

The **+** WITNESS

JANUARY 5, 1967

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Story of the Week

Anglican Commission Has Yes--No Report About Women Priests

★ Admission of women priests into the Church of England would be divisive within Anglicanism and also "strain relationships" with the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, according to a report just published.

A commission, headed by Bishop Gerald Ellison of Chester was appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York. It makes clear in its 60,000-word report that it was called upon only to examine the question of women and holy orders and not to advise the Church on what it ought to do in future.

In this context, and after studying and interpreting arguments both for and against women priests, the commission came to three conclusions in the light of ecumenical considerations.

● That although the division between Churches which accept and Churches which reject woman ministers no longer correspond to the division between non-episcopal and episcopal Churches, resistance to woman ministers coincides with what theologians term a high doctrine of the Church, the ministry and the sacraments, and the issue is more divisive where these high doctrines prevail. It would be divisive in the Church of England.

● The admission of women

to the priesthood in the Church of England, if carried into effect, must be expected to strain relationships with the Roman Catholic Church and particularly with the Orthodox Church.

● In the present century all Christian communions have become far more conscious of the nature of the Church and its ministry as a theological question and therefore, because of the sharper consciousness of doctrinal issues, the introduction "de novo" of woman ministers into most Churches now might be more difficult and divisive than it was a generation or more ago.

On the other hand, while making no positive recommendations about the admission of women as priests, the commission did act decisively on deaconesses within the Church's ministry and called for a reconsideration of their position by the next Lambeth Conference, scheduled for 1968. It also recommended a widening of their duties.

Bishop Ellison's commission was formed with 10 members, excluding secretaries. It included Mrs. Kay M. Baxter, a member of the central advisory council for the ministry, Fr. Henry Chadwick, professor of divinity in the University of Oxford, and Fr. V. A. Demant,

professor of moral and pastoral theology at Oxford. Mother Clare of the deaconess community of St. Andrew had been a member until she was forced to resign because of an illness which led to her death.

The commission held 14 meetings and took evidence, verbally and written, from scores of persons and bodies both in Britain and abroad—Roman Catholic, Methodist, Congregational, and so on, as well as Anglican. Its report, it said, was unanimous but "had the commission been called upon to advise whether women should be ordained to the priesthood or not, its members would have found themselves divided, and they would have had to present majority and minority reports or at least statements of reservation on particular points."

In its studies, the commission took into account biblical and historical evidence as to the place of women in the Church, psychological and other related considerations, such as sexual differences and changing social roles and the symbolism of the priest, and ecumenical considerations. Its report also presented cases both for and against ordination of women to the priesthood.

On the ecumenical side, the report described the position of women in the Lutheran, Methodist and Congregational Churches, as well as the (Presbyterian) Church of Scotland, and Churches in Sweden and Switzerland. But it devoted

most space to the Roman Catholic Church and the "set-back to unity" which would occur if a major historical Church unilaterally admitted women to the ministry.

Other Churches

This was how the commission put this aspect: "In the Roman Catholic Church, where the terms of the canon law explicitly restrict ordination to men, and where 'the unwavering tradition and practice of the Church make it clear that the male sex is required' for ordination, there is a mild theological interest in the question, prompted by the beginning of what may be called, without discourtesy, a 'feminist' movement within the Church.

"Theological speculation is more 'open' than the canonical proscription. While, no doubt, theologians could be found who would maintain the thesis that a woman is, ipso facto, inherently incapable of receiving holy orders, others, with considerable authority, would argue that the decision, whether to ordain women or not, lies entirely within the competence of the Church; and that if the Church decided so to ordain them, the ordination would be valid.

"They would add that there is no likelihood, in the foreseeable future, that the Church would so decide. As for the practice of non-Roman Churches, it would be regrettable, and a set back to unity, if a major historical Church were to act unilaterally in admitting women to the ministry.

"The acceptance by some other Churches of women into their ministries would hardly be accorded the significance of a major impediment to unity because the only kind of unity with them foreseeable at present is a loose sort of federation

in which there would be a great deal of diversity, even of anomaly, to be tolerated.

"In short, the question of the ordination of women — even to no more than a permanent diaconate — is seen as one of very little importance; of far less importance than that of the function of the laity as such in the Church, and of a genuine lay ministry as complementary to that of the clergy."

Of the Orthodox Church, the commission said, "The ordination of women to the sacred ministry is utterly alien to the tradition and ministerial theology of Orthodoxy; there is no evidence of any wish to challenge the tradition. A firm distinction is drawn between the office of the deaconess (while it survived) and that of the deacon; he is a member of the sacred hierarchy; she was not."

In a reference to Methodist practices, the commission's report said one aspect invited particular attention in view of the conversations now going on involving union of this Church with the Church of England.

Two Viewpoints

"A number of deaconesses (there were 38 in 1962)," it said, "already hold a dispensation from the conference 'to give the sacrament' in the societies of which they have pastoral charge — a dispensation given in respect of the pastoral charge, but not given to deaconesses as such. This practice and its significance may well have to be considered by those charged with the conduct of negotiations between the two Churches."

In considering arguments for and against the ordination of women to the priesthood the commission studied two sets of testimony. On the one side it was argued that such ordination would be contrary to the tradition of the Church from the

time of the Apostles, that it is fallacious to assert that the ordination of women is the logical outcome of a steadily growing recognition of women's full humanity, that a female priesthood would present practical difficulties and that much of the value of women's own kind of ministry, in offering the specific gifts of the feminine sex to the furthering of Christ's work on earth, would be lost if women were drawn into the ordained priesthood.

On the other side, it was stated that the view that women should now be ordained to the priesthood "is based on the urgent need for renewal and for adapting the ministry of the Church to the requirements of the day." It was also argued that there is no biblical evidence to justify the exclusion of women from the priesthood; that changes in the social circumstances of women have now removed the restrictions which made it impossible for women to be ordained in previous centuries; that temperamentally they are as well fitted as men for the requirements of the priesthood; and that the priesthood could never be fully represented until both men and women are permitted to take their place equally within it.

(The report of a committee to the October meeting of the bishops in U.S. was in our Dec. 1 issue, with a supportive editorial).

INSTALLATION OF BISHOP MYERS

★ Bishop Kilmer Myers will be installed as diocesan of California at Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, January 14th.

A number of clergy of the diocese have announced that they will not attend the luncheon that follows because it is being held in the Masonic Temple which discriminates against Negroes. Instead they will picket.

Union Movement Needs to Face New World Says Sam Cavert

★ The need for new patterns of relationships of Churches involved in ecumenism and the growing need to relate the Church to an increasingly secular world were cited as urgent tasks facing the ecumenical movement by one of its early pioneers.

The Rev. Samuel McCrea Cavert, a veteran of 30 years in the ecumenical movement on both the national and international fronts, told a Friends of the World Council of Churches luncheon that the "greatest thing about the World Council" has been its "resilience and flexibility."

He then proceeded to indicate the areas in which he believes that flexibility will be most needed in future.

According to Cavert, "the presence of the Roman Catholic Church in the ecumenical picture" will require the most obvious changes.

In the light of the ecumenical developments within Roman Catholicism in the last four years, he said, the "observer" category for Catholics at WCC conferences "is already becoming passe and . . . at least in this area of common concern a more integral relationship may develop."

The veteran Protestant leader said it appeared "unlikely" that new relationships here would take the form of Roman Catholic membership in the WCC. "It is historically and theologically difficult for the Roman Church to think of itself as one Church among others in an official grouping of Churches. But we should not entirely rule out the possibility of another viewpoint.

"If the Roman Church has

already changed more in the last four years than it had in the previous four centuries, who are we to set up preconceived limits as to what it may do tomorrow?"

Noting that in a number of communities Catholic parishes --and in one case a diocese -- are participating with Protestants in councils of Churches, he observed: "If this new experience in conciliar fellowship should work out happily, there might be an interest in extending it to the national and worldwide levels."

Need for Clarity

In any event, he advised, the World Council should "be alertly open-minded to whatever advances may come from the Catholic side and be prepared to consider the kind of changes in our ecumenical organizations to which the Holy Spirit may now be calling us."

When Cavert retired in 1954 as general secretary of the National Council of Churches, he became executive secretary of the World Council of Churches in the United States, a position from which he retired in 1958. He is now working on a history of the role of American Churches in the ecumenical movement.

Another task facing the ecumenical movement, said Cavert, is to "come to greater clarity . . . as to the meaning of unity. We all agree that the Church is, in some vital sense, a single reality given to us by Jesus Christ in and with the gospel."

"The question, however, is how that unity is manifest: by separate denominations working in cooperation; by this cooperation plus full fellowship and intercommunion; or by organic

union of the denominational structures into one united Church.

"While we may differ as to the structural form which ecumenical Christianity should finally take, we can at least agree that the denominational system as we now see it is not compatible with authentic Christian community. Our ecumenical experience has already gone too far to permit us to be satisfied with an ecclesiastical anarchy of competing denominations, each of which regards itself as wholly sovereign, sometimes even to the point of rejecting one another's ministry, excluding one another from sacramental fellowship, establishing new parishes that weaken the Churches of other Christians . . .

"If we can clearly agree on this, I suggest that we can leave it to future ecumenical experience to discover whether a strongly supported Council of Churches, with full intercommunion and fellowship among its members, or a union in a single administrative structure, is the better manifestation of the oneness and the wholeness of the body of Christ in the world."

In addition, Cavert said, it must be kept in mind that "the ecumenical movement is not just an encounter of Church with Church but also an encounter of the Church with the world." He warned, however, that in seeking ways to minister to the secular world "the Church must be on guard against becoming so identified with the secular as to lose the dimension of the transcendent and the holy."

"We must never forget that in addition to the secular city there is always 'the holy city coming down out of heaven from God.'"

Both Cavert and another speaker, M. M. Thomas, director of the Christian institute for

the study of religion and society in Bangalore, India, called for ecumenicity defined in terms of involvement with the problems of the contemporary world. Thomas, who is visiting professor of world Christianity at Union Theological Seminary for the current academic year, discussed the ecumenical movement from an Asian viewpoint.

Involvement of the ecumenical Church in "the appalling gap between the affluent peoples of America and Europe on the one hand and the enslaving poverty of the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America on the other," was cited by Cavert as a further imperative. The widening gap between the affluent and the poverty-stricken "may even prove to be the most insistent issue of all, in the decades just ahead, for an ecumenical movement committed to the principle of bearing one another's burdens and thus fulfilling the law of Christ," he said.

Thomas agreed that "this issue is uppermost in the minds of all Asians, including Asian Christians."

"But the question remains," the Indian layman said, "whether the World Council of Churches and its member Churches which are largely drawn from the rich west, will pursue this concern seriously, not only at the humanitarian level but also at the political level in their own countries. This in many ways remains the test of ecumenism in our generation."

Thomas pointed out that for Asian Christians, the ecumenical dialogue must involve non-Christian religions. "These religions and cultures have come to new life as part of the awakening of the non-western peoples; and they have also emerged with new or renewed claims to uniqueness and with a sense of world mission."

Religious Newswriters Select Ten Top Stories of 1966

★ Changes in abstinence regulations for Roman Catholics was ranked as the top religious story of 1966 by editors and reporters in the religious newswriters association.

Made annually, the survey this year produced responses from 44 members of the association. It is made up of men and women who report, write and edit news of religion for U.S. and Canadian press associations and daily papers.

Among other major religious developments of the year, the members gave second ranking to the visit of Archbishop Ramsey of Canterbury with Pope Paul.

Election of Eugene Carson Blake as general secretary of the World Council of Churches was considered the third major story.

Also on the "top ten" list were:

The Consultation on Church Union, which reached agreement on "principles of union" and during the year grew from six to nine participating denominations.

The decision by Pope Paul to defer a long-awaited pronouncement on birth control.

The resignation of Bishop James A. Pike as diocesan of California.

Dr. Martin Luther King's civil rights leadership and the open-housing demonstration in Chicago.

Pope Paul's repeated efforts in behalf of peace in Vietnam.

Approval of a merger plan by the general conferences of the Methodist and Evangelical United Brethren Churches.

Approval of the proposed "Confession of 1967" by the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church.

In rating the stories, members assigned points to various topics — a maximum of 10 for first place, nine for second, etc.

On this basis, the change in Catholic abstinence regulations considerably outdistanced other stories with a total of 293 points out of a possible 440. The Archbishop of Canterbury's visit to the Pope scored 206 points; Blake's election, 190, and the Consultation on Church Union, 168.

In addition to the top ten stories, members cited several other leading religious developments of the year. Among these was the discussion of Bishop Pike by the House of Bishops, where he was reprimanded for "irresponsible" statements and answered by calling for a formal investigation of the charges of his critics.

Other stories listed included the Vatican statement on mixed marriages, efforts by Father William DuBay to form a union of Catholic priests, the World Congress on Evangelism and the World Conference on Church and Society.

Votes also went to the following: clergy participation in the California grape-pickers' strike and union organization efforts; the National Council of Churches' General Assembly; the statement by the World Council of Churches urging Vietnam peace negotiations; organization of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Protestant-Catholic progress toward development of a common Bible.

EDITORIAL

Down to Cases with MRI

MRI came in for a lot of discussion at the December meeting of the Executive Council, as reported here last week. There were a lot of words, some rather sharp.

Bishop Burrill of Chicago contented that MRI is "supposed to be a spirit, a movement" and to set up regional conferences to plug it might lead people to "think of it as a promotional scheme to get up the dough"; that MRI "should activate its spiritual task"; that the proposed meetings across the country "sells MRI down the river."

But after all the speeches council members voted unanimously for the conferences, which means, we take it, that they like a lot of other people, are not quite sure what MRI is all about.

One thing is sure — Anglicans throughout the world are not getting up the dough. Bishop Ralph S. Dean, executive office, in sending new 1967 directories — projects that need money to be established or to carry on — says that early in 1966 there were 1148 projects listed. Only 111 had been met in full, 390 has been partially taken up, leaving 758 unadopted.

Bishop Dean says further that although the original MRI document spoke of the need of \$15-million in five years, the projects so far submitted call for over \$20-million in less than three years.

"Obviously that process could not go on," he writes. "What outcome other than more widespread heartache than ever could result from adding yet more projects when already 758 had met with no response at all."

What is being done in 1967 is to continue the 390 projects which have met at least partial response; the 758 which met with no response are dropped, with a few exceptions, and now the 1967 directory has been placed in the hands of the proper authorities, into which, the executive officer says, has gone "much blood and sweat, much toil and tears" — which we may well believe.

It is a fact, we think, that very few Episcopalians have a clear idea of what MRI is all

about, lay people and clergy alike. We read a good many diocesan monthlies and some of the strangest projects are reported as being Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in the Body of Christ.

A parish in the chips invited some slum kids for a visit. They all went for a swim; the ladies whipped up a meal; the rector gave a talk; the visitors were packed into a bus and taken home. MRI says the paper.

A downtown parish provides a service on Wednesdays at noon for those who work or shop in the area. On other days, since the church is not locked, "come in and pray awhile." MRI says the bulletin.

In a diocese, the bishop was interviewed on tv. Lots of work went into this. Tapes were made of congregations at worship and diocesan agencies at work; the bishop was wired for sound and gave a talk two weeks in advance of the show and everything assembled for a half-hour program. The page is headed in 36 point type: M.R.I. What Is It? Who Needs It?

If this particular bishop and his diocese think that this is hitting below the belt, we simply add that as far as we know the tv show was a very worthy undertaking but it wasn't MRI.

So we hope these regional conferences will really get down to cases. And we do not think that those running them have to be shy about talking about money. After all failure as of now is due largely to the lack of response in dollars and cents. And it does not take much of a salesman to present any of the projects in the new directory and ask a diocese, a parish or an individual to take it on.

Example: Malawi is in Central Africa. The diocese wants to increase the number of clergy from 25 to 42 in a three year period. There is the possibility of a joint seminary with Presbyterians at the new University of Malawi but until this is a reality the diocese must train its own at Anglican institutions. The project also mentions the need of clergy to share in the evangelization of three million Malawians who are not Christians. Cost: \$1,680 in 1967.

The directory spells out about 300 projects

throughout the Anglican world, with a price tag on each one so that a donor knows exactly what he is in for.

Meanwhile we call to your attention the article that follows on this subject. Francis X. Walter,

an angry young man of 33 years, is doing it the hard way at the Selma Inter-Religious Project in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. This project is not listed in the new directory. After reading his blast some people, we hope, will send him a buck or two.

TAKING A LOOK AT MRI

By Francis X. Walter

*Director of Selma Inter-Religious Project
Tuscaloosa, Alabama*

TENTATIVE THOUGHTS ON RECEIVING REPORT OF THE CHURCH FROM THE COMMISSION ON MRI

SOME FAMOUS TEACHER, whose name escapes me, once said that the message is the medium. Or did he say the medium is the message? This was my first tentative thought on receiving "Report of the Church on MRI." After reading the document, the thought remained my most vivid impression of the effort.

First, there was the envelope with its 25¢ stamp and the designation "First Class Mail" slanted across the face in crisp red letters. Then one sees the restrained cover, using bond paper with deep set margins which introduce a style carried throughout the document — called padding in the printing business, I believe. This gave a clear impression of the commission's attitude toward MRI before the booklet was even opened. I found this communicative skill truly remarkable.

This initial reaction to envelope and cover was skillfully reinforced on the very first page. To quote: "It is equally obvious that the disproportionate use of our resources on ourselves is truly scandalous. Illustrations of this are well known and very clear." A more perfect marriage of message and medium could hardly be effected.

However, if this is not the message of the declaration of August 17, 1963 in Toronto, we are in trouble. I think the commission is in trouble.

In section III, the second point of the declaration is "that every Church begin at once a radical study of its own obedience to mission." The General Convention resolved: "That this Church undertake without delay that evaluation

and reformation of our corporate life, our priorities, and our response to mission . . . God being our helper."

Same Old Stuff

These points can be made:

● August 17, 1963 to September 1966 is three years. The words used were "begin at once", "without delay". Your report announces it is the first of a series. On page 31 this report announces that a study of a study has been completed. Now, it says, this study, the first to be designated, "is about to get underway". Shouldn't the purpose of the commission be to incarnate the imperatives "begin at once", "without delay" rather than to study studies?

● The declaration (section III, second point) uses the word "radical" "a radical study." The General Convention resolution speaks of undertaking "a reformation" What does the word "radical" mean in this context? May I further respectfully ask if the commission has ever asked itself if it can effect MRI without identifying and altering certain emphases of our affluent Church? I do not detect any emphasis in the report that to become MRI—like certain specifically stated practices and attitudes must go. The report breathes a confidence that the Church in the USA can have a splendid MRI study and program just by adding some generosity, dedication, money and reports to the life of the Anglican Communion. Why did you not use this first report to say what must be reformed and what a "radical study" might mean?

● Section III the second point contains the only concrete example in the Toronto declaration. It is the equation of the cost of twelve priests in Asia or Latin America with the cost of an organ in Lagos or New York. The drafters must have considered this an important point. It is the only point given a concrete illustration. Yet, one finds nothing in your report that makes concrete the ways in which our secondary needs are put ahead of the essential needs of our brothers. This seems to me one of the great foci of MRI

To sum up: "the message is the medium" or something like that. The message I got square in the face is that this is more of the same old stuff. Same old Church, unready for a radical study. Same old report, not about to stir up a reformation. Same old affluence, using 25¢ stamps like post cards. Same old wordiness, which not one priest in ten has time to read, much less a layman. Same old status quo, ever ready to propose a new undertaking but scared speechless of proposing what things will have to go before a real foundation for a new thing can be established.

Positive Suggestions

I AM NOT too sanguine about making positive suggestions. But I want to do so none-the-less. If I can expend some time in composing a criticism of your commission's report I can at least be expected to suggest a few positive approaches. May I suggest:

● That the commission secretly propose to the Episcopal Society for Cultural and Racial Unity that that organization picket the next few building sites of incredibly wealthy parishes adding structures to their swollen facilities. The pickets could simple carry placards stating "MRI".

● That the commission encourage the Christian education department to experiment with systems of religious education that can operate without facilities used only on Sundays but can use facilities that are in use all week.

● That the commission suggest strongly to our seminaries that they explore the meaning of Christian poverty. The idea would be to see if this concept has any relevance for us.

● That the commission use the excellent mimeograph machines of the executive council to send us five short, cogent, cleverly written, honest examinations of our Church. This could be done in place of one flashy edition.

● That the commission propose model or

theoretical parishes that would be flexible enough to contribute to MRI. For instance, suggest a local church without a building, without a parish hall, without a church school, and even without a full time, salaried priest. I mean you could suggest this might be possible for some people if they really wanted it. And you could explain why this sort of church is worth trying.

● That the commission create an international advisory committee for itself of poor Christians. Perhaps the overseas ones could only write, and probably not all would be Episcopalians. But it would stimulate the commission to hear what poor people in Jersey City, Gee's Bend, Alabama, or Watts thought about the Church and MRI. Are there any people on the commission who make less than \$4000 a year?

Thank you for your kind indulgence. I do not often write unpleasant letters but when I do it is either to Church or state. My present job moves me more often to write unpleasant letters to the Justice Department, the President of the United States, or the Civil Rights Commission. Letters to the Church have become rare. But that 25¢ stamp and your poshy booklet did it. MRI is a worthy, if turgidly expressed idea.

I am sure my prayer is yours also: That our Church be relevant enough to encourage debate, reform, thought, and life. I should feel genuine regret were I permanently to enter the ranks of those thousands who do not care enough to be angry with their Church.

MRI NEEDS TRAINED PEOPLE SAYS KENNETH HUGHES

THE GREATEST NEED of MRI is trained personnel according to the Rev. Kenneth Hughes, rector of St. Bartholomew's, Cambridge, Mass.

Hughes went to Africa in 1962 and found a desperate need not only for trained personnel to bring the gospel but also for doctors, nurses, teachers and evangelists.

Upon his return Hughes prevailed upon the vestry of St. Bartholomew's to underwrite the training of three seminarians in two dioceses. The first group, now trained, are working in West Africa where Muslims outnumber Christians 100 to 1. Hughes points out that it cost \$560 a year for a young man to study theology in Nigeria.

He went on to say: "Nothing has brought to our parish a greater comprehension of our oneness in Christ than this project in West Africa."

WHY DO YOU CALL ME GOOD?

By George W. Wickersham II

*Minister of the Tamworth Associated Churches,
New Hampshire*

WHAT A MAN MUST DO TO INHERIT ETERNAL LIFE AS REVEALED IN THE PARABLE OF THE RICH YOUNG MAN

ST. MARK precipitated a theological controversy when he recorded Jesus as saying to the rich young man, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone." Even St. Matthew felt compelled to sidestep this controversial statement. Matthew's Gospel contains much of Mark's, including the whole of the story of the rich young man, but the quotation in question is carefully rephrased, "Why do you ask me about what is good? One there is who is good." St. Luke's Gospel, which also leans heavily on Mark, is not so diverted. In this instance it follows Mark's to the letter.

It would appear to me that Matthew is too sensitive as to what some might think about Jesus' words. He is over-concerned lest people say, "There! That proves that Jesus did not think of himself as divine!" But to say this, you see, is completely to miss the point of the passage.

The passage deals with a man who asked what he might do to inherit eternal life. The purpose of the passage is to underline the fact that there is nothing which anyone can do in order to gain entrance into heaven. "No one is good but God alone."

The rich young man had given a great deal of effort to observing the Commandments. Mark tells us, again rather surprisingly, that Jesus "looking upon him loved him." Well, doesn't Jesus love everybody? Here again the devil of literalism rises within us to obscure the point.

Have you ever seen a beetle in a porcelain sink? He struggles valiantly with all six legs to reach the top of the shiny bowl. As surely as he comes near the rim, however, just as surely he slides back to the bottom.

Whenever I see one of our insect friends in this predicament, I am overcome with pity. I get a piece of paper, wrap it over the edge and watch for the struggling creature to dash across

it to freedom. Silly me! Sometimes he flees from the offered assistance, terrified.

Unable to Help Themselves

A HUMAN BEING who endeavors to attain true godliness by his own efforts is exactly like a bug in a basin. He is resolutely attempting the impossible. Perhaps this is what moved our Lord with compassion for this man. He had been trying with all his might to save himself. Another Saul of Tarsus! When Jesus tried to help him, however, he would not be helped. Like so many bugs, he panicked and fled.

"You lack one thing; go, sell what you have, and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me." Horrors!

One of the most exciting experiences a person can have is to attend a meeting of Alcoholics Anonymous. It is exciting for just one reason. The people at these meetings are real. They certainly do not come to make any reputation for themselves!

There is no patter at these meetings, no routine. Little is said that is not meant. What is said may be said haltingly — although often it is extraordinarily lucid — but always it is powerful. And what lies behind this power? That also is easy to explain. These people have left all pretense at the door. They have fully admitted that, as the collect says, they have no power of themselves to help themselves.

Members of A. A. know that they cannot do it alone. They have become aware of the great benefits of association. They know, for instance, that they cannot keep sobriety unless they share sobriety. That is why they meet regularly and often. Alcoholism is a sickness of a peculiar nature. It is all but incomprehensible to those not afflicted with it. Nobody can help an alcoholic as can another alcoholic. But A. A. members go beyond this.

Alcoholics Anonymous is not a religious group per se. The chapter which meets at St. An-

drew's Church, Tamworth, confines formal religion to a moment of silence or to a recitation of the Lord's Prayer. With almost no exceptions, however, the members will tell you that in the course of finding sobriety, they have also become aware of what they call "a Higher Power." Indeed, the book, "Alcoholics Anonymous," states flatly, "On one proposition . . . these men and women are strikingly agreed. Everyone of them has gained access to, and believes in, a Power greater than himself. This Power has in each case accomplished the miraculous, the humanly impossible."

Rock Bottom

HERE, then, are people who, one way or another, have found God. Why? Most of them are perfectly frank. Doctors, clergymen, lawyers, businessmen, teachers, housewives, whatever they might have been, they have lost jobs, families, friends, position, health — everything. They have reached rock-bottom, or at least have beheld its rapid approach. In utter despair they have cried out for help. "Surrender" is a term which they use frequently. Their surrender is usually followed by an immediate awareness of a Higher Power.

I have one particular friend with a drinking problem. Periodically he gets alarmed and goes running to A. A. For several months he says all the right things. He makes quite a to-do about it. Just as periodically he goes into the closet and gets started on whiskey again. A. A. sees a certain amount of this, too, of course. As is often the case, my friend's trouble lies in the fact that he never hits bottom, or even sees bottom coming. His family always picks up the tab. No creditors, no sheriffs, no jails, not even any insolvency. Consequently: no surrender.

Trying to Hide

THIS PRINCIPLE is not confined to alcoholics.

The Prodigal Son did not "come to himself" until he wanted to eat the husks which he threw to the swine.

This is the point, I believe, of the section on riches in our story. "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." This young man would never have to face work, face people, face his own inadequacies, face reality, as long as he could sit down and write a check for whatever he wanted.

As long as we think that we can save ourselves, God cannot help us.

Finally: if this passage has always made you feel guilty over having money, feel guilty no longer. Money is not condemned anymore than houses or brothers or sisters or mothers or fathers or children or lands — one or all of which our Lord indicates that we might have to give up too. Do you feel guilty about having these? Of course not. But like money, these human possessions can become shelters to hide behind, fortresses of defiance, props of propriety, cellars of self-centeredness. The Jones family teams up against the world. The Jones family cannot be saved. Many that are first shall indeed be last.

"Then who can be saved?" The disciples came quickly to the point.

So did our Lord. "With men it is impossible."

This is what we must realize if we are ever to attain any virtue worthy of eternal life, indeed if we are ever to obtain true houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children or lands in this life — along with persecution.

Alas! It is so easy to say all this. It is so hard to mean it. "No one is good but God alone." You know just as well as I do that each one of us thinks of himself as pretty able.

Our Lord was evidently under no such illusion.

St. Mark wrote his Gospel to prove that Jesus was divine. This did not prevent him, however, from grasping the tremendous message in our Lord's encounter with the rich young man or from relaying our Lord's words precisely as they must have been uttered.

Divine or not, Jesus was certainly human. As it is with all the rest of us, so it was with him: whatever goodness he had was from God.

Jesus and the Bible

By Terence J. Finlay

Rector of St. Bartholomew's, New York

IF NEWSPAPERS had been published in Nazareth in the time of our Lord, they might have carried headlines like these: "Local Boy Returns," "Synagogue Disrupted," "Jesus Forced to Leave Service." Why would they have had such headlines? Let us go back, in our imagination, to that sabbath day when Jesus had re-

turned to his hometown of Nazareth following some emotional experiences. He had been baptized in the River Jordan by John; He had spent six weeks by himself in the wilderness, searching his heart to find how he should begin his ministry. Then he returned home, "and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day," to join with the people he knew so well in the opening prayer of the traditional service beginning, "Blessed be Thou, O Lord, King of the world," as well as in the recitation of the ancient creed, called the Shema, and in the following prayers and responses.

Then, the congregation standing, the elder went to the ark and took out two rolls of parchment: one, the book of the law; the other, the book of the prophets. As was customary, he asked one of the congregation to read from the scriptures; and seeing Jesus newly returned, he beckoned to him. Jesus went up and received "the book of the prophet Esaias," and began to read these words, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted . . . To preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Jesus rolled up the parchment and returned it to the elder, and, again as the custom was, he began to expound upon what he had read, and he said distinctly, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

In a moment there was an uproar in the congregation. People turned to one another and said, "Is not this the son of Joseph, the carpenter?" "We know his mother; we know his brothers and sisters. How does he speak with such authority?" "'This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.' How dare he say such a thing?" While this tumult was going on, Jesus walked down the aisle, and out of the door. Jesus could well say, "A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country." And we are told that he was never able to do any mighty work in Nazareth. The people simply refused to believe in him.

The Art of Living

IF WE WERE INTERESTED in the development of church-going, we could point out to ourselves, and to anyone who might argue this point with us, that from his childhood Jesus had been trained to go to the synagogue; it was his custom, this weekly worship, this meeting together with the people. If Jesus, who is the

master of the art of living, felt the need of this corporate worship, how much more do we need it in our day and generation? Or we could pause and think of the jealousy of human nature, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

We are concerned with our Lord's interpretation of the scriptures and the place they had in his life. The scriptures occupied a place of paramount importance. Again and again in his teachings he referred to the prophecies in the scriptures regarding the coming of the Messiah, and he translated these prophecies to mean himself. In this he aroused the antagonism of the Pharisees and the scribes, of the rabbis and the leaders of the people. Their attitude was always the same: "This man has had no training for this kind of teaching. How dare he speak with such authority and power? How dare he claim such things for himself?"

But Jesus pursued his ministry, revealing to people, in the humbleness of his life, the true heart and the nature of the God who created him and us. Men and women, who had suffered darkness and perplexity of mind, who had lost all hope in religion, suddenly found in Jesus a new revelation of the heart of the Creator of the universe; they found that he was a God who cared, a God of love, a God who, in his infinite mercy, had revealed himself through this Jesus of Nazareth.

Expounding the Scriptures

LATER on in his ministry, Jesus healed a paralytic man at the pool of Bethesda and gave him the opportunity of walking again. The Pharisees and scribes turned on him and condemned him because he had healed on the sabbath day. They pointed out to him something of which he was already aware, that in exact Mosaic law one should not do this on the sabbath day. Jesus replied, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." These men knew the scriptures, but they failed to see that these scriptures pointed to Jesus as "the way, the truth, and the life." After Jesus had lived for some three years among them, even his own disciples did not fully comprehend the wonder and the glory of the message, which today, as Christians, we accept.

Do you remember that incomparable story, tucked away in the gospel for Easter Monday, of the two disciples journeying to Emmaus. As

they walked along the road, downcast and sad, they were joined by a stranger, who asked why they were so depressed. They asked if he had not been in Jerusalem and had not seen the death of Jesus of Nazareth on the cross. Then this stranger began to expound to them the scriptures. He told them how this all had been prophesied, and that it all had been revealed that this should happen to the redeemer of their people. After he had left them, do you remember what they said, "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" "Did not our heart burn within us," — if we could only have Jesus expound the scriptures to us, if he could only walk with us so that our hearts would burn within us as we tried to study something of this peerless book which we have been given!

The scriptures testify of Jesus; therefore, it might be well, when we start to read the Bible again, that we do not begin with Genesis. Too many people have gone away determined that they would read the Bible anew, and have started with the Book of Genesis. Somewhere in Exodus they have become discouraged, and they have failed altogether in the wilderness of Leviticus. Let us begin with the earliest record of Jesus' life in the Gospel according to St. Mark. Most scholars seem to agree this is really the story of the life of Jesus seen through the eyes of Simon Peter. Read St. Mark; then read the three other wonderful Gospels. Then, if your appetite is sufficiently whetted, you will turn to The Acts of the Apostles, and see how a few men and women began to put into practice the teachings of Jesus Christ, and how they turned things upside-down in their world, so that the great Roman Empire finally had to accept Christianity and make it a legal religion.

Search the Scriptures

TODAY all the might and power of ancient Rome, which dominated the world when Jesus was born, is but a relic of history; but the Gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed by this simple man, who came into the world to reveal God more fully than any other man, is still alive and a dynamic force. Then, if your appetite still is not sated, read some of the letters of St. Paul to the little Christian communities. Next go back to the Old Testament; select the books you feel would appeal to you most. Read in

Genesis how human beings, when confronted with the fact of their creation and with the existence of an evil power in the world, sought to explain these facts. Inspired by God, they began where any man has to begin in his faith, "In the beginning God . . ." And this God is revealed in the New Testament through Jesus of Nazareth.

Search the scriptures, not to quote chapter or verse, not to bolster some ecclesiastical argument, but to see a life so wonderful, so glorious, so different from ours, that as long as we live we must try to emulate that life which encourages us with its great optimism regarding people like us. Jesus never despaired of human nature. He believed all people were the creation of God in his world.

If you want drama or stories that will lift you to the heights; if you want songs that you can sing when things go wrong, or if you want to express the joy that is welling up in your hearts, turn to the psalms. If you want to read wise sayings, then turn to the proverbs. If you want to see men who lived in an age of discouragement and despair, yet could see a God who was greater than any other god revealed to the tribes around them, read the stories of the prophets and the judges of Israel. "Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way?" This is our privilege — to share the scriptures.

I mentioned that Jesus after his baptism spent six weeks in the wilderness, searching for the way in which he should serve God. We know that, while he was there, he was tempted. How did he fight off that temptation? Jesus said, "It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Again and again he said, "It is written . . ." When he hung on the cross and every one of his disciples had forsaken him and fled for their lives, when he was "despised and rejected of men," where did he turn? To the scriptures! He turned to the psalms, and he cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" When he was dying, he found in the psalms his comfort and strength, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

You and I have to pass through life and death even as he did. It is written, "as thy days, so shall thy strength be." Search the scriptures, not to prove an argument, not to refute some doctrine, but to see the living Christ.

Great Things --- Indeed

By William B. Spofford Sr.

WHEN COMMONWEAL, a Catholic weekly, said get out of Vietnam it got a big spread in the New York Times. Why I do not know—an alert press representative most likely. Or it could be that even the Times is not yet aware that Rome has changes more in the last four years than in the last four centuries, as our friend, Sam Cavert, said at the WCC luncheon, reported in this issue. Protestants have been saying get out of Vietnam ever since we got in the mess, without much coverage by the secular press. Many good reporters are not yet conditioned to the new Rome—hence a sassy bit by a R. C. magazine is considered sure-fire “man-bites-dog” stuff.

Commonweal called on the U.S. to get out of Vietnam “even at the cost of a Communist victory.”

The publication said that America should “seek whatever safety it can for our allies,” and “arrange whatever international face-saving is possible,” but it should withdraw.

“The war in Vietnam is an unjust one,” the editorial declared. “We mean that in its most profound sense: what is being done there, despite the almost certain good intentions of those doing it, is a crime and a sin.

“At a moment when claims of military victory are drowning out quiet admissions that the war cannot be settled for years, this conclusion must be affirmed and reaffirmed.”

While not denying that the outcome in Southeast Asia will make a difference in the fate of the Vietnamese people and the balance of power in Asia, the weekly asserted that these objections seem to be “ambiguously served by American policy.”

The difference, it continued, is not so decisive as to justify a war “which may last longer than any America has ever fought, employ more U.S. troops than in Korea, cost more than all the aid we have ever given to developing nations, drop more bombs than were used against the Japanese in world war two, and kill and maim far more Vietnamese than a Communist regime would have liquidated — and still not promise a definite outcome.”

Commonweal said that the “disproportion between ends and means has grown so extreme, the consequent deformation of American foreign

and domestic policy so radical, that the Christian cannot consider the Vietnam war merely a mistaken government measure to be amended eventually but tolerated meanwhile.

“The evil outweighs the good. This is an unjust war. The United States should get out.”

The editorial went on to observe that to work for a negotiated peace, meanwhile supporting the war, makes sense if a settlement is in sight, but it added, “More and more doubts surround the expressed willingness of Washington to negotiate . . . and there is even less evidence that Hanoi has wanted to talk.”

Commonweal urged that the bombing of North Vietnam be halted. Meanwhile, it said, America should assure the Soviet Union that it would not renew the bombing provided Russia persuaded Hanoi to start peace negotiations.

This country, it said, “must de-escalate its settlement demands. So must Hanoi. But de-escalation on the American side would mean a frank and open willingness to negotiate with the National Liberation Front. It would mean acceptance of the fact that there must be a recognized role for organized left-wing and Communist forces in the political life of any post-settlement South Vietnam.”

Bishop Arnold Lewis, suffragan for the U.S. armed forces, told the recent meeting of the executive council that our government has “no intention of getting out of Southeast Asia” that “we are doing great things there” and that he hopes “we can have trust in our government.”

Harrison E. Salisbury, who went to North Vietnam for the N. Y. Times, writing on our Lord's Birthday:

“Quote”

Christmas wasn't a joyous occasion for Namdinh although strings of small red pennants decorated the old gray, stucco Catholic church and a white Star of Bethlehem had been mounted on the pinnacle of the tower. Few Americans have heard of Namdinh, although until recently it was the third largest North Vietnamese city.

Mayor Tran Thi Doan, a petite 40-year-old woman, regards her city as essentially a cotton-and-silk textile town containing nothing of military significance. Namdinh has been systematically attacked by United States seventh fleet bombers since June 28, 1965.

The cathedral tower looks out on block after block of utter desolation: the city's population of 90,000 has been reduced to less than 20,000 be-

cause of evacuation; 13 per cent of the city's housing, including the homes of 12,464 people, have been destroyed: 89 people have been killed and 405 wounded.

No American communique has asserted that Namdinh contains some facility that the United States regards as a military objective. It is apparent, on personal inspection, that block after block of ordinary housing, particularly surrounding a textile plant, has been smashed to rubble by repeated attacks by seventh fleet planes.

The town lies only 20 miles inland, which may explain why the seventh fleet seems to have made it its particular target. The textile plant, whose most dangerous output from a military point of view would presumably be cloth for uniforms, has been bombed 19 times, but is still operating under great difficulty.

Other industries in Namdinh include a rice-processing plant, a silk factory, an agricultural-

tool plant, a fruit-canning plant and a thread cooperative. All have been damaged in raids. The least affected operation is the rice mill, which is working at normal capacity.

Street after street in Namdinh has been abandoned and houses stand torn and gaping. One deserted street is Hang Thao or Silk Street, which was the center of the silk industry. Almost every house on the street was blasted down April 14 at about 6:30 A.M. just as the factory shifts were changing.

Forty-nine people were killed, 135 were wounded on Hang Thao and 240 houses collapsed. Eight bombs — MK-84's — accomplished this. These are huge weapons weighing about 2,000 pounds.

“Unquote”

We are doing great things there, indeed, Bishop Lewis.

LARGE MASS. GIFT FOR PENSIONS IN JAPAN

★ A gift of \$350,000, in response to MRI, has been made by the diocese of Massachusetts towards the establishment of a pension fund for the Anglican Church in Japan. This represents the largest single project gift ever made by one Anglican Church to another.

The Japanese Church has not had the capital for a formal retirement plan in its 30 years of independent life and the situation has caused much hardship among older clergy and lay workers. The only pensions which have been made available in emergency retirements have been from small gifts from their own members and from other Churches in the Anglican communion. The onset of world war two caused them to speed their independence from the Episcopal Church without the usual arrangements of some kind for an endowment from their original founders.

The dilemma of the Church in Japan aroused the interest of the diocese of Massachusetts

because of the leadership given to the development of the Church Pension Fund in the Episcopal Church by the late Bishop William Lawrence.

The diocese, planning a 5-million dollar capital campaign, determined to give a tithe of 10% to the needs of sister Churches.

With the impact of the sharing of responsibilities underlined in MRI, the Church in Japan was encouraged to plan for pensions with the hope of aid from outside. The initial fund required from outside sources was set at \$700,000 which would start the plan and which then could be continued by its own membership.

Planning for this project has been given great care and effort, under the direction of Bishop Anson Stokes. The Japanese pension plan was carefully studied by diocesan authorities in cooperation with Tokyo's Bishop Goto and an Episcopal layman, Ernest Moorhead, a senior actuary of an insurance company and treasurer of St. Andrew's, Wellesley, who traveled to Japan at his own expense to work out

the final details. As a result of his recommendations, the diocese has contributed one-half of the capital fund needed.

Bishop Stephen F. Bayne, director of the overseas department and member of the MRI commission, has said that “A project of this magnitude is obviously difficult at best for any diocese or other unit of the Church to undertake. It can be translated into the terms of scores of elderly clergymen and lay workers who can be freed through retirement from the need for work past the feasible age. And it opens the way for increasing mobility in the ministry of the Church plus greater hope for security for young men and women entering the ministry.”

ANGLICAN CONFERENCE ON CONTINENT

★ A conference of clerical and lay representatives of the British and American Anglican jurisdictions in Europe, called by the Anglican executive officer, the bishop of London, the bishops of Gibraltar and Fulham, and the bishop-in-charge of the

convocation of American Churches in Europe, Stephen F. Bayne, met at Holy Trinity Church, Brussels, December 14-16, with Bishop Dean, executive officer, as chairman.

The conference agenda included discussion of the status of the two British continental jurisdictions, the diocese of Gibraltar under its diocesan bishop, and the jurisdiction of Fulham, a suffragan of the bishop of London, with a view to securing integration and representation of these two jurisdictions in the provincial organization of the Church of England which, at present, they do not have.

In the course of the discussion, it was pointed out that

the convocation of American Churches in Europe, with churches in France, Switzerland, Italy, and Germany, is fully integrated, by constitution and canons, into the Episcopal Church in the United States of America, with representation, clerical and lay, in the General Convention.

The relationship of the American convocation with the two British jurisdictions was considered, with a view to strengthening and co-ordinating the cooperation already existing between them in their joint Anglican ministry on the continent.

A statement was presented by Dean Sturgis Lee Riddle of the American Pro-Cathedral Church

of the Holy Trinity, Paris, and of the convocation of Europe, authorized by the vestry of the Pro-Cathedral, and supported by the representatives of the other American churches present, advising against any juridical amalgamation at present of the British and American jurisdictions. The statement suggested the establishment of an Anglican co-ordinating council for the continent to discuss, advise, and recommend ways of implementing further Anglican co-operation in Europe.

This statement formed the basis of a resolution moved by the bishop of London, seconded by Dean Riddle, and unanimously adopted, requesting the bishops of the jurisdictions to organize such a council, to be composed of the bishops, and one clerical and two lay delegates from the diocese of Gibraltar, the jurisdiction of Fulham, and the convocation of American Churches in Europe, to meet regularly to consider matters of mutual interest and helpfulness, and to recommend action to the authorities of the several jurisdictions.

PRESENT ICELANDIC BIBLE TO ARCHBISHOP

★ A rare Icelandic Bible printed in 1584 was presented to Archbishop Ramsey, by the Lutheran Bishop of Iceland.

Bishop Sigurdjoern Einarsson of Reykjavik, head of the national Lutheran Church of Iceland, in turn received the cross of the order of St. Augustine of Canterbury, which is awarded by the archbishop to members of foreign Churches who have made notable contributions to the advancement of friendly relations with Anglican Churches.

During his eight-day visit, Bishop Einarsson also was the guest of Bishops Leonard Wilson of Birmingham and Gordon Savage of Southwell.



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A Call to Clergymen ---

VIET-NAM:

THE CLERGYMAN'S DILEMMA

An Education-Action Mobilization

January 31 — February 1, 1967 — Washington, D.C.

Dear Friend:

Scripture warns that "where there is no vision the people perish." The failure of vision regarding Viet-Nam is a blindness to realities no less than to ideals. The threat of this moment is a preoccupation with the enemy that destroys our society's power to understand itself or its foes. In such a time leaders in the religious community of this nation must risk the displeasure of the powers that be in order to challenge dogmatisms that imperil ourselves and our world.

We want you in Washington with us on January 31—February 1 to gain new insight for local involvement through workshops, to meet with both elected and appointed government officials, and to stand with members of all faiths in a vigil for peace.

Dr. John C. Bennett
President, Union Theological
Seminary

Rabbi Abraham Heschel
Professor, Jewish Theological
Seminary of America

Father John McKenzie
Notre Dame University

Dr. Robert McAfee Brown
Professor, Stanford University

Rev. William Sloane Coffin, Jr.
Chaplain, Yale University

Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath
President, Union of American
Hebrew Congregations

Bishop John Wesley Lord
Methodist Bishop of
Washington, D.C.

Rabbi Jacob Weinstein
President, Central Conference
of American Rabbis

Sister Mary Corita

Dr. Harvey G. Cox
Associate Professor,
Harvard Divinity School

Father Joseph F. Mulligan
Dean, Graduate School,
Fordham University

Father Donald Campion
Former Editor, America

Father Peter Riga
Professor, St. Mary's College

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FIXED PRIMATIAL SEE IN CANADA LIKELY

★ The Anglican Church in Canada is likely to decide at its general synod of 1967 to name a city as the see of its primate. At present the see of the primate depends on the see city of the bishop who is elected to the office. Presently it is Winnipeg, the home of Archbishop Clark.

The office of primate has developed into a full-time job.

BISHOP GILBERT BAKER OF HONG KONG

★ The Church in today's society in Asia is a frontier Church, said the Rev. Lee Shi-keung, canon theologian, speaking at the consecration of the new Anglican Bishop of Hong Kong and Macao. He urged the Church to speak the language of the people.

The new prelate is Bishop Gilbert Baker. He was the first Bishop of Hong Kong and Macao to be consecrated in the British crown colony.

"The gospel must speak a language the people can understand," Mr. Shi-keung said. "We must use more and more Chinese modes and expressions to expound the Christian faith."

"Moreover, we must use Chinese religious insights to enrich our own understanding," he told the congregation at St. John's Cathedral.

Bishop Baker was consecrated by Bishop James C. L. Wong, head of the Anglican Church Council in Southeast Asia. The service was conducted in English and Cantonese, the dialect used by the majority of Hong Kong's Chinese.

The bishops of Kuching, Jesselton, Korea and the Philippines, together with the supreme bishop of the Philippine Independence Church, were also present at the ceremony.

After the consecration, Bish-

op Baker was received by the governor, Sir David Trench, and attended a reception given by Roman Catholic Bishop Lawrence Bianchi.

Bishop Baker is a native of Tientsin and has spent most of his life in Southeast Asia.

MORAL PURPOSES OF MRA ARE QUESTIONED

★ Episcopal clergymen of New Mexico, supported by their bishop, have questioned the moral purposes, the financial backing and the leadership of Moral Re-Armament, which scheduled a Dec. 23 meeting in Santa Fe, N. M.

A statement signed by Episcopal ministers and Bishop C. J. Kinsolving of New Mexico and West Texas stated that the "absolutes" propounded by MRA are "a false substitute for Christian ethics . . . We stand with youth and therefore are opposed to false systems of absolutes."

The statement appeared in a daily newspaper at a time when MRA leaders were asking residents of Santa Fe and surrounding communities to donate food and lodging for three casts of the MRA "Sing-Out," which was to draw young people from 70 nations and a total attendance of 2,000.

The Episcopal statement also quoted from statements made previously by the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Church.

"As clergy of the Santa Fe area, we are concerned that the people of this community become informed as to the purpose, organization and backing of this 'movement'," the statement said.

"Whose morals are being used to re-arm the youth of the world (by MRA)?" the religious leaders asked. The statement specifically asked whether the group is using the "nationalistic morals" of Robert Welch, founder of the John Birch Society.

"From where does the financial backing for this 'movement' come?" the statement asked. "Does any person have a certified statement of national income and expenditure for 1965?"

The Rev. William Crews of St. Bede's Episcopal church in Santa Fe, one of the signers, said he had been unable to obtain any financial information about MRA.

The Episcopal clergymen listed five charges against MRA by the Church of England in 1955. These were: "MRA fails to take the nature of politics seriously; MRA fails to make a profound enough analysis of the world's social problems; MRA is utopian; MRA's view of change is less than the Christian view of conversion; and MRA makes insufficient appeal to reason."

"We also note," the statement said, "the official policy of the Roman Catholic Church as stated by the sacred congregation of the holy office in Rome, 1955: Priests may not take part in MRA meetings and activities, and that lay persons may not accept responsible positions in the movement."

Quoting the Church of England Assembly's report, the letter said: "We have at times been haunted by a picture of the movement, with its hectic heartiness, its mass gaiety and its reiterated slogans, as a colossal drive of escapism from the full force of the difficulty in detail of responsible living in the world."

Signing the protest letter were Bishop Kinsolving and Mr. Crews; the Rev. Robert H. Dinegar and the Rev. William H. Wolfrum of Trinity Church, Los Alamos; the Rev. Dennis R. Walker and the Rev. Richard H. Williams of the Church of the Holy Faith, Santa Fe; and the Rev. David B. Todd of St. Stephen's Church in Espanola.

CHURCHES CRITICIZED OVER VIETNAM

A chairman of the interreligious Clergy Concerned about Vietnam group declared that a "credibility gap . . . has cushioned the impact of religious criticism of the Vietnam war."

The Rev. John Neuhaus, declared in a sermon to his congregation in Brooklyn: "It is true that the administration's slippery statements and misleading explanations about the tragedy in Vietnam have created a public cynicism which is both disgraceful and dangerous in a democracy. But it is equally true that we in the religious communities have attempted to cover our tracks of moral cowardice with pious generalities about peace."

Neuhaus said that in such statements as those issued by the National Council of Churches and the National Conference of Catholic Bishops "the criticism from the Churches is no doubt sincere, but feelings of moral outrage are cloaked in mild reprimand and condemnation of the barbarities of the Vietnam war is expressed in terms of safe generalities."

RELIGION COURSES URGED BY STUDENTS

★ Students at the University of Rochester made an unusual request — they want more courses in religion — and the administration decided that their petition warranted quick action.

Signed by 1,008 students — more than one-third of the undergraduates on the university's main campus — the petition asked that the university add at least two courses in religion next semester, and at least three the following semester. It also requested that the university consider establishment of a department of religion.

As a result of this, Kenneth E. Clark, dean of the college of

arts and sciences, announced expansion of the college's courses in religion for next semester.

Courses that will be added to the regularly scheduled History of Religion are: The Puritan Heritage, a course for freshmen dealing largely with the content of religious beliefs in the early period of American life; a course on The Philosophy of Religion; and a revised course on 19th and 20th century intellectual history emphasizing the relation of religion and culture.

In addition, the chairman of the philosophy department announced that he will propose to the faculty committee on academic policy a new course on Human Faith and Fate which he would like to give next semester.

The petition for the added religion courses was proposed at a student-sponsored "teach-in" on the "Death of God" movement which was sponsored by campus organizations. It took the administration about a month to formulate and announce the new courses.

The student committee sponsoring the petition promptly issued a statement expressing gratitude for the "quick and meaningful action taken on our request."

Robert Beaven, university chaplain, said that he believes students are looking for an "opportunity to delve into the whole area of human experience in a respectable academic way."

"It does not mean that students are interested in religion in the traditional sense. They are interested in exploring the meaning of life. They are eager

to talk with anyone who is willing to talk without any kind of mask or pretense," Beaven said.

CHURCH TAX EXEMPTION PROBABLY ILLEGAL

★ A New York University professor of constitutional law told an Episcopal lawyers' group that tax exemption of church property is "probably" not constitutional and would be difficult to defend legally.

"It is really aid to religion — and I don't think you can get around the fact," said Prof. Robert F. Cushman, co-author of Cases in Constitutional Law with his father, Robert E. Cushman, retired constitutional law professor of Cornell.

Prof. Cushman gave his opinion at a luncheon of the Guild of St. Ives, a diocese of New York group which is studying the tax exemption issue in the hope that it will eventually be taken up by the diocese and the General Convention.

While the U. S. Supreme Court has avoided ruling directly on the issue, he said, "there may come a time when the Supreme Court can't duck the question indefinitely."

Prof. Cushman said that it would probably be difficult "to get up a case challenging tax exemption, because someone would have to show that he has an interest that is being infringed."

The issue, he said, is a problem that needs to be solved politically rather than through a taxpayer's suit.

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