

FELLOWSHIP OF CATHOLIC SCHOLARS

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME I, NUMBER 1

DECEMBER 1977

Lines From Father Lawler's Desk

St. Thomas Aquinas once expressed the central concern in his scholarly life by making his own the words of St. Hilary: "I am aware that I owe this to God as the chief duty of my life, that my every word and sense may speak of him." (S.C.G., I, Ordinary No. 2).

The Catholic scholar's words may speak of God in many ways. Be pursuing what is true and good, in honest intellectual efforts, scholars labor to speak of Him. But in times of transition and trial within the family of faith, more specific services may be asked of them.

Traditionally, Catholic scholars of the greatest authority and most evident intellectual integrity have found it right to give a priority in their labors to face intellectual problems that seemed to threaten the personal faith of the members of the Church. Augustine, Aquinas, Thomas More, Newman, gladly assumed such labors: questions that most disturbed the peace and unity of faith became their central problems. The Christian scholar is often called to use his own special skills responsibly in the service of the family of faith.

Great love of the gift of Catholic faith is not rare. Scholars who acknowledge that the magisterium is a gift of God to the Church, and to reverence it in the same way and acknowledge to it the same authority that saints and scholars over the centuries have shown, are present yet in very great numbers in the Church. The Fellowship was not established to canonize any narrow or partisan interpretations of faith, but to encourage the hearty support of Catholic faith and life that the tradition of scholarship in the Church has always recognized as indispensable.

How the Fellowship began

In January 1977 in seven different parts of the United States — seven different priests from different backgrounds were discussing with their local peers what could be done to redirect the Catholic scholarly community towards a more friendly approach to the teaching authority of the Church. In each case the priests independently found their working peers isolated and frustrated. Almost by accident of correspondence and informal conversations, Fr. Joseph Mangan, S.J. of Loyola University in Chicago, Fr. Robert Levis of Gannon College in Erie, Pennsylvania, Fr. John Miller, C.S.C, provincial of the Holy Cross Fathers in New Orleans, Msgr. George A. Kelly of New York, Professor James Hitchcock of St. Louis University, Fr. Joseph Fessio, S.J. of the University of San Francisco, Fr. Ronald Lawler, OFM, Cap. of the Catholic University of America, decided to meet in St. Louis — first on May 7-8th, then on August 23-24, 1977 for a discussion of the Catholic academic situation. At the August meeting in Jesuit Hall at St. Louis University they

were joined by Professor Germaine Grisez, Fr. Paul Quay, S.J., Fr. Henry Sattler, C.S.S.R., Fr. James Turro, Fr. William Smith, Fr. Louis Barth, S.J., Sr. Janet Fitzgerald, OP, Sr. Miriam Paul Klaus, S.C.M.M., Dr. William Lynch, Sr. Catherine McMahon, Fr. Earl Weis, S.J., Sr. Mary Christopher, S.N.D., Fr. Paul Marx, O.S.B., Fr. Fred Jelly, OP, Fr. John Hardon, S.J., Fr. Donald Keefe, S.J., Fr. Robert Brungs, S.J., Fr. Edward Duff, S.J., Fr. Denis Meade, O.S.B., Sr. Theresa Catherine Shea, OP, Dr. William Parente, Dr. Joseph Graham and double the number more, the decision was made to create the **Fellowship of Catholic Scholars**.

The name was suggested by an Australian layman who happened on the scene by chance.

The first Statement of Purpose was drafted chiefly by Dr. Germain Grisez and Fr. Ronald Lawler. The constitution was drafted by Fr. Henry Sattler — these were finally approved at the first meeting of the Board of Directors in Washington, D.C., November 12, 1977.

First Convention — April 28-30, 1978 Ramada Inn – Airport Kansas City, Missouri

THEME – CATHOLIC FAITH AND HUMAN LIFE

THE TOPICS TO BE COVERED INCLUDE

Christian Vision of Man
Theology and the Behavioral Sciences
Magisterium-Gospel, Law, Conscience
Catholic Theology-Marriage and Family Life
The Gift of Sexuality
Ten Years of Human Life Problems

Speakers will be outstanding scholars presently being invited and two Bishop theologians.

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, the new Archbishop of Munich, Germany and formerly member of the International Theological Commission, has been invited to be keynote speaker-more on the speakers later.

Inquiries about the program can be directed to any of the officers of the *Fellowship* or to the executive secretary.

Editorial

Sometimes the only way out of a storm is to go through its eye.

It is much easier to fly above or around it. At times this is the prudent thing to do.

But at times this is not possible.

Recent Catholic turbulence is clearly centered in the scholarly community. The "eye of this storm" moves right and left carrying disrespect for the teaching authority of the Church wherever it goes – from those who reject approved development of doctrine, from those who invent doctrine without regard to magisterium.

Those who have tried to go around or about

the storm have frequently been blasted by charges of "right wing" or "left wing" or worse. And some of them are one or the other.

But most Catholic scholars, though by secular standards spread throughout a wide political spectrum, identify themselves religiously by their oneness with the Church's teaching authority.

The *Fellowship of Catholic Scholars* hopes to avoid where possible political affiliation. On the other hand the *Fellowship* expects to direct its full energy toward ensuring that "the eye of Catholic Faith" remains the magisterium of the Church.

Officers of the Fellowship

President – Fr. Ronald Lawler, O.F.M. Cap.

Vice Presidents – Fr. Joseph Fessio, S.J.

Sr. Janet Fitzgerald, O.P.

Dr. Joseph Graham

Dr. James Hitchcock

Fr. Earl Weis, S.J.

Board of Directors – Rev. William Brown

Rev. Robert J. Levis

Rev. Joseph T. Mangan

Dr. William May

Rev. John H. Miller

Rev. Paul Quay

Rev. Henry V. Sattler

Rev. William B. Smith

Rev. James C. Turro

Executive Secretary – Msgr. George A. Kelly

Statement of Purpose

We Catholic scholars in various disciplines join in fellowship in order to serve Jesus Christ better by helping one another in our work and by putting our abilities more fully at the service of the Catholic faith.

We wish to form a fellowship of scholars who see their intellectual work as an expression of the service that they owe to God. To Him we give thanks for our Catholic faith, and for every opportunity He gives us to serve that faith.

We wish to form a fellowship of Catholic scholars open to the work of the Holy Spirit within the Church. Thus we wholeheartedly accept and support the renewal of the Church of Christ undertaken by Pope John XXIII, shaped by Vatican II, and carried on by Pope Paul VI.

We wish to form a fellowship that is gladly obedient to the Word of God spoken in His Catholic Church. We accept willingly in faith the defined teachings of the Catholic Church, and those teachings proclaimed by the Church's ordinary and universal Magisterium, by the sense in which they have been taught and believed in the Church. We acknowledge also our duty to adhere with religious assent to those teachings which are authoritatively, even though not infallibly, proposed by the Church, as for example, in the papal encyclicals. (LG 25)

Aware of the duty scholars have to serve the whole community of faith, we wish to give whatever assistance we can to the Church in answering contemporary questions. We will seek to do this, faithful to the truth always guarded in the Church by the Holy Spirit, and sensitive to the needs of the family of faith.

To contribute to this sacred work, our fellowship will strive to

- come to know and welcome all who share our purpose;
- make known to one another our various competencies and interests;
- share our abilities with one another unstintingly in our efforts directed to our common purpose;
- cooperate in clarifying the challenges which must be met;
- help one another to evaluate critically the variety of responses which are proposed to these challenges;
- communicate our suggestions and evaluation to members of the Church who might find them helpful;
- respond to requests to help the Church in its task of guarding the faith as inviolable and defending it with fidelity.

With the grace of God for which we pray, we hope to assist the whole Church to understand its own identity more clearly, to proclaim the joyous Gospel of Jesus more confidently, and to carry out its redemptive mission of all humankind more effectively.

Items of Interest

• Fr. Joseph Fessio, S.J., the director of the **St. Ignatius Institute** at the University of San Francisco (a four year liberal arts college with heavy emphasis on Catholic philosophy and theology) sponsored a symposium in October on Magisterium at which Archbishop John Quinn rejected the pluralistic theory of authority in the Church. Said the Archbishop: *"I do not see how there could be any point of real certitude for the faithful if the Magisterium is conceived as a fugue of frequently dissonant voices forming a choir with no director."*

• Fr. Paul Marx, O.S.B. of St. John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota has seven seminars on marriage, family life and family planning planned for June 1978. His phone numbers are (612) 363-3552 and 363-3313. Marx disputes the claim made by demographer Charles Westoff that natural family planning will be only of historical interest by the end of the century.

• Professor William May in October 1977 organized an ecumenical group of scholars who replied to an attack by 200 Protestant and Jewish theologians who has called the Catholic Church's anti-abortion efforts "a serious threat to religious liberty and freedom of conscience. The May statement particularly scored language which described the Catholic position as "relentless", "extreme", "rigid," "blind", and "dangerous" while considering the pro-abortion stand "moral", "responsible", "sound", and "rooted in deeply held convictions."

• Proceedings from the symposium held at Catholic University on October 1-2, 1977 featuring Hans Urs Von Balthasar will appear in the Spring 1978 issue of *Communio*. For copy (or subscription \$8.00 per year) write to *Communio*, Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington 99202.

• Fr. Paul Quay, S.J. is working with a physician-lawyer duo in St. Louis in a response to the *Journal of the American Medical Association's* articles (October 17th and 24th, 1977) favoring "definition-of-death" legislation. Not only will the scientific-theological questions be analyzed but pastoral considerations as well, e.g. the treatment of the human corpse.

• The *National Federation of Catholic Physicians Guilds* at their Chicago Convention (September 1977) featured Fellowship scholars including Dr. William Lynch, Fr. William Smith, Fr. Paul Quay.

• William Cardinal Baum, Archbishop of Washington, D.C., has established an eight-member Committee for Doctrine to serve as an advisory board which will support the pastoral mission of the Church of Washington by "evaluating various programs from the perspective of fidelity to Catholic doctrine." (*Catholic Standard*, Nov. 10, 1977, p. 1) Included among the members are three who belong to the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars: Fr. Lorenzo Albacete, who will serve as Secretary to the Committee; Professor William May, Theology Department of the Catholic University of America; and, Fr. Frederick Jelly, O.P., of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology at the Dominican House of Studies. This Committee for Doctrine will assist the Church of Washington by rendering such services as: 1) "considering requests for assistance in doctrinal matters made by pastors, confessors, and teachers; 2) examining materials used in the teaching of the Catholic faith to students in Archdiocesan schools, and in programs of evangelization and catechesis directed to children, adolescents and adults, both at parish and diocesan levels; 3) evaluating the doctrinal content of programs of sacramental preparation, and of various liturgical and homiletic aids; 4) studying the doctrinal requirements of programs for the education of candidates for the priesthood and diaconate for renewal and continuing education of priests and deacons; 5) establishing the doctrinal basis of Archdiocesan programs for the promotion of justice, charity, and peace.

• Rev. Ronald Lawler, O.F.M. Cap., President of the Fellowship, lectured in England and Ireland from September 17-24, 1977 first at the CRUX Conference in Manchester on: "Developments in Contemporary Catechetics"; to religious educators of the Salford Diocese on "Goals of Religious Education"; to the priests of the Salford Diocese on: "The Contemporary Crisis in Christian Morality"; at the *Matre Dei Institute* of Religious Education in Dublin, Ireland on: "The Meaning of Christian Education"; and at the *Catholic Institute of Social Ethics In London* (Farm Street) on: "Christian Sexual Ethic: Is Dr. Dominian Right?"

Research Needed

One of the major purposes of the *Fellowship of Catholic Scholars* is to encourage scholarly work in areas in which the Catholic community is in special need of serious and balanced scholarly work. The structure and membership of the *Fellowship* is such that cooperative work in such areas might well be encouraged by it.

Another note in this Newsletter indicates a major project in sexual ethics which is being shared by a number of members of the *Fellowship*. Clearly there are many other areas which deserve such shared work.

One major area of need: Determining within acceptable limits those items of Catholic faith and practice which represent the core of belief and membership as distinct from dispensable historical forms.

The *Fellowship* will shortly be announcing the formation of a research committee to assist members, when called upon, in projects that they are undertaking, and to help interested members to form cooperative groups in undertaking similar projects in the future. Suggestions for subject to be treated, and for procedures, personnel, and the like, would be welcomed. Until the committee is established, communications may be addressed to the Executive Secretary.

For Interdisciplinary Committee Work

- *The National Catechetical Directory*, when finally published, will probably be reviewed by bishops and the Holy See in five years time. During that period members of the Fellowship are invited to do careful study of its content – with a view to making recommendations, particularly on items such as revelation, grace, sin, the sacraments, and psychological theories of human development.

- The New American Bible has been the subject of renewed study. Scholars interested in working on Greek translation and the development of “notes” may notify the Fellowship. There is also a request on file for a new look at translations in the liturgical books.

- *The Symbolism of the Priesthood* – in its theological, scriptural, patristic, and psychological aspects, becomes an area of important research in view of Rome’s rejection of women priests.

- How does the concept “Hierarchy of Truths” apply to the Marian Dogmas? Fr. Frederick Jelly, O.P. has an article in *Marian Studies*, 1976 entitled “Marian Dogmas within Vatican II’S Hierarchy of Truths” where he evaluates Avery Dulles’ ecumenical proposal that the anathemas be removed from Immaculate Conception and Assumption definitions. Fr. Jelly would like to collaborate with

others who see the same need to research the relationship of the revealed truths about Mary’s unique role in salvation history to those that regard the Christian meaning of humanity in the world today.

- *Sterilization*. Many hospitals seem on the verge of adopting radical new policies touching sterilization. The problems of formal cooperation in intrinsically evil actions do need radical study, and the difficulties of distinguishing material from formal cooperation need to be faced squarely. Further research seems important before major institutional policies are altered in ways that could gravely offend the well-formed consciences of many.

- There seems to be a vast amount of research to be done in the area of *definitive biographies* and monographs concerning the Bishops, of “reform tendencies” immediately before the Council of Trent, including Reginald Pole, Giberti of Verona, Sadoletto and his nephew, and their circle of friends and acquaintances. This is important for background material about the Saints and reformers of the pre-Council of Trent era. Please contact Dr. Dorothy L. Latz, St. Thomas Aquinas College, Sparkhill, New York 10976.

Problems For Collaborative Research

• **Dr. James Hitchcock:** There is a need to reexamine two common assumptions of contemporary religious thinkers.

- 1) The assumption that all historical doctrinal statements are relative.
- 2) The assumption that religion and supra-humanistic positions must be tailored to gain approval from seculars whose humanism is considered the normative philosophical position for Western culture.

Both these attitudes have wide currency within the Church.

• **Fr. Paul Marx:** The intrinsic evil of contraception; its relation to sterilization and abortion.

• **Fr. Thomas DuBay:** 1) There is need for an updated text on apologetics for high school and

college. The climate is now more favorable than it was just a few years ago.

- 2) A competent thorough study of the magisterium.

• **Fr. John Sheets:** Collaboration that integrates systematic/moral/spiritual with the problems that are coming from science, particularly genetics. For this reason, close involvement with what is happening in ITEST (Institute for the Theological Encounter of Science and Technology), St. Louis University, directed by Fr. Robert Brungs, S.J.

• **Sr. Hannah Klaus:** Massive push for sterilization by Planned Parenthood, Association for Voluntary Sterilization, and probably some within HEW. Finding ways to encourage people to hang on to their own futures, rather than giving it away needs behavioral input to say the obvious in a way that will not be turned off . . .

Research To Know About

• **Leo Pfeffer,** "Issues that Divide: The Triumph of Secular Humanism," *The Journal of Church and State*, Spring, 1977.

Pfeffer, who has been involved in numerous church-state court cases in the past thirty years (and has taken a consistently anti-Catholic position in all these instances) here argues that as a result of various court cases and shifts in public opinion secular humanism is triumphing in America and organized religion is being pushed out of public life. He sees this process as irreversible. Catholics are making a last-ditch stand on abortion, but they will finally have to concede. He sees last year's Call to Action Conference in Detroit as an example of how the secular humanist spirit is triumphing even in the Church itself.

• **W.E. May and John Harvey, O.S.F.S.,** "On Understanding Human Sexuality: A Critique of the C.T.S.A. Report" *Communio* Fall, 1977. An expanded version of this study will be published in booklet form later this year under the same title by Franciscan Herald Press.

"The Meaning and Nature of the Natural Law in St. Thomas Aquinas," *American Journal of Jurisprudence*, 1977.

"Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage" *The*

Jurist, Fall 1977, offers a critique of Charles E. Curran's "Divorce from the Perspective of Moral Theology," 1975 *Proceedings of the Canon Law Society of America* reprinted in Curran's *Ongoing Revision*.

• **This Curette for Hire**, dealing with abortion, by Eugene F. Diamond, M.D., ACTA Foundation 4848 N. Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois 60640, \$3.95 and his article "Redefining the Issues in Fetal Experimentation" from the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, July 19, 1976, Volume 236.

• **John Kippley** "Preaching on Humanae Vitae," due to appear in *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, Spring 1978.

• **Hanna Klaus M.D., Joan Goebel M.D., Ralph Woods M.D. Mary Castles Ph.D. & George Zimny Ph.D.,** "Use-effectiveness and analysis of satisfaction levels with the Billings Ovulation Method: two year pilot study" in *Fertility and Sterility* 28 pp. 1038-42. October 1977.

• **Sacred Music**, a quarterly journal (founded in 1874) is devoted to research on liturgy and liturgical music. The editor is Msgr. Richard J. Schuler 548 Lafond Avenue, Saint Paul, Minnesota 55103.

What They Say About the Fellowship

• *America* (November 5, 1977) carried a one page article by William J. Parente entitled "The Conservative Response". The Scranton University professor indicated that "in the view of the Fellowship, the bishops — and their flocks — are cut off from the Catholic intelligentsia. To a great extent, the theological journals and learned societies are perceived as not giving a fair hearing to what Rome is saying. The faculties at Catholic universities are thought to be in opposition rather than support of the local ordinaries". So Parente concludes: "If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change".

• An editorial in *St. Louis Review* (September 2, 1977) read in part: "For a very long time it has seemed that our bishops and other leading spokesman for the Catholic Church have been caught in a trap . . . it is our hope that the selection of numbers for the new organization will permit it to serve as a creditable instrument of the Church. Its make-up must be genuinely scholarly. — (If) the new group does not project a reactionary image, we can hope it will be an important instrument for the Church".

• A letter written to *America* (November 26, 1977) seems anxious about "those who want to be more papist than the Pope." Of these he says: "Their awe-inspiring solitude makes them realize that something is rotten in Denmark and that their tightrope act is mighty dangerous!"

Types of Membership

The new constitution provides three kinds of membership: *Regular* and *associate* members. Both *subscribe to the Statement of Purpose*; but the former are academic persons with advanced degrees or its equivalent. The latter are those who offer "Spiritual, moral and financial support of the *Fellowship*". For the time being annual dues for either of these memberships has been set at \$15.

A regular or associate member can also be a *foundation member* by contributing \$200 or more to the *Fellowship* to enable its firm establishment in the Catholic academic world. *Foundation* members are exempt thereafter from all other dues.



Research to Know About

• Fr. Thomas Dubay's book *Authenticity* on the biblical signs of discernment is worth reading in connection with the present problems of magisterium.

• Paul Ramsey's *Ethics of Fetal Research* (Yale University Press 1975) containing an informed account of the 1973 Blackmun decision on abortion.

New Members

At the present time 150 scholars from a wide range of scholarly disciplines are members of the *Fellowship*.

New members may apply by writing to Executive Secretary, Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, St. John's University, Jamaica, New York, 11439.

Beyond acceptance of the Statement of Purpose, two recommendations from *Fellowship* members are requested. The Executive Secretary will assist with these requirements as needed.

Publishers Wanted

Six lectures on *The Meaning of Sexuality* by Paul Quay, S.J. aimed at young adults.

Edward O'Connor, CSC has completed a book on Pope Paul's teaching on the Holy Spirit and Church renewal. The book is tentatively entitled *Paul and the Spirit*.

Important

The second issue of Volume I of the *Newsletter* will go to press February 1st, 1978. Please send your items to the Executive Secretary as soon as possible.