

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

# RELIGIOUS BULLETIN

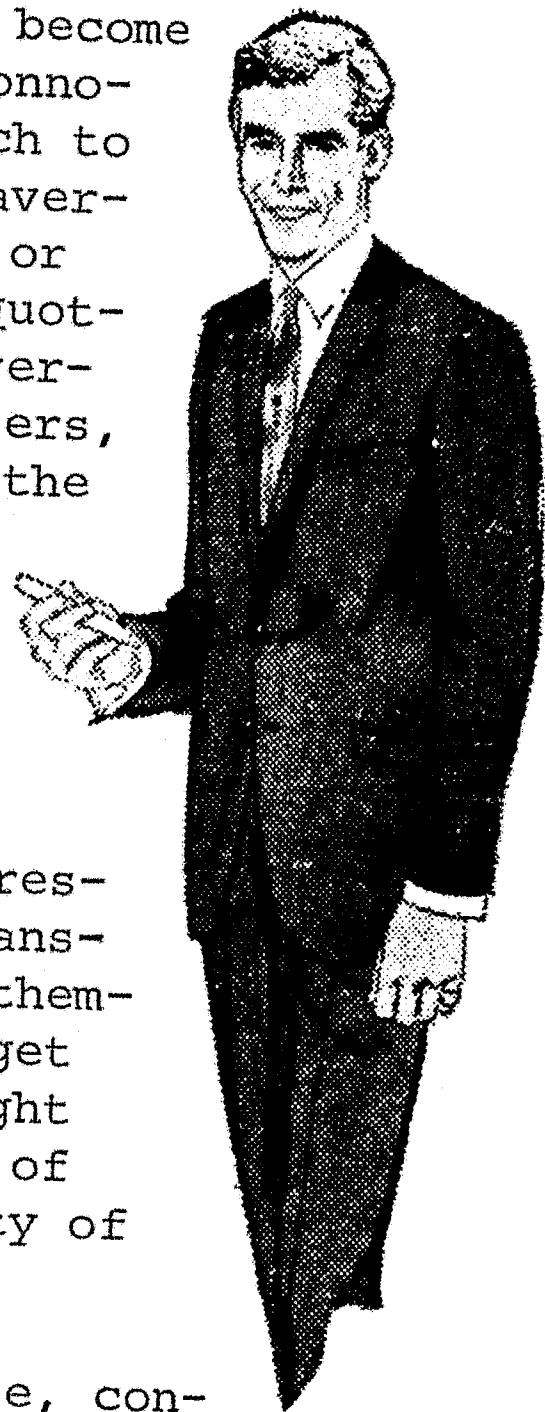
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UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN - EDITOR

Are you proud to be

## AN "AVERAGE" CATHOLIC?

One of the big troubles in the world today is that too many people are too "average" -- they do not want to get involved in the problems and the issues that concern each and every one of us. When they are invited or challenged to become involved in a specific problem they find the connotation of "average" a convenient closet in which to secrete themselves while others -- the "above average" -- get involved, stand up and are counted or make statements that they are willing to have quoted and will stand behind. But use the word "average" to describe their ability as dancers, bowlers, card players or what-have-you and you rub them the wrong way. . . .



On the streets of every American community, small or medium or large, these days and nights, incredible incidents occur and in the aftermath there is public shock and indignation and always the question: "With so many people present and looking on, how could it happen?" The answer is simple: because the spectators consider themselves "average" citizens; they do not want to get involved because they might get hurt or they might have to go to court and testify against enemies of law and order -- and this carries the possibility of recrimination by the offenders. . . .

Again, just a short time ago, an unfortunate, confused and mentally defective young man of 19 climbed out on a ledge atop a hotel in Albany, capital city of New York State, and for several hours threatened to leap to his death 12 floors below. The word spread like wildfire and within two hours a mob of more than 4,000 had assembled. Truly this was a moment for horror and pity, but there was none of either manifested. It may be incredible but reporters on the scene quoted a teen-ager as crying, "Jump! Jump!"; a well-dressed man as remarking, "I hope he jumps on this side. We couldn't see him if he jumped over there!"; and an elderly man as wagering five dollars that the youth on the ledge wouldn't jump. While these demonstrations of mass sadism and cal-

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REVELATION AS CONSUMMATED Since a deepened understanding of revelation is necessary to a person if he is going to have a deepened understanding of his faith, such a volume as Revelation\* by Werner Bulst, S.J. (translated by the scriptural scholar, Bruce Vawter, C.M.) should challenge the interests of all Catholics who are really intellectually serious about their religion.

Supernatural revelation was closed with Christ and his witnesses, the Apostles, Fr. Bulst tells us. However, revelation as mediated to the individual Christian continues forever. "Thus, the divine revelation-in-act is not something exclusively pertaining to the past. It is present."

This mediated revelation, moreover, is most profoundly personal, because in it God speaks to man in his inmost being. "Revelation," says Fr. Bulst, "is never a mere communication of truth. It never consists merely in an enrichment of man's understanding, but concerns his inner self and therefore his salvation."

The "word" is never to be understood as a mere "word of teaching," but is to be understood in the fullness of meaning of the Hebrew "word", that is, as a "summons to man." God's word is not a revealed doctrine, but a personal truth, a self-communication, a living encounter of the incarnate Word of God with sinful man. God discloses himself to a human being for his salvation. The soteriological character of revelation must be increasingly stressed, therefore. Revelation is redemption taking place, brought to completion.

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"The word of God," says Fr. Bulst, "is not in itself revelation, but is revelation only when, and to the extent that, it is received by man as such. If there is no faith, then the revelation has not been consummated. It has not actually happened."

The fact that the concept of revelation is essentially relative (revelation always occurs in relation to a person or a community of persons) gives us a key to the biblical understanding of faith. "Faith is a personal avowal of Christ, a personal response to him, an engagement with him who has revealed himself as our salvation, as my salvation." It is a personal acceptance of the salvation made known to me and announced to me in revelation.

We can say, therefore, that Christ continues to speak to us, and that faith is the personal response of man to God revealing himself and offering his salvation now. Although no new content is made known to us, since the divine salvific will was revealed once and for all in Christ, revelation and salvation are of the present.

--Claude L. Boehm

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*The Church is not an archaeological museum, but the ancient fountain which slakes the thirst of the generations of today as she did that of the generations of the past.*

--Pope John XXIII

lousness were going on, the reporters found one man on his knees on the sidewalk offering a prayer. When the young man on the ledge was finally led to safety, this man said: "My prayers were answered."

How many Catholics would have the courage to drop to their knees at such a time? How many would excuse their failure to do so because there were "just average Catholics" and that any such drastic or extreme display of faith in the efficacy of prayer would have to come from the "above-average" practitioners of their faith? . . .

. . . For those who characterize themselves as "average Catholics" and use it as an excuse for being provincial in their support of needy missions, Bishop Fulton J. Sheen, director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, has some thoughts:

"Your first duty is not to your parish or your diocese, but to the Church. Your parish is a church; it is not the Church. The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ living, suffering, teaching, forgiving in our twentieth century, just as Christ in His Physical Body lived, suffered, sought, forgave and redeemed in Galilee. . .

"Be Catholic! Love all mankind! Worry about sinners! Be hungry with the slum dwellers! Be aching with the lepers! It was Debs, the socialist, who said: 'While there is one man in prison unjustly, I am in prison.' These were the sentiments of Christ. Shall a socialist realize them more than we do?"

It would be difficult to find a place in our country where there is no problem of racial discrimination and the corresponding need for interracial justice. How many Catholics are willing to stand up and be counted when it comes to practicing, rather than talking about interracial justice. The "average" Catholic will try to duck it by pleading ignorance of the problem. . . .

There is much unfinished business on this score and it will take more than Average Americans and average Catholics to get on with it. The job to be done includes genuinely equal education; job training; free access to jobs and real, not just advertised, equal opportunity for jobs; housing programs, welfare and guidance projects and a real demonstration that we are sincere when we say that we are behind the efforts to cancel out three centuries of error and prejudice. It calls for better-than-average effort, regardless of religious belief but certainly Catholics should be away out in front in the effort. . . .

The first step in the direction of becoming better than an average Catholic is a determination to become involved in the problems of others. Not on a "busybody" basis, of course, but an involvement that is concerned with helping others in trouble; with being actively a part of church, community, fraternal and other programs designed for the common good; with not being squeamish about

speaking up, even though there is a possibility that the remarks, while in good taste and for a good cause, may not be liked by others. We simply cannot be satisfied with trying to walk in a narrow, selfish path and hope to enjoy the satisfaction of a well-spent life.

As Bishop Sheed has so well put it: "Alienation from self and from one's fellow men has its roots in separation from God."

--T. J. McInerney in Our Sunday Visitor  
(April 4, 1965)

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#### FORTY HOURS REFLECTIONS ON THE EUCHARIST

The Eucharist is the center of the Christian life; it is the sacrament to which all the other sacraments are ordered. And so a Christian must not be content merely with the reception of Life in Baptism. He must unite himself in and through the Eucharist with the suffering and dying Christ who is also the glorified and risen Christ.

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In the Eucharist we experience an encounter with the glorified Christ. Like Peter, James, and John we may be tempted to remain on the Mount of Transfiguration revelling in our intimate contact with the glorified Christ. But this is not the way Christ has ordered it. We must come down from the mount; we will be forced to encounter again and again our own weaknesses and those of others. We will be tempted many times to flee to the mountains to get one more look at Christ. But we will not find Him there. We will find Him only among the weak and the lame, among those who irritate us, and among those who appear to be furthest removed from Him.

--William J. Crumley, C.S.C.

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IN YOUR CHARITY please pray for the following: Deceased -- mother of Michael Kronk of Stanford; mother of Sister Emmanuel, O.S.F., of Notre Dame Convent; grandfather of Philip Stork of Morrissey and of Robert, '64; grandmother of John O'Connell of Lyons; aunt of Bro. John Taige, C.S.C., of Dujarie; brother of Anne Marron, nurse in the Student Infirmary; grandmother of Suzanne Whetstone of the Library staff; brother of Father Christopher O'Toole, C.S.C.; Torgus (Turk) Oaas, teammate and roommate of Knute Rockne in 1911; father of Robert J. Maley, '55; father of William, '62, and Alfred Weinsheimer, '55; sister of Father Francis Goodall, C.S.C.; Paul T. Carey, '29; George J. Lynch, '35; John C. Quinlan, '48; Vincent C. Giblin, '18; John M. Montague, '23; father of Thaddeus J. McDonald, '59; Frederick E. Watson, '25; Thomas W. Jackson, '48; father of Allan J. Powers, '51, and of John F., '55, and Thomas E., '55. Ill -- Ralph Neas of Keenan; Harry Flannagan of Keenan; father of Noel Sullivan; priest-cousin of Father Michael Heppen, C.S.C., of Keenan; Larry Kellerman, whose condition since he left the university at the end of the first semester has grown steadily more serious.