

RELIGIOUS BULLETIN

VOL. XLIV, NO. 35
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1965

REV. LLOYD W. TESKE, C.S.C.,
UNIVERSITY CHAPLAIN - EDITOR

GOLDFARB AND HUMAN DIGNITY

In Notre Dame's corner in the fight to restore the dignity of man, particularly in the area of public entertainment, is Frank Morriss who writes for the Register. In his column last Sunday, while dealing specifically with the Goldfarb case, he touched matters which are applicable to the subject of Friday's RELIGIOUS BULLETIN as well.

Notre Dame, in its contest with Twentieth Century Fox, is carrying the ball for considerably more than Notre Dame. At stake are a number of concepts that have a great deal to do with the dignity of man. If ever there was a cause that needed cheering on, it is the one that Notre Dame is championing in its litigation to prevent the showing of John Goldfarb, Please Come Home.

Privacy and the right to be secure in one's good name are under assault. . . . The idea that everyone should somehow conform to the enormous bad joke that passes as today's entertainment is shown in the cavalier fashion that television today caters to the lowest and broadest possible taste.

How much the public itself invites and how much is the result of Hollywood-conditioning would be impossible to determine. There is not much anyone can do about it either. But if the New York Supreme Court is serious in maintaining that an institution like Notre Dame (and presumably individuals themselves) must endure manhandling by the moguls of Bucksville, then we have reached a sorry state in the cultural history of mankind.

I resent something far worse in the implication of the ruling against Notre Dame. It is that private citizens must suffer indignity to their reputation in the name of so-called free speech and artistic expression. This idea is a blow not only at individual dignity but also at the great value of speech and art.

If hacks and intellectual guttersnipes can take aim at anyone, if they can involve anyone in their concept of what is humor, if they can guise their own vaporings as "social commentary" then the works of genius are placed in sorry company.

Notre Dame is not seeking an injunction merely to protect its own interests. It is seeking an injunction against one more triumph by the abysmal poor taste that passes as this nation's heritage of humor and art.

If Notre Dame as a university and as a Christian entity is fighting for the dignity of man, each Notre Dame student ought to become conscious of his part in this crusade.

In the Liturgical Spirit.....

MAN MUST GIVE OF HIMSELF

Man's great desire and man's great problem are to get more of God into his own life. Man's problem is present because of himself, not because of God. For God has shown through human history that He wants to become part of man, to share Himself with His human creatures. "My delights," says the Lord, "are to be with the children of men."

Man's problem is present because he ordinarily wants much for little - perhaps even great things for nothing. But it is not God's will or way to accept these selfish terms of many men.

To receive of God man must give of himself. In order to help man do this God gave him a precedent in the perfect gift of self offered by Jesus Christ to win over redemption.

Not only that but God has provided a fitting and helpful means through which the men of every generation since Christ can not only witness the daily renewal of Christ's eternal gift of Himself but actually have a share in it.

In other words, each man of each generation has a visible and dramatic way of uniting himself and his gift of self with Christ's gift of Himself to God.

It is not enough for us to offer Christ's gift over and over again. We must offer our own. The joining of the two gifts does not demean the gift of Christ and it adds a divine dimension to the gift of man.

Love demands the submission of man's will to God's will. This is not the easiest thing in the world for the undisciplined person. This submission becomes easier and more fruitful, however, as man takes part more honestly with Christ at the altar in the daily renewal of the great obedience of Gethsemane and Calvary.

All of the baptized are invited each day to take part in the intriguing and transforming mystery of the Mass. For it is in the center of this mystery that man finds God and with Him makes an exchange of selfless love.

Under the sacred influence of the Cross men give themselves, their burdens, their hopes, their defeats, their victories into the keeping of the kind and provident Lord.

The gift-giving of man at Mass is done in an assembly of the faithful. In the process of the sacrifice each worshiper is united with Christ and with his neighbors through the promise and practise of unity, charity, and brotherhood. The sincere gifts of the whole

congregation honor the Blessed Trinity and merit for man a fuller response of Divine favor.

At the Offertory of the Mass recall that you have brought to the Sacrifice of Christ your own sacrifice. Remember that you came not only to offer Christ again to the Father but also to offer yourself in love and obedience.

To help members of the assembly do this some parishes provide the people with altar breads which they deposit, usually by spoon, into a ciborium set on a table at the main entrance of the Church. When the prospective communicant places his host in the ciborium he makes an offering of himself in a specific way.

This little gesture can be a lively symbol of what goes on in the Mass. At the Offertory - "Lord accept the gifts we offer" - the members of the assembly are offered to the Lord along with the materials of sacrifice.

Later their visible offering is consecrated as a symbol of their invisible love. And, finally, Christ in the Eucharist is returned to them in Communion to provide them with the further substance of unity, charity, brotherhood.

The Mass does not begin and end at the Church door. The course of the Mass is but a fleeting moment of sacramental union with Christ made fruitful later in the turmoil and tensions of work and play.

The meeting of man and God at the altar is meant to express man's love and fidelity to his Lord and to help man receive from God the supernatural impulse to carry on all his activities in the world in the spirit of Divine charity.

The Mass has a meaning for all of man's life. And all man's life has a meaning for the Mass.

The man who worships thoughtfully is likely to bring to the Mass the burdens and hopes of his fretful years. And he will bring back into his pulsating world the wisdom and joy of the true Christian who grows strong on the bread of sacrifice.

--Rev. Joseph A. Hughes in the Register

IN YOUR CHARITY please pray for the following: Deceased -- father of Terry Plumb of Farley; grandfather of Steve Aufmuth of Badin; Professor Charles DeKoninck; Sister M. Lucilla, C.S.C., nurse at the Student Infirmary between 1938 and 1953; father of John R. Raedy, '62; William J. Gomber, '37; mother of Frank G. Kersjes, '30; Dennis E. Lannon, '07. Ill -- Sister Leo of the Daughters of Charity.

INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP NARCISSISM "Are human beings wolves or sheep?" asks Erich Fromm in his most recent book, The Heart of Man.* Those who propose that they are sheep, he says, have only to point to the fact that human beings are easily influenced to do what they are told. They will believe any kind of nonsense if it is only presented with sufficient vigor and supported with power. The majority of human beings are suggestible, half-awake children, willing to surrender their wills to anyone who speaks with a voice that is threatening, or in a voice that is sweet enough to sway them. Anyone who has a conviction strong enough to withstand the opposition of the crowd is the exception, and is mostly laughed at by his contemporaries.

Those who believe that human beings are wolves call our attention, he says, to the fact that human history has been written in blood, has been one of continuous violence. Even in the past two generations, men in power have exterminated literally millions of their so-called political enemies.

"Is man basically evil and corrupt, or is he basically good and perfectable?" Fromm would conclude that he is neither good nor evil. If one believes in the goodness of man, he will be forced into a rosy falsification of the facts, or end up in bitter disillusionment. If one believes in the other extreme, he will end up a cynic and be blind to the many possibilities for good in others and in oneself. A realistic view sees both possibilities as real potentialities, and studies the conditions for the development of either of them.

In the course of arriving at his conclusions, Fromm discusses such psychic states as those of individual and group narcissism (defining narcissism as a falling in love with the reflection of one's own image). Man's individual narcissism today, he says, frequently manifests itself in his pride as a creator of a formerly undreamed-of world of things, such as radios, television, atomic power, space travel, and even in being the potential destroyer of the entire globe. All of this has given him a new object for narcissistic self-inflation.

Group narcissism often takes the form of an eagerness to have a leader with whom the group can identify itself. "The leader is then admired by the group which projects its narcissism onto him. In the very act of submission to the powerful leader, the narcissism of the individual is transferred onto the leader. The greater the leader, the greater the follower. Personalities who as individuals are particularly narcissistic are the most qualified to fulfill this function. The narcissism of the leader who is convinced of his greatness, and who has no doubts, is precisely what attracts the narcissism of those who submit to him ... There are always gifted half-psychotics at hand to satisfy the demands of a narcissistic mass."

*Harper and Row, 1964, \$3.95