ford's thesis in one of its most solemn statements.

In the field of pastoral theology, John Ford

saw many urgent needs and contributed to meeting them--not least by his scholarly work concerning alcoholism together with his pastoral work in alcoholics' care. In the field of moral theology, he recognized the need for renewal and worked, often in collaboration with the late Gerald Kelly, S.J., toward that end. Some of that work was published in two volumes of questions in *Contemporary Moral Theology*.

The second of those volumes, *Marriage Questions*, providentially appeared in 1963, just as some Catholics began to deny the Church's constant and firm teaching that contraception is always wrong. When Pope Paul VI, in June 1964, expanded the Pontifical Commission for the Study of Population, Family, and Births, the Pope named John Ford to that commission. Ford served on it until its work ended two years later in June 1966. That work was difficult and depressing, and was especially hard on Father Ford, since he was not entirely well.

Yet during those years he led the theological defense of the received teaching, and proved cogently that it could not be substantially modified. The majority of those involved in that Commission's activities proceeded according to the principle, *Stat pro ratione voluntas* ("Will stands in for reason"), and urged Pope Paul VI to abandon the traditional teaching. However, at some point during the next two years the Pope realized that he could not preach a Gospel different from the one he had received. So in July 1968 he issued *Humanae Vitae*, endorsing Father Ford's thesis concerning contraception just as Vatican II had endorsed his thesis concerning obliteration bombing.

As soon as *Humanae Vitae* appeared, a wind of dissent whipped around the world, amplified to an all-but-deafening howl by the secular media of communication. The eye of this storm, Cardinal Patrick A. O'Boyle, Archbishop of Washington, had a splendid episcopal motto, radically at odds with *Stat pro ratione voluntas*. His motto was *Stare in fide* ("Stand in faith"). That is what he did, despite everything.

But he knew he could not stand alone. He needed theological help. So he called John Ford, and Father Ford helped the Cardinal to formulate and begin to implement the policy, both firm and

and Father Ford helped the Cardinal to formulate and begin to implement the policy, both firm and gentle, of instructing the faithful, dialoguing with the dissenters, and taking only the minimal disciplinary measures necessary to maintain the integrity and consistency of the Cardinal's own witness to the truth.

Many of John Ford's confreres in the Society of Jesus, colleagues in scholarship, and other friends and associates did not agree with, respect, or appreciate what he did in serving Pope Paul VI and Cardinal O'Boyle. Many relationships changed for the worse. Father Ford is an outgoing, friendly, sociable man. So he suffered all the more as he experienced others' hostility and lived with their alienation. Truly, that experience has been a slow martyrdom, and one not yet ended.

The truth which John Ford defended about the sanctity of life even in its transmission is a truth of faith. I was privileged and blessed in being able to collaborate with him in making the case for this position. We set out the case in our article, *Contraception and the Infallibility of the*

Ordinary Magisterium which appeared in *Theological Studies* in 1978. Since then, Pope John Paul II has made and published his own profound and extensive studies on the foundations in Scripture and tradition of the Church's teaching that contraception is always wrong, reaching the conclusion that this truth "belongs to the moral order revealed by God".

Thus, it is true that John Ford has defended the faith. He stood with Patrick O'Boyle when that exceptional bishop stood firm in faith, and they suffered the consequences together. Moreover, Ford's theological work was of excellent scholarly quality. Therefore, it is right that we, the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, bestow upon you, John C. Ford of the Society of Jesus, this first Cardinal O'Boyle award for defense of the faith. I am certain that everyone here, all our absent members, and Patrick O'Boyle himself joins me in doing so...

His Eminence Bernard Cardinal Law joined in the presentation and spoke of Father Ford's saving work.

Response of Father John C. Ford to the Award of the Cardinal O'Boyle Medal

I want to thank the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars for the singular honor you have bestowed upon me by awarding me the first Cardinal O'Boyle Medal. And I thank my friend Germain Grisez for the generously kind things he said about me.

It is with genuine humility I accept this medal, signifying as it does that you view my work as laudable defense of the faith we all love. I confess it has meant some suffering. But in ages past defense of Christ's faith cost people their blood. To be the first recipient of the medal makes me doubly honored and doubly humble. Needless to say I am happy you named the medal in honor of Cardinal O'Boyle. For he indeed was a man of faith, a man who suffered in defense of the faith, a man I personally held in high esteem. In my judgment Pope Paul VI respected and stood up for Cardinal O'Boyle when the trial went to Rome.

I wish to express my esteem also for this Fellowship of Catholic Scholars. To know people that like you are working to preserve our Catholic faith heartens me.

Germain Grisez referred to my work on the Pontifical Commission for the study of population, family and births. I was flattered to hear him say

that the Pope "issued *Humanae Vitae*, endorsing Ford's thesis concerning contraception". I remain utterly convinced that that teaching will never be changed precisely because it is a truth of faith. And I would like to share with you an experience carved in my memory which I associate with such conviction. During an interview with Pope Paul he and I were discussing the positions being proposed in the Commission. The Pope was calm and composed while we talked about these. I did have the impression that he did not talk about the proponents of these new positions as though they were "Formati Doctores" speaking about the faith. But when I said to Pope Paul, "Are you ready to say that *Casti Connubii* can be changed?" Paul came alive and spoke with vehemence: "No!" he said. He reacted exactly as though I was calling him a traitor to his Catholic belief. I have never before told that story publicly. Perhaps you interpret his reaction the way I did and do.

It has been my privilege to have devoted my life to working for the Roman Catholic Church and it fills me with pride to be able to say that. May the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars flourish and may more and more men and women respond to God's call to defend His Son's Church in whatever way and at whatever time it is needed.

The Conversion of the Jews: A Correspondence

In the June 18, 1987 issue of *The Texas Catholic*, Dr. John Crosby, Professor of Philosophy of the University of Dallas, objected to certain comments in the May 8th issue regarding the beatification of Edith Stein and cited Dr. Eugene Fisher, the Executive Director of the United States Catholic Bishops Secretariat for Catholic-Jewish Relations. Among other things, Dr. Crosby said:

"I appreciated many of the reflections on Catholic-Jewish relations which you (The Texas Catholic) offered us on the occasion of the beatification of Edith Stein, but it seems to me that they contain one serious error. You seem to accept the view of Dr. Eugene Fisher that, in thinking about this beatification, we should approach Jews not as potential objects of conversion but rather as bearers of a unique witness to the Name of the One God'.

"There is nothing in any official teaching of the church which says or even implies that conversion is inappropriate for Jews; the most recent official documents rather reaffirm the necessity of conversion. For example, in 1985 the Vatican's Commission on Religious Relations with the the Jews declared: "Jesus affirms that there shall be one flock and one shepherd. Church and Judaism cannot then be seen as two parallel ways of salvation, and the church must witness to Christ as the redeemer for all" and therefore as the redeemer for Jews, too (part I, paragraph 7).

"The Vatican Commission goes on to say that, in accordance with the teaching of Vatican II, the church must show the strictest respect for the religious liberty of Jews. But our respect for their religious liberty does not prevent us from inviting them to conversion."

Dr. Eugene Fisher replied in the June 18th issue:

"Dr. Crosby's letter seriously misconstrues my position. I did not say that the church should cease to "witness to Christ as the redeemer for all". To cease such witness, in my

view, would be to cease being a Christian.

"What I did say was the the figure of Edith Stein should not be used as an occasion for "unwarranted proselytizing" among Jews. The historical referents of this phrase include activities such as forced baptisms, disputation, ghettorization, etc. More, they include any and all forms of social, economic and psychological pressure, however subtle, that a dominant religious culture can impose on minorities. Further, they include any denigration of the religious integrity of Judaism or the ongoing validity of God's covenant with the Jewish people. We are called instead to an attitude of "mutual esteem" with Jews as people of God. The Christian attitude toward Judaism which is to say the proper character of Christian witness, has been clearly articulated. To cite again the Holy Father "Where Catholics are concerned, it will continue to be an explicit and important part of my mission to repeat and emphasize that our attitude to the Jewish religion should be one of the greatest respect, since the Catholic faith is rooted in the eternal truth contained in the irrevocable covenant made with Abraham. We, too, gratefully hold these same truths to our Jewish heritage and look upon (Jews) as our brothers and sisters in the Lord". (John Paul II, November 26, 1986)...

"The church's proclamation, in short, is incomplete if one stops at "Christ is risen", as Crosby does. To that affirmation must necessarily be added: "Christ will come again". God's Kingdom, we proclaim with Jesus, is already present among us. But equally we pray with Jesus, "Thy Kingdom Come". We Christians must be circumspect in our use of language regarding the sacred mysteries. As the 1974 Vatican "Guidelines" for Catholic-Jewish relations put it, "we believe that (the biblical) promises were fulfilled with the Coming of Christ. But it is nonetheless true that we still await their perfect fulfillment in his glorious return, to the end of time". Crosby, it would seem, has accepted only the first part of these great truths ignoring their eschatological ("not yet") aspect. But it is precisely to that eschatological hope, the challenge of God's Kingdom, that the pope and

the teaching of the Holy See today are calling our renewed attention. It is a hope and a proclamation that, pace Crosby, we share in common with the Jewish people."

Dr. Crosby replied, but *The Texas Catholic* did not publish his reply. He wrote:

"I thank Dr. Fisher for taking the trouble to respond to my letter. But the more he talks (especially in his second and third paragraph) the more he gives the impression that the Church no longer desires to lead Jews to conversion: nor can he, as it seems, be induced to correct this impression by declaring that the Church does indeed take a missionary interest in the Jews. Perhaps it will help to advance the discussion if I formulate five of the main confusions which I find in his argument.

1. From the fact that Jews may not be forced to convert, he concludes, or is easily read as concluding, and does nothing to prevent being read as concluding, that the very idea of inviting them to conversion is inappropriate, as if this invitation inevitably involved force.

2. From the fact that we should cultivate "mutual respect" between ourselves and Jews, as Pope John Paul has said, he again seems to suggest the conclusion that any Christian interest in their conversion is out of order. But wait—did St. Peter fail to show respect for the Jews gathered in Jerusalem from all over the world when on Pentecost he boldly proclaimed Jesus as their Messiah? Would he have shown greater respect for them if he had pretended that he had no more religious knowledge than they, insisting instead on only dialoguing with them, and refusing to invite them to baptism?

3. The fact that there are occasions, such as ecumenical encounters, when it would indeed be inappropriate to invite Jews to conversion (since on such occasions we come together in the name of what we have in common), seems to confirm Dr. Fisher in his opinion that the very idea of conversion is inappropriate. But consider a parallel case. It would have been inappropriate to have preached the cross at the marriage feast of Cana; but this does not mean that the cross is not

an essential part of the teaching of Jesus, and that Jesus did not preach it on other occasions.

4. From the fact that the Jews are still a people dear to God, and under His special providence, Dr. Fisher insinuates the conclusion that their covenant with God (which in their understanding of it involves a rejection of Christ) is just as valid before God as our covenant with God, which is in Christ, and that they therefore have no need of converting to Christ—as if the covenant sealed in the blood of Christ were optional, and left open other equally valid ways of being reconciled to God.

5. I find it difficult to gather clear thoughts from Dr. Fisher's remarks on eschatology. But as I read his last paragraph, he seems to want to relativize the difference between Christians and Jews by saying that even we Christians are still awaiting our Messiah, namely still awaiting His final coming at the end of time. Christians no less than Jews are awaiting a Messiah, and so the difference between them, he suggests, is only one of degree. The implication seems to be, or at least in the minds of many readers will be: why go to the trouble of inviting Jews to conversion, when we Christians do not after all go that much beyond them?

I would ask: is this the way Edith Stein understood her conversion to Christ? Did she experience her conversion as a continuation of Jewish expectation, or did she not rather experience it in the first place as a fulfillment of Jewish expectation? Again I appeal to the labors of the apostles towards their fellow Jews: do these labors make any sense if Dr. Fisher is right in bringing Jewish waiting and Christian-waiting so close to each other? St. Paul does not say that you will be a new creature in Christ when you get to eternity, but that you are a new creature already now; and that what you await in eternity is only the full revelation of what you are.

Dr. Fisher should not respond by protesting that he did not directly say any of the five things I ascribe to him. I realize that he did not directly say them; he insinuated them. Nor should he respond that he did not mean to insinuate them; for I am only interested in the public impression which he makes and which he is responsible for..."

Humanae Vitae

From August 7 to 12, 1988 a major symposium to mark the twentieth anniversary of the encyclical Humanae Vitae of Pope Paul VI was conducted at the Nassau Inn in Princeton, New Jersey. It was a notable success in many ways. It was sponsored by the Roman Academic Center Foundation (New York) and the Aquinas Institute (Princeton).

Precis of the talks were developed and we print three below. Precs always dilute the author's carefully nuanced thought and we offer the usual apologies for not having space for the full talks.

Humanae Vitae: Christian Respect for the Dignity of the Human Person - Most Rev. Austin Vaughan, Auxiliary Bishop of New York.

Contrary to the expectations of those who opposed Humanae Vitae when it was issued in 1968, it has become a growing reality; it is much clearer now than it was then. How prophetic a document it is. The Church has to be a sign of contradiction--even to her own children. Most of the national episcopal statements in Western countries which commented on HV tried to find ways of leaving the question of the limitation of procreation open; in the 1969 Synod of Bishops (on collegiality) there was no mention of birth control. No universities supported HV, not even those in Rome. A 1975 document permitted sterilization in some cases, pleading doubt on the fundamental principle.

The hardest part of HV to defend was in sec. 17: that contraception would lead to sexual license and moral decline; to the demeaning of women; to greater government intervention in private affairs. Now this is the easiest part to defend because we have seen how the predictions have come true; the disaster is all around us.

Now in 1988 HV is still not accepted in the Church; there is widespread dissent among clergy as well as laity, and almost no effort has been made to deal with this and change it. In the

U.S. prominent professors who teach contrary to HV have been left in their positions; it took an intervention from Rome to remove Father Curran from Catholic University of America. Father Maguire still teaches at Marquette. No one in the U.S. has pushed hard enough on behalf of the truth about human sexuality.

These are the major points contained in HV:

1) A clear reaffirmation of objective moral principle: contraception is always wrong, regardless of consequences;

2) The physical part of our nature is integral to our being: dualism is rejected;

3) Human life is ruled by divine providence; ultimately, God's way is the best way, no matter how hard it may seem to us;

4) The Holy Spirit speaks in the Church through the successor of St. Peter: his teaching is normative;

5) Natural law is fully understood only in light of revelation: everything in the world is part of the divine plan of salvation (no true anthropology without Christology);

6) Emphasis on the sacredness of sexuality, and not mere instrumentality: it cannot be honest unless the unitive and the procreative meanings remain together (acceptance of artificial contraception leads directly to homosexuality, divorce, and abortion because they make sexuality instrumental);

7) The need for grace in order to live in accordance with God's law;

8) the importance of purity, of chastity in moral education;

9) Married life, sex, children, and family support one another;

10) Parents are God's instruments in procreation: only He can give to each child a unique soul.

Some remarks on human dignity: love and the origin of human life are sacred; an awesome loss of dignity has resulted from the birth control mentality. The value of married life is now more apparent, by contrast; also the personhood of the unborn child.

In the past 20 years Catholic theology has been sterile; no dissenting position has

made a substantial contribution to it. The Magisterium stands serene above the fray. But doctrinal ties with Rome have been weakened.

It is rare today for Catholic people to hear doctrine in sermons or in the confessional; there is very little teaching on purity or on the salvation of one's soul. Priests seem to lack a sense of their divine vocation. Here is a reason for the fall-off of priestly vocations—because priests have turned away from doctrine. No wonder Catholic public officials feel no compulsion to live their faith in public life. No wonder the general public has been hardened into acceptance of so many corrupting influences in society. All of us are affected by it. There has been a remarkable decline in human dignity.

The "Munus" of Transmitting Human Life: A New Approach to Humanae Vitae, Dr. Janet E. Smith, Program of Liberal Studies, University of Notre Dame.

We must try to overcome the resistance to Humanae Vitae; it is still largely neglected because it is not well understood. Re-reading HV now shows the freshness of its approach, its understanding of marriage as a Christian vocation. Most couples seem to have lost the sense of that vocation; children are considered a mere option. HV can be effectively explained by focusing on the Christian understanding of marriage and the centrality of children to it.

The fourth word of HV is "munus"; this means a privileged office entailing certain obligations, duties, responsibilities, and freely given as an honor. It is a special mission of service to God which comes from God. Thus it is closely linked to the vocation to apostolate, a participation in Christ's mission. This word connects HV to Gaudium et Spes and Familiaris Consortio. As HV explains, this munus is a task given to spouses and not to be underestimated: a cooperation in the transmission of life—freely, responsibly, lovingly.

Analogies that show why contraception violates God's intent and is therefore evil; they show that parents contract with each other to do what God wants of them. They don't have a right to be selective in carrying out this munus. If spouses have an imperfect understanding of the meaning of sexual intercourse, they won't understand HV or why offspring are the supreme good of marriage.

Interior changes occur in the spouses as they live their vocation; having children makes parents better Christians—the more the better. This transformation in Christ through the vocation to marriage is developed by John Paul II (see Sources of Renewal). He shows how parents, in accepting the munus, accept a share in Christ's fulfillment of His own munus—as priest (sacrificial self-giving), as prophet (evangelization), and as king (government and self-government).

Most Rev. John J. Myers, Coadjutor Bishop of Peoria, The Rejection and Rediscovery by Christians of the Truth of Humanae Vitae.

From the pastoral point of view, we can discern a recovery by clergy and laity of the truths in HV, following the earlier rejection of the symbolism which the media built around it. What were the causes of that rejection?

1) Historical and cultural factors: The atmosphere of change accompanying Vatican II made it possible and likely for some people to reject a teaching of the Church for the first time. Some theologians had adopted a "university model" of theology: privatized notions of truth-in-development. The media became actors in this theological process. They promoted a neurotic fear of overpopulation; and life-style was elevated above people. The pill had just become available. These factors combined to strip the Pope and the Bishops of traditional support for their teaching.

2) Internal pedagogical factors: The Magisterium had not tried to get the average Catholic to understand what it taught; it relied upon faithful adherence to and respect for Church authority. Only a few could understand scholastic philosophy and theology. HV seemed to restrict the freedom of the average Catholic; the media had led everyone to expect a loosening of restrictions. The people reacted as if they had been betrayed. Probably the teaching of HV could have been presented better (pedagogically); there was no tradition among Catholics of accepting contraception as a good or even as a lesser evil. People recognized that to use sex apart from its procreative purpose (usually out of weakness) was sinful, and they confessed it. With the

(continued on page 28)

BOOK REVIEWS

Dishonored Shepherd: Pius XII and the Holocaust by Anthony D. Mangano and Robert E. Martin, The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, Milwaukee.

One of the most surprising events in the history of the modern Papacy was the savage onslaught on the character of Pope Pius XII (1939-1958) for which the publication in 1963 of Rolf Hochhuth's play "The Deputy" provided the occasion. The thesis of the play was that the Holocaust could have been prevented or severely curtailed by the Pope. All he had to do was to denounce Hitler publicly and forcefully and the persecution would have been checked, if not stopped. His failure to act was explained only by cowardice, pro-German sympathies, financial considerations and antipathy to the Jews.

The breathtaking simplicity of this thesis, which had much to do with its popularity among illiterates on every social and academic level, was something Dr. Goebbels would have admired. The fact that it ran counter to mountains of available documentary evidence and to immensely important military and political events the whole world had seen before 1963 made very little impression on the critics then or since. Hitler and the Third Reich were not destroyed by moral suasion or fervent denunciation from any quarter or by a revolution in Germany, much less by a rising of the oppressed masses in the occupied countries, but by the application from without of overwhelming armed might on a scale never seen before. Most of that force was supplied by America and Russia so their leaders determined the major part of the post-war settlement. Stalin who, unlike Roosevelt, always knew exactly what he wanted, collected handsomely at Yalta and Potsdam for the manpower without which the President's fateful policy of unconditional surrender could not have been imposed on Germany.

Not all who hailed "The Deputy" really believed its thesis, but some important groups had reasons of their own for using it. Many German Protestants were only too happy to unload the blame for a heinous crime no one could defend on a hereditary enemy, the Catholic Church with its Italian Pope. It was easier than explaining to

the non-Germans, whose good will they were then cultivating, how Hitler became Chancellor in the first place. How were the leaders of the Army, the Evangelical Churches, the conservative parties, the big industrialists, the bankers, the major labor unions, the Socialists and the universities - non-Catholics all, in a country where Catholics were only one-third of the people, induced or constrained to accept him as their National Leader. This astonishing and sinister man was despised by many of them as a child of the gutter and he could never have become Chancellor if Woodrow Wilson had not insisted on the destruction of the German Monarchy in 1918.

Hochhuth supplied them with a convenient alibi so they were willing to use and to be used by him. He himself, a German Protestant born in 1931, was a child in arms when Hitler came to power, and so had no personal experience of the complicated problems he dealt with. Apparently he knew nothing of or simply ignored the ineffectiveness of excommunication as a political weapon in the cases of Elizabeth I of England, Napoleon, Victor Emmanuel II of Italy, and others.

Many of the Jewish leaders outside Germany, enraged by the unjustified sufferings of their people and aware of how little they had been able to do (or in some cases tried to do) for them, welcomed the chance to blame the Church for not having done enough, or if enough were impossible, at least more. Moreover, in their understandable determination to make sure that the Holocaust never happened again, they were (and are) making every effort to keep its memory alive - a task made easier for them by their exceptional prominence in the international communications industry in all its branches.

Not all the Jewish leaders followed Hochhuth. It is noteworthy that those who had known Pius XI and Pius XII and knew what they had done for the Jews, paid warm tributes to them in 1939, 1945 and 1958. It was left for a younger generation that "knew not Pius" to take up the cudgels in 1963. They were joined by all the traditionally anti-Catholic forces in the West which, for a variety of reasons, are always ready

to attack the Church. The Papacy was the only institution in Europe that had emerged from the wreckage of the two World Wars stronger than before. In particular the respect for Pius XI, the veneration for Pius XII, and the unexampled popularity of John XXIII had raised the prestige of the Holy See to a level unseen for centuries.

That Hochhuth ignited rather than created the anti-Catholic feeling "The Deputy" evoked, can be seen by the failure of "Soldier", his second attempt at icon-smashing which appeared in 1967. Surprised and elated by the success of his attack on Pius XII he tried to repeat a winning formula. This time his Goliath was Winston Churchill (1874-1965) whom he accused of complicity in the assassination in a plane accident of General Sikorski, then Premier of the Polish Government in Exile. There is no proof that the General was murdered and the moulders of public opinion who welcomed "The Deputy" were unwilling to accept the attack on Churchill. In England, where libel is taken seriously, the pilot of Sikorski's plane sued for libel and was awarded 130,000 pounds by a jury.

One consequence of the heavy emphasis on the Holocaust has been the development and spread of a distorted perspective on World War II itself. As the War faded, inevitably, from the public consciousness, and as awareness of the Holocaust grew, the impression was created that the latter was as known and important to contemporaries as it has since become. The fact is it was not a major concern to the Allied Powers while the hostilities lasted. It was not widely known, as is shown by the revulsion and surprise on all sides when its full dimensions were revealed.

This is true especially of Anti-Semitism, which is a distressing phenomenon of immemorial antiquity that was well known in the Greek and Roman world centuries before the time of Christ. It has many degrees, takes many forms and is rarely defined precisely. It had a long history in Germany, long before Luther supported it vigorously. The term itself is relatively new and has been traced to Imperial Germany immediately after the Franco-Prussian War. It was then and there that it was based on race at a time when the theories of the Master Race (whether Teutonic, Anglo-Saxon or Nordic) was spreading in Northern Europe. No American has to be told that the idea of racial superiority was not invented by Hitler.

It was precisely this unalterable and wholly

unacceptable theory of race, from which so many of his crimes flowed that drew on Hitler the unrelenting hostility of Pius XI which was shown as early as 1928 and was accepted fully by Pius XII. After World War II itself, for which Hitler was responsible, his greatest crime was the Holocaust. The exact number of the victims will never be known. There are many discrepancies among the estimates, but they really are irrelevant. It is safe to accept the generally used figure of a total of 14,000,000 of whom 6,000,000 were Jews. Of the 8,000,000 Jews in non-Russian Europe, about 2,000,000 survived and of them about 800,000 were saved by the Church. It was a splendid achievement in the light of the existing circumstances. Of course if it had been "enough" there would have been no Holocaust. It is essential to keep in mind that as the figures show, the Jews were not the only targets of Hitler's rage. He loathed the Poles, especially, and all other Slavs among others.

The authors of this book have done a real service by telling a terrible story so calmly and temperately and providing the reader with copious references. Two other features demand special commendation: a country by country summary of what the Church tried and achieved wherever the German Army was present, and a description of the difficulties encountered by the authors when they tried to insure that wherever, as in New Jersey and New York, the states have mandated courses on the Holocaust, the story is told as accurately as possible. A Preface by Father Robert A. Graham, S.J., a recognized expert on the diplomatic history of the pontificate of Pius XII gives added value to this most useful book.

Msgr. Florence D. Cohalan
New York

Homosexuality: The Test Case for Christian Social Ethics by James P. Hanigan, Paulist Press, New York, 1988, 194 pp., \$9.95.

The author sees homosexuality as a test case for a theory of Christian ethics. He argues that the two-in-one flesh unity in marriage is the more fundamental meaning and purpose of human sexuality in its genital expression; but the purpose of procreation must be subordinate to the mutual love commitment of husband and wife; hence, in opposition to the traditional Christian ethic summed up in *Humanae Vitae*,

Mr. Hanigan can find justification for birth prevention. Accordingly, the impossibility of procreative purpose in homosexual intercourse is not sufficient reason for regarding such activity as not in harmony with the Christian ideal of sexuality. Still, he writes, homosexual intercourse does not fulfill the Christian ideal, because it lacks the vocational significance which human sexual behavior ought to have. Only in Christian marriage is the vocational meaning of human sexual-genital activity fulfilled; all other forms of sexual activity do not satisfy completely the normative ideal of human sexual behavior.

Stating his conclusion (above) in nuanced tentative, and, at times, vague language, Mr. Hanigan fails to reconcile even steady-lover homosexual liaisons with his understanding of Christian ethics. He turns to the notion of vocation to solve the problem. For all its ambiguity and concrete disorder sexuality he states, remains a gift of God, pointing each one to a role of service to others in the world, and so confronting us with a vocational choice. "The key issue or question confronting every individual is not how to best satisfy one's sexual longings, but how to best express one's sexuality in the service of the kingdom of God." (pp. 186-187)

Mr. Hanigan's thesis is unconvincing. By separating the unitive and procreative purposes of human sexuality and by reducing procreation to a non-personal function he weakens his argument against homosexual activity. In the order of objective meaning there is no way one can subordinate the end of procreation to the good of the genital expression of marital love. His presupposition, moreover, that one cannot have absolute certitude about any ethical theory is misleading, for it fails to note that in practical matters of morality, all that is required personally is moral certitude. This reduces his thesis to a form of moral agnosticism. In effect, he says that we really do not know which position is true; thus, the official teaching of the magisterium concerning the immorality of homosexual activity is reduced to a venerable opinion.

The author, for instance, does not know whether there are any exceptions to the moral norm of heterosexual marriage. He uses the term ideal instead of norm because it allows him a certain latitude in the interpretation of moral law and of official Church teaching. Following that opening, exceptions can be made on the plea that one

may not be able to conform to the law of chastity, but is able to approximate the ideal; thus in that logic masturbation is again not always the normative ideal of sexuality.

Although this book contains some brilliant insights and useful distinctions, it suffers from distortions and misleading positions. The author states that most human beings fall between the two extremes of exclusive homosexuality and exclusive heterosexuality (p. 24); he should add that the vast majority of humans (94 per cent) are heterosexual with, at most, an insignificant attraction to homosexual activity. (Ruth Tiffany Barnhouse, *Homosexuality: Symbolic Confusion*)

I take exception to the author's view that nothing can be done to change the condition of an active homosexual life style. The confessor does not have to say: "I am sorry; I cannot help you." (p. 27) Mr. Hanigan seems unaware of the fact that many Christian counselors, both Protestant and Catholic, clerical and lay, have been able to help active homosexuals to change their way of life to either a life of celibate Christian living (see my book, *The Homosexual Person, New Thinking in Pastoral Care*), or to move toward a heterosexual orientation (see, among others, Leanne Payne, *The Broken Image*).

Again, the author accepts the subjectivism of Gregory Baum when he asserts that the most important factor in making an assessment of the moral quality of a sexual relationship is not its sexual character or form, but the quality of personal relationship between the partners.

I have many other reservations about this book: the author claims that *Persona Humana: The Vatican Declaration on Sexual Ethics* regard homosexual orientation as an innate instinct (82). (In fact the document refers to it as quasi-innatus, that is, as if innate); his uncritical support of Dignity (p. 166); that only God, and not the Church, can make moral judgments about the lifestyle of homosexual persons (p. 171) and that all significant human experience is ambiguous (p. 186).

Yet, despite my criticisms, I concur with the author's insight into sin: "Sin is at root always a form of active or passive idolatry, a kind of disordered love, which makes the loves of one's own mind or heart, or the loves of another's mind or heart, superior to the mindful heart of God. Sexual sin is no less idolatrous, for it gives to

sexual pleasure and experience an importance that belongs only to the kingdom of God." (p. 191).

John F. Harvey, OSFS
Courage, New York

The Battle for the Trinity: The Debate Over Inclusive God-Language by Donald G. Bloesch, Servant Publications, Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1985, 106 pp. \$10.95

"Though I regard myself as pro-woman, I sense in the modern feminist movement an ominous drift toward a goddess spirituality, which calls people into a new faith-orientation."

This statement from the preface sets the tone of prominent evangelical Christian scholar Bloesch's crusade against altering Bible language to desex it. Professor Bloesch scores the feminists, some of their male supporters, and others for this. He is particularly critical of the *Inclusive Language Lectionary* of the National Council of Churches. And he quotes all of his sources in such careful detail that he cannot be validly accused of taking them out of context. This is an important, powerful work.

Mr. Bloesch startles us by showing how the feminist campaign mirrors the similar, and failed efforts of the "German Christians" in the 20s and 30s to accommodate Christianity to National Socialism. In support of his main thesis he says Rosemary Ruether proposes changing God to the metaphor God/ess. He cites another feminist scholar as acknowledging that shift in symbolism from God the Father to a Mother Goddess means a new religion. Two of the many telling quotes he gives are:

Witchcraft is the only western religion that recognizes woman as a divinity in Her own right. — Naomi Goldenberg

We (should) enrich our imagery of female divinity by meditation on the Hindu Goddesses." —Rita Gross

The seeming rejection by some feminists of the divinity of Christ, Mr. Bloesch says, goes farther toward a new faith: Sallie McFague, for example, says "While we look through the story of Jesus to gain an understanding of what it means to live under God's rule we cannot make the illegitimate move of identifying Jesus with God".

Reflecting, though she may not realize it, some of the mainline Protestant attempts to square religion and the Enlightenment, Ms. McFague asserts that the authority of Scripture is the authority of a classic poetic text. She then echoes an old canard—"The Bible is to be seen as great literature rather than as a document of divine revelation...The Bible as model can never be an idol. As poetic classic the Bible continues, as does any great poetic work, to speak universally".

Another feminist, Jean Bolen, encourages her hearers to offer prayers to such goddesses as Athena, Demeter, Artemis, and Aphrodite. And Naomi Goldenberg calls for the restoration of the religion of witchcraft which is more in tune with nature.

Professor Bloesch says we have to understand it is not we who name God. God names Himself, showing us who He is—I am who I am (Ex 3:14 New International Version). The name of God in the Bible represents the very reality and being of God. It is in His name that He reveals Himself and saves us—our help is in the *name* of the Lord, who made heaven and earth (Ps 124:8 Revised Standard Version, italics the author's).

If we are to follow the biblical way, Mr. Bloesch says, we will designate God as our Father and the Church as our mother. We refer to the motherhood of God indirectly, he continues, when we call the Church "Our Holy Mother". There is a divine side to the Church as well as a human side and Protestants especially, he believes, have lost sight of this dimension of the sacred by thinking of the Church primarily as a gathered body of believers. He agrees with the advisory Council on Discipleship and Worship in the Presbyterian Church (USA) that the traditional formula (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) speaks to who God is, whereas the substitutes are generally functional terms describing what the triune God does.

In the area of equating feminist campaigns to change the language with that of the "German Christians", Bloesch is working over a theme (parallels between any current movement and Hitlerism) that is being done nearly to death. However, his treatment of it is compelling. For example, he cites a pointed letter of scholar Harold P. Nebelsick to the Office of Worship of the Presbyterian Church (USA) that provides striking parallels between modern feminist word-changers and the "German Christians" (a

congeries of groups within the churches in Germany in the '20s and '30s that tried to work an accommodation with National Socialism). Bloesch, on the basis of his own researches and his correspondence with Professor Nebelsick, sees the similarities as glaring and beyond dispute.

Among the "German Christians" who gained ascendancy in the movement, the idea of a creator God is replaced by a God immanent in the historical process. God is no longer Almighty Creator of the World but the soul of the race. To one of the movement's leaders, Bishop Hossenfelder, "Christ is a heroic fighter, a helper and a conqueror, rather than the mediator between God and man".

Third Reich Bishop Mueller in 1936 offered a revised version of the Sermon on the Mount. In the King James version, Matthew 5:5 reads: "Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted". Bishop Mueller's version was: "Happy is he who bears his suffering like a man; he will find strength never to despair without courage".

Even more disturbing was that Joachim Niedlich, founder of the League for a German Church, urged that hymn books and liturgy be purged of all Jewish expressions! Substitute "sexist" for "Jewish" and you have the modern feminist crusade. Niedlich also edited a "German Matins" for use in church liturgy, which he hoped might serve as "building stones for the new and holy shrine of Germanism".

Professor Bloesch sums up his appraisal of this issue by saying that the goal of life in both these movements is no longer the glory of God but the realization of human potential.

Among the names for God he has culled these from the suggestion of the language-changers: Ground of Being, Creative Source, Creative Process, All Determining Reality, the Unconditional, Spiritual Presence, Womb of Being, Primal Matrix, Immanent Mother, Creatrix, God/ess, The Divine Generatrix, Shalom of the Holy, Source of Sustenance, and Cosmic Benefactor.

To Professor Bloesch, as to us, none of these titles is even adequate. He comments: "God is not just the first cause of the universe, but the Almighty One Who Holds the Whole World in His Hands", and "We can know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior only when his spirit moves us to confess Him as Lord and Savior". Then we will

come to recognize the bankruptcy of the theology that describes Jesus only as the model of "Transformative Love", who simply aids us in understanding. "God is not merely a model of love", says Bloesch, "but the God who loves—even to the point of death on the cross".

And surprising to us is the author's insistence on Tradition as well as Scripture as our guide for understanding our religion. For example, he says (p. 26), "God reveals not only Himself but also His plan of salvation. He tells us not only who He is, but also what He demands from us as His people. We have this revelation primarily in the testimony of Holy Scripture though this original revelation is amplified and illumined in the tradition of the Church". Heretofore, I believe, only the Catholic Church has said this with any regularity.

The main thrust of *The Battle for the Trinity* is well summed up in its penultimate paragraph: "Just as the people of Israel had to maintain the purity of the faith in the battle against the cult of the Mother Goddess, and just as the early Christians had to resist the lure of the Gnostic attempts to dilute the particularistic claims of the faith, so Christians today have to contend for the religion of Christ crucified and risen in the face of the recrudescence of both Baalism and Gnosticism."

John J. Farrell
Oak Park, Illinois

The Reflections of an Unorthodox Christian by Theodore Abel, Privately published, 4200 Sunningdale, N.E., Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87110, 1986, 134 pp., no price listed (paper).

Religious sociologists and sociologists of religion alike will find this monograph useful. A recently deceased eminent social theorist who was trained in both philosophy and sociology and who has long advocated a "scientific" sociology, Polish-born Theodore Abel (1896-1988) offers his own personal interpretation of the Christian faith. His overall message: "one can be a believing and born-again Christian and not be orthodox and a fundamentalist" (p. 1). Writing in the spirit of Peter Berger's *A Rumor of Angels* (1969) and *The Heretical Imperative* (1979), he analyzes such topics as salvation, the second coming, creation and evolution

(continued on page 24)

spirituality and immortality, evil and Satan, the problem of hell, among others. In doing so he offers the reader an excellent example of what Ernest Troeltsch meant by the highly individualistic and syncretic mode of religious belief supposedly endemic to the modern world (or at least notoriously so among social scientists who are religiously musical), i.e., "mysticism". Abel consistently takes very liberal positions on the issues he addresses; he is to born-again Christianity what Hans Kung is to Roman Catholicism. Abel hopes that his reflections "will encourage readers to take those steps toward self-determination of their beliefs. I also hope that in rejecting the claims of religious and secular fundamentalists to know the absolute truth, they will refrain from becoming fundamentalists themselves and practice the Christian virtue of tolerance".

Christian sociologists will find two of Abel's positions worthy of in-depth investigation. The first is Abel's understanding that the fields of theology, philosophy, and science are autonomous, that they operate in different frames of reference, and that they are in no way incompatible or in conflict (pp. 63-4). The implication here—one that he explicitly states elsewhere—is that there can be no such thing as a "Christian sociology". For Abel, "a disposition (attitude or intent) is not sufficient to create a branch of a science" (*Christian Sociological Newsletter*, Vol. 5, #2, February 15, 1977, p. 4) and "to say there is a Christian sociology would mean that there are principles of Christianity that are basic to sociology, and these principles constitute Christian sociology. This makes no sense to me" (*Christian Sociological Newsletter*,

Vol. 12, #3, June 15, 1985, pp. 7-8).

Two quick responses are in order here from a reviewer who advocates the resurrection of the idea of "Catholic sociologies". The first is that the body of Catholic social thought is capable, in principle, of producing a coherent sociological theory (or theories). The second is that even in the event that a Christian sociology is unable to produce a unique and distinctive theory, following Margaret Poloma, "it can supply a perspective that may be integrated in other theoretical paradigms" ("Toward a Christian Sociological Perspective" *Sociological Analysis*, Vol. 43, #2, Summer, 1982, p. 105). Another Christian sociologist, David Lyon, hedges his bet on this issue carefully and intelligently: "the kind of critical integration proposed may open the door for 'alternative' types of sociological theorizing, but more likely is a continuation of a complex conversation with existing sociology" (*Sociology and the Human Image*, 1983, p. 194).

The second issue, not explicitly addressed in the volume but very real nonetheless, revolves around Abel's simultaneous positing of 1) the usefulness of "verstehen" in the sociological research process and 2) the maintenance of sharp boundaries between religion, philosophy, and science. Scholars are urged to contact Dr. Abel's widow regarding information as to how to acquire his important manuscript.

Joseph A. Varacalli
Nassau Community College
New York

Letters to the Editor

Dear Sir:

While I usually enjoy your newsletter, I don't think a fair review has been given in your June '88 issue to the book "Canons and Commentaries on Marriage" (Gramunt, Hervada, Wauck).

First because the review was so brief. Please keep in mind that to date this is the only canonical book on Matrimony, published in the U.S.A. on the new code, that upholds the Church's teaching on the sacrament. As Bishop Keating notes in the foreword: "The authors give a very clear and concise account of how the Church goes about its sacred trust of teaching, celebrating, upholding the sacrament, safeguarding its holiness and dignity through her substantive law..." (see p. vii). And indeed the book's carefully reasoned considerations of each new canon

bear out this judgment. Though I know your space is limited, certainly such a text merits more attention.

Second, and more important, the review contains the misleading statement that the book "dodges the critical question of whether almost any marriage can now be attacked on psychological grounds"...The books stated purpose is to elucidate the canons on marriage in a clear and analytical way. It is not meant to attack current abuses of U.S. marriage tribunals, or to represent one school of thought over another. To infer that the authors were deliberately avoiding something, or not confronting something, is unfair..

Rev. Michael Giesler, S.T.D.
Chicago,, Illinois,

Items of Interest

Search for Director of Pastoral Education: Mount Saint Mary's Seminary is conducting a nationwide search for a priest to serve in the seminary administration as Director of Pastoral Education. He will supervise the training of students in effective pastoral programs and relate their work to the mission of the Church. He should be faithful to the Magisterium and have acquired the permission of his diocesan bishop or religious superior. He should be ordained at least five years, with a priority placed on his pastoral experience and appropriate academic work.

Applications and recommendations should be directed, by December 15, 1988, to the Chairman of the Search Committee:

The Rev. J. Michael Beers, Ph.D.
Mount Saint Mary's Seminary
Emmitsburg, Maryland 21727-7797
(301) 447-5295

The CUF/Ignatius Press catechetical series has received many nice endorsements.

From Cardinal Gagnon of the Pontifical Council for the Family:

"...The Second Vatican Council called upon the laity to take up its share of the burden of evangelization, so responding to the universal call to holiness. These catechisms are splendid example of the apostolate of Catholics United for the Faith responding generously to these major themes of the Council.

It is particularly important for parents to know that these texts provide the Faith whole and complete in each of the eight primary grade levels. I am impressed by the magnificent art work utilized throughout the series to support the teaching in each chapter and to transmit a sense of Catholic culture.

I remember well when C.U.F. began this major project. Now, I stand in admiration of what has been achieved, and I hope that bishops, priests, religious, teachers and catechists will recognize the balance of sound content and good methods. I hope that C.U.F. will do all in its power to promote this series, and that donors can be found to subsidize the printing of these catechisms in other languages, especially Spanish.

I congratulate C.U.F. and I would ask that my congratulations be extended to Fr. Joseph Fessio, S.J. and Ignatius Press for adding this series of books to the repertoire of Catholic works they have already published..."

Christendom College - Philosophy: Applications are invited for a position in the Department of Philosophy, beginning August, 1989. Christendom College is a four-year Roman Catholic liberal arts college institutionally committed to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church and to the spirit, method and principles of St. Thomas Aquinas. Position requires competence in Thomistic metaphysics and epistemology and special competence in contemporary philosophy, phenomenological realism and the thought of Karol Wojtyla/Pope John Paul II. Salary and rank commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Send curriculum vitae to:

Dr. Robert C. Rice
Vice President for Academic Affairs
Christendom College
Front Royal, Virginia 22630

President - Georgia State University: The Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia announces its search for a new President at Georgia State University to take office on July 1, 1989.

Georgia State University is located in the heart of Atlanta. Some 22,000 diverse students are presently enrolled in undergraduate, graduate and professional degree programs. The university has one of the largest graduate programs in the Southeast. The academic colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Education, Law, Health Sciences, and Public and Urban Affairs offer more than 50 degree programs and 250 majors.

Candidates should have a distinguished record of accomplishments in teaching, research and administration in higher education or executive-level accomplishments and a working knowledge of higher education. A doctorate or appropriate terminal degree is desirable.

Nominations should include the nominee's current address. Applications should include a letter of interest, a curriculum vitae and the names and address of five persons who can serve as references.

Dr. H. Dean Propst, Chancellor
University System of Georgia
244 Washington Street, S.W.
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Don't miss two excellent articles re feminism in the *Social Justice Review*: one is a reprint of Msgr. John McCarthy's appraisal of the Bishops' proposed pastoral on women from *Living Tradition*; the other is Don DeMarco's superb piece *The Marxist Roots of Contemporary Feminism*. Both appeared in the SJR's September-October issue. Address is: 3835 Westminster Place., St. Louis, MO 36108.

Despite **Georgetown University's** stated neutrality on an effort in Congress to exempt it from a District law protecting the rights of homosexual student groups, the school's president spoke out against the effort

"It's a bad law; it isn't going to work," said the Rev. Timothy Healy in regard to the so-called Armstrong amendment...

"Most Catholic colleges and universities have responded to secular learning," he said. Increased excellence in these areas are required for Catholic colleges to receive the kind of grants and endowments received by secular schools, he said.

"We're still playing catch-up" in that area, he said...

"In American law and in reality, a Catholic university is not a form of the church's life but a secular university in which the Church lives, functions and exercises her influence," he said.

Regarding the lawsuit by the homosexual student groups, Father Healy said, "The university has arrived at, after a long struggle, an honorable solution to a difficult problem."

He described the agreement reached through the courts between Georgetown and the homosexual groups as "holding a balance between legal rights and pastoral responsibility."

The Washington Times, 10-27-88

From: **The Centre for the Study of Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations**, Selly Oak Colleges, 996 Bristol Road, Birmingham B29 6LQ, United Kingdom, telephone: 021-472-4231:

"We have previously drawn your attention to the postgraduate research degrees in Islamic studies, which this Centre offers in conjunction with the University of Birmingham. I should now like to provide you with more details of the one-year MA programme. With its three taught courses and dissertation...the MA programme has the advantage of offering a well-instructed close relationship between teacher and student. Clearly limited to a 12-month period, it is also predictable in terms of the commitment of time and resources required. Many students embarking on the first stage of postgraduate work find these elements of certainty preferable to the less clear circumstances of direct progression to a degree by research only, such as the M.Phil.

"The MA offers an integrated programme which stands on its own, and at the same time it lays a firm foundation for students considering progressing to doctoral research work..."

New International Organization

On November 11, 1988, the International Society of Ethics (tentative title) was formed. Its purpose is basically similar to that of the Fellowship. Its aim is to support the teachings of the Church, particularly in areas of morality and ethics. Its membership is open to those engaged professionally in teaching ethics and moral theology, or in professions where issues of ethics loom large, e.g., the medical and legal professions, higher education, etc. Two Fellowship members are on the board of directors, namely, Germain Grisez and Bill May. In subsequent Newsletter more information will be given.

Catholic Principles at Work

A relatively recent foundation of the Sisters of Mercy is doing good work in the field of health care. Founded by Mother Maureen McDonald, the foundation of these Sisters in Alma, Michigan, works in cooperation with local Catholic physicians and dentists in an effort to bring the truth of Catholic teaching to the care of their patients. The Sisters themselves are professionally educated. Among their members are an internist, Sister Firestone, another is a surgeon, Sister Kotorba, another a psychiatrist, Sister Weber. The community operates under the leadership of Mother Margaret Mary Turner. Their work needs to be made known. They are fine work. Subsequent Newsletter will give more details.

Books in Brief

The First Historians: The Hebrew Bible and History by Baruch Halpern, Harper and Row, 285 pp., \$22.95

These eleven chapters, written by a Canadian, are of interest to professional biblical historians. Professor Halpern argues against the reductionism that views the bible as literature only; and also against the Fundamentalism that takes every detail of it to be literally true. In his judgment historical texts are to be examined for what they mean to say, more than for what they say. He offers what he calls a fresh understanding of the historiography of the bible. Specialists will be challenged and probably pleased.

When Theology Listens to the Poor by Leonard Boff, Harper and Row, 147 pp. \$18.95:

These seven chapters are essays on liberation theology unadorned and bluntly stated. We obtain the flavor of his thinking from his treatment of the Eucharist which for him is a symbol of communion with others, not the worship of God or reconciliation with Him. He quotes favorably the view of Jose Castillo who thinks that once the eyes of the clergy are opened to the need for a collective evangelization of the entire Church, the liturgical situation will be revitalized: "The solution will be found not in 'ecclesiastical decisions', but in 'community options'. We face a problem affecting the whole Church. The Church is not just clergy. It will have to be the community, therefore - each concrete community that celebrates the Eucharist - who take responsibility for their (sic) Eucharistic celebrations and their concrete manner of 'proclaiming the death of the Lord' before society." (pp. 101-102)

19th and 20th Century Theological Texts, by Harper and Row, \$19.95 each.

This series offers theologians who, since the Enlightenment, have had a major influence on the development of Christian theology: *Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, (edited by John de Gruchy); *Friedrich Schleiermacher*, (edited by Keith Clements); *Paul Tillich*, (edited by Mark Kone Taylor); *Rudolf Bultmann*, (edited by Roger Johnson).

Each volume follows the development of one theologian's thought, provides historical

context, and cites primary and secondary sources for additional research.

How Bishops Decide: An American Catholic Case Study by Philip F. Lawler, Ethics and Public Policy Center, Washington, D.C., 41 pp., no price).

This is a valuable booklet by the editor of the *Boston Pilot*. In five short chapters Mr. Lawler summarizes recent Catholic social thought and then dissects the process by which the United States Bishops came to publish their recent pastorals on peace and economics. He discusses the ideologies involved and the committee work which turned drafts into approved documents. His final treatment of the levels of authority for different segments of these letters is incisive. Well worth reading.

A Theology of the Jewish-Christian Reality: Part 3, Christ in Context by Paul M. Van Buren, Harper and Row, 312 pp., \$29.95

The third of a four-volume study of the relationship of Christianity to Judaism. The author expresses his views frankly: Jesus is not unique divinity but a recapitulation of God's covenant with the Jewish people. He is one of God's messages - a reconfirmation of the Jews during the Exodus. Christianity, therefore, should abandon its concept of universality and see itself as part of the creation process, not an end in itself.

Introducing the Old Testament by John Drane, Harper and Row, 352 pp., \$19.95

This lecturer in religious studies at Sterling University in Scotland incorporates into his thirteen chapters all the latest biblical and archaeological research he could put his hand on. His drawings, maps and pictures are intended to, and often do aid readers working their way through the maze of biblical events and personalities. The framework is historico-critical and of use to Catholics, even though not Catholic in inspiration.

Ignatius Press

Three books almost form a trilogy.

The Teaching of Humanae Vitae: A Defense by John C. Ford, S.J., Germain Grisez, Joseph Boyle, John Finnis, 219 pp., \$12.95

(continued on p.28)

Twenty-four sermons from evangelical writers.

Pillars of Flame: Power, Priesthood and Spiritual Maturity
by Maggie Ross, Harper and Row 214 pp., \$17.95

An indictment of the Church's view of the Catholic priesthood. Recommended by Rosemary Radford Reuther!

The Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God by

Bishop Ullathorne, Christian Classics, 184 pp., \$9.95

Reprint of Bishop Ullathorne's well-known treatise, first published in 1855, following the definition of the doctrine.

Our Vital Reserves by William James, Christian Classics, 58 pp., \$8.95

It is hard to understand why essays on energy and relaxation are called Christian classics.

Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Newsletter
Published by St. John's University
Jamaica, New York 11439

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Jamaica, NY 11439
Permit No. 451

(*Humanae Vitae* - continued from p. 18)

pedagogical problem was one of an inadequate mediating role by the clergy. They simply assumed that the old adherence of the people to authority of Christ in the Pope and the Bishops was practically sufficient, that commands didn't need to be supported by knowledge. The clergy usually want to be popular; they dislike controversy; they don't want to dash people's hopes, bring bad news. And they had not catechised enough about sexual morality.

But all of that is in the past. We look to the future, for the Holy Spirit is always at work, providing the resources and the will to correct what has happened:

1) The enriched reformulation of the tradition by John Paul II ; this gives new tools for reaching the people, and especially seminarians (who must be

taught his theology of sexuality),

2) The gradual recognition by couples that contraception is dishonest because it is a withholding of part of their love, the creative part. The Pope is telling them that they must truly mean what they are saying with their bodies. People today want to live noble, honest lives; and with that they have won a deeper consciousness of their sexuality.

3) The disposition of younger clergy and seminarians and religious educators (who no longer carry the emotional baggage of the 60's and 70's) to accept the teaching of HV. But Bishops have to lead the way, especially in correcting wrong moral teaching in seminaries. Teachers must be found who not only teach correctly, but believe what they teach. Dissenters must be refuted and its privileged position restored to the Magisterium. Minds are opening.

4) The hopefulness of this historic moment; it is our second chance. Those who believe HV have to act accordingly.