

Authentic diversity is needed for peace to be a reality

MORAL PERSPECTIVES



REV. DAVID STRONG

Adversity creates character if the adversity does not break a person. Suburban living seeks to create security and comfort. The terrible danger is that our children in particular become too comfortable and secure. Our children expect to have everything. I see the tragedy of many suburban children who grow up to be nothing and to accomplish nothing. They were given too much. They were required to do too little and to learn too little.

The greater tragedy is when people do not find themselves. People who do not find their special gifts and talents wander from one thing to another. How do we and how do our children learn the lessons that adversity call teach us?

One of the best things that I ever did for my children was to take them to Haiti. They were teenagers. They were shocked to see a whole society living on the edge of survival. They were shocked to see entire families living in a tin and wood shack, without electricity, without water and with very little food. Yet, these very same people lived in hope, with love and with hospitality.

The second best thing I did for my children was to send them off to work as a deck hand on a freighter. They were given the worse jobs on the ship. They were required to work without rest until the job was done. They were working under dangerous conditions. It was also a great adventure, a great lesson in life and a great test.

My sons worked with men who would never do anything more than this job. They would never get out from the cycle of hard work, danger, alcohol and a lonely life. My sons learned a lot as I learned a lot years ago working on the assembly line.

By moving to the city I am

learning a lot. Comfort and security are not taken for granted. I meet wonderful people who are very wise and strong because they face adversity.

I find that education, a job of importance, money and being white are not as significant as many other things. I find people who are wise, compassionate, loving and willing to sacrifice for other human beings. I find people who commit themselves to help reduce the suffering of other

human beings. I find people I admire and love.

In the city, I find a diversity which requires that we allow each person to determine who they are. Certainly, I cannot assume who someone is who is very different from myself. The city confronts me with something about what the whole world is about. We are all struggling to know who we are and how we fit into the larger society as a whole. This is a difficult task.

The basis for the peace that we all desire is not that we pretend to be all alike. The basis for peace is that we define clearly who we are and how we fit into the whole.

Authentic diversity is required for peace to be a reality. This requires that we do not bury the differences. This peace requires that we do not provide a false security and comfort for our children.

When I lived in the suburbs I would show visitors Detroit. I would show them the beauty and

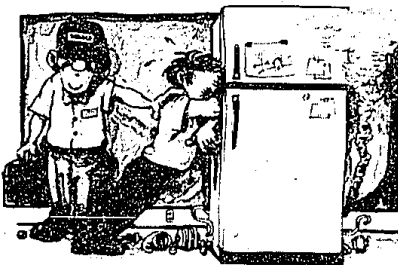
I would drive them through the slums. When classes of children from the suburbs come to visit the city I seek to get them out on the streets. I arrange to have them meet people who are very different from themselves.

Without such experiences, human beings cannot mature. Without such experiences of challenge and even adversity, a human person will not become mature and compassionate. Suburban schools teach some

things very well. Other things are not taught in school. Essential lessons are taught by being exposed to life in its difficulty and in its diversity.

Rev. David Strong is pastor of Central United Methodist Church in Detroit. If you have a question or comment for him, call him at 953-2047, mailbox number 1878, on a touch-tone phone, or write him at 36251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150.

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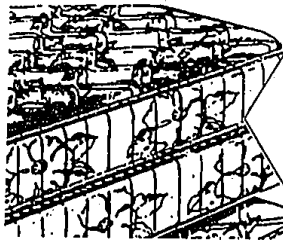
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OU sets workshops

Registration is under way at Oakland University for preparation workshops for the Graduate Record Exam and Law School Admission Test.

The workshops are offered by OU's division of continuing education on Saturdays, GRE beginning Jan. 9, and LSAT beginning Jan. 23.

With the exam preparations, optional one-session workshops are offered in math refresher, writing and power reading.

The four-session GRE workshop will be held 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. every Saturday between Jan. 9 and Jan. 23. Tuition is \$165. The next GRE occurs Feb. 6.

The three-session LSAT workshop will be held 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. every Saturday between Jan. 23 and Feb. 6. Tuition is \$215. The next LSAT occurs Feb. 13.

For more information, or to register, call 370-3120.

Area students win contest

Two area high school students are winners of the Detroit Auto Dealers Association seventh annual short story contest.

Mark Heasley of Troy and Tiney Marsh of Southfield each won \$500 as did three other Michigan High School students.

Heasley, a senior at Troy High School, writes as a hobby and is editor of the school literary magazine. He plays the trombone and plans to attend college in the fall.

Marsh, a senior at Groves High School, enjoys writing, singing and playing keyboard. Marsh will attend the Honors College at the University of Michigan in the fall to major in international studies.

Entries sought for film fest

Student film entries are being sought for the 23rd annual Michigan Student Film and Video Festival, set to take place May 22 at the Detroit Institute of Arts Film Theater.

The festival is open to film and video work done by students, kindergarten through 12th grade, who live in Michigan.

Deadline for entries is March 10. For more information, call Margaret Culver at 489-3491.