

Eye on Washington by Nicholas F. Benton

Recess witnesses the purging of heretics

Keeping things lively in the nation's capital during the summer recess for the President and Congress, the Vatican struck a blow against the moral decay eating away at Western civilization by stripping Fr. Charles Curran of his right to teach theology at the Catholic University of America here.

This move by the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, headed by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, has implications that will affect the entire American Church, and extend far beyond the Church itself.

Father Curran was a much-published proponent of the decadent moral and social dogmas that became the vogue in the West during the late 1960s, when the massive social-engineering project, described as "the Aquarian conspiracy" by the Stanford Research Institute's Marilyn Ferguson, the author of a book by that name, unleashed the "sex-drug-rock counterculture."

Father Curran was among those who argued the merits of the new degenerate hedonism in high-flown and esoteric theological language in order to undercut the traditional pastoral function of the Church to resist these trends. Therefore, as he himself concedes, his arguments were always veiled in "carefully nuanced" terms, to sound acceptable to Church doctrine, while profoundly undercutting its content.

He helped draft a formulation adopted by the U.S. Catholic Bishops in 1968 "allowing" theological dissent

in the Church, and used this to justify his defense of homosexual and extra-marital sex, as well as abortion, sterilization, euthanasia, and population control.

At an increased pace over recent years, Pope John Paul II and Cardinal Ratzinger have been striking back at the terrible social consequences of the cultural shift into this "Aquarian age."

The Pope has attacked the narco-terrorist networks of South America and their controllers, denouncing the drug business as the "new slavery" that threatens an entire generation. Rock music and promiscuous sex, as well as the immorality of euthanasia and population control, have been singled out for attack by both the Pope and Ratzinger.

The economic barbarism underlying the Aquarian conspiracy, the usury of the International Monetary Fund and its proponents, has also come under attack.

But the blow struck against Father Curran's heresy is a major escalation by the Pope and Ratzinger, and has created reverberations throughout the American Church—Curran was, after all, a fair representative of a sizable number of "American heresy" Catholic prelates. While the architects of the moral decay shriek about "violations of academic freedom," the American people applaud, as they did President Reagan's recent escalation of the war on drugs.

This reporter put the relevant question to Curran during his press conference Aug. 20: "Can you deny that the impact of your ideas has contributed to the spread of AIDS?"

The standing-room-only crowded auditorium, jammed with press and erstwhile supporters of Curran, recoiled in shocked horror. The reaction by dozens was so angry, outraged, and spontaneous, that I knew it had hit the mark. When the noise settled down,

Curran evaded answering: "There are 10 members of our sociology faculty present who would probably be better equipped to answer that question than me."

But the question remains. How many of the 4 million Americans infected with the AIDS virus can Father Curran take personal credit for?

Curran tried to argue that "St. Peter would have flunked a Catholic catechism" because "he wouldn't know how many persons there are in the Godhead, how many natures in Christ, or how many holy sacraments there are." He meant this to argue that the theological doctrines of the Trinity, consubstantiality of Christ, and the holy sacraments were part of the "evolution" of the Church, and that his controversial views should be seen as part of that "evolution."

In fact, the Church has been fighting heresy within its ranks since the time of Simon Magus, and in this fight has consistently recognized that the advocacy of hedonism always occurs at the expense of the sanctity of human life. The Curran issue is just another case of this, because his support of hedonism in the form of sexual promiscuity is coupled with his rejection of the sanctity of life in his support for both euthanasia and population control.

Curran claimed he has "never supported the use of euthanasia for the purpose of population control," but then admitted that he has written in support of both euthanasia for the elderly and population control in developing sector nations.

Of course, Curran is not alone. There are many like him who have chipped away at the moral fabric of society, if few have been in such influential positions to do so. More important is the fact that the Vatican, to the benefit of us all, Catholic or not, has started to crack down.