

'Watergate Shatters Some Childish Beliefs'

ECCLESIASTICAL REFLECTIONS

By REV. James G. Schaefer
Pilgrim United Church of Christ

Let me begin with a footnote of history: When the Watergate complex of offices and apartments was first built in Washington, it was financed by the Vatican as an investment. The situation became politically sensitive and so the property was sold to other investors.

Can we say that the church is involved in Watergate? Of course, if for no other reason than that it involves persons. Some might say that to relate the creeping scandal of the present administration to the church is getting involved in politics and the church should not be involved.

Not so! We can make the mistake of thinking that somehow we are untainted and safe in a churchy refuge. Too often the church has been a place of running away and hiding. Church buildings were once considered "sanctuary."

The gospel of Jesus Christ does not say to huddle next to the altar safe in the hands of God while the world outside remains corrupted and sinful. We are part of the world and seeking to bring a gospel of good news to a lived-in world.

I wonder if the United States is an adolescent. Some rather naive beliefs about ourselves and our place in the world are being shattered. There are three false myths about our country now exposed — and not solved.

First, there was, and is, the sense of pride in our nation. We were isolationists for most of our history pursuing our own "destiny" which was called manifest. We considered ourselves

young and innocent and we wanted to remain uncorrupted from the old governments and orders of Europe.

Then change. By 1940 we decided that the world to be "saved." We were pulled into "One World" by the second world war. Our self-pride as a nation turned into a form of imperialism which crusaded as anti-Communism.

Finally, our national arrogance resulted in the war in Vietnam. We tried to impose our ideas on a tiny, oriental nation around the globe. Here we learned that we are not god to the world of nations.

The present criminal proceedings in Washington take away another childish belief.

Supposedly, the "sky is the limit" for getting ahead, and can be reached through hard work and perseverance. But inflation takes away increased earnings, dollar deficits overseas have removed our money from the hands of the rich, creating a growing gap between the "haves and the have-nots."

The false myths say "my country right or wrong" which is patriotism. We have trusted the electoral process and human nature as infallible, and we have thought of modified capitalism as God-given economic order.

First President Johnson promised no war in Vietnam, but reversed himself and secured our involvement through dubious legalisms. Now, President Nixon, promising "law and order" is finding his circle of administrators indicted for criminal activity. What has happened to our democracy? We have taken pride in being the oldest continuous republic in the world?

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God is trustworthy; sinful human beings are not. And instead of old-style patriotism, we ought to first consider ourselves as children of God and members of a global village. Many would object, but my understanding is that my loyalty is first to God; second to humanity and then to my country.

I have citizenship responsibilities but to make them religious in meaning and ultimate in devotion is to make one's country a god.

Our faith tells us that persons must live in community where selfish impulses and self-serving decisions can be countered.

We cope with our national founding fathers. We have this well when they translated checks on human willfulness into a government of checks — and — balances with three divisions and carefully prescribed — freedoms — press, assembly, speech, and religion.

With weak election laws, we have allowed special in-

terests to buy elections and favors.

With naive trust, we have allowed one branch of government to supersede the others.

These guards against despotism and autocracy must be maintained with vigilance. By thinking that our system is infallible and undeserved trust in party loyalty, we have allowed the system to fall into disrepair — and now we suffer.

Our faith says that every person has a right to life — not just physical existence but a full and open life.

By appealing to our greed and hope for financial gain, we have allowed an inequitable system of subsidies and tax-laws to make us very unequal.

Face it: capitalism is based on greed — called the profit incentive. If we are to create good out of evil, then unfettered and inequitable capitalism must be modified even more. Opportunity for a good life must be guaranteed to all citizens.

I think of several biblical

statements: "Inasmuch as you have done it to the least of these . . . There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male or female . . . Trust only in God . . . I have come to save the world . . . Some adolescent myths have replaced Christian insight and truth. We need to grow up into adulthood.

People, left to their own devices, create disharmony and chaos. Our need is great. We need God and his ways. What are we learning from what has happened? What kinds of solutions are we seeking? Are we ready to use our Christian insight to inform our social order and processes? Are we reassured that ends do not justify means?

Are we mature enough to shun adolescent promises of politicians and to look for persons of integrity and social consciousness rather than party labels?

God calls us to a lifestyle that deals with our sinful propensities and encourages our finest notions.

CHURCH DIRECTORY

EASTERN ORTHODOX ST. INNOCENT ORTHODOX CHURCH 2330 13th Ave S.E. (3 blocks East of Telephone Rd.) Rev. FR. MARK ODELL, PASTOR Services: 9:30 a.m. (English) Divine Liturgy, Sunday: 9:00 a.m. "All Services in English"	
UNITED METHODIST ST. LUKE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 3551 24th Ave. S.E. (East of 24th St.) 10 A.M. Church School (11 A.M. Worship)	
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St. Matthew's United Methodist Church 30900 25 Mile Road Phone 24-0208 William D. Rickard, Pastor Jeanne K. Smith, Assistant Pastor Sunday Worship 8:30 A.M. Nursery Available 9:30 a.m. Church School (all ages) St. High Fellowship Sunday 7 p.m. Jr. High Fellowship Tuesday 7:30	
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH of Garden City 6442 Meridian Road Phone 421-8628 Minister: Rev. Glenn Kallberg SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30 Sunday School Nursery through Adults 10:45 Morning Worship and Children Service 6:30 Lunch and Senior High U.M.F.F.	
NEWBURGH UNITED METHODIST CHURCH 18500 Ave. Albert Trail Rev. William Borer, Minister Rev. Ben Brock, Ass't Minister 422-0149 Worship and Church School 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.	
REFORMED CHURCH IN AMERICA CHURCH OF THE SAVIOR 13810 Five Mile Rd. Sunday School: 9:30 a.m. Divine Worship: 10:30 a.m. Evening Study Groups: 7 p.m. Nursery Care is Provided at All Morning Worship Services 464-1052 Rev. Ronald Van Der Werf Pastor Rev. Moody Van Minister of Discipleship	
CHURCHES OF CHRIST FARMINGTON 36500 Elevator Mile 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Bible School 9:45 a.m. Wed. 7:30 p.m. Worship Earl Davis, Minister 582-5872	
LIVONIA 15431 Meridian Rd. Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Bible School 9:45 a.m. Wed. 7:30 p.m. Worship Ronald White, Minister 422-8743	
Sae Herald of Truth TV Channel 9 Sunday 9:30 a.m. Call or Write for Free Correspondence Course	
KENWOOD CHURCH OF CHRIST 22000 Meridian Livonia South of 22 Mile 478-3212 Lee Wilkins, Minister Ken Gardner, Associate Minister Bible School SERVICES: 9:45 a.m. Sun- day 6:30 p.m. Wednesday	
SOUTH REDFORD CHURCH OF CHRIST 26500 W. Chicago (Off Elm, Exchange) Bible School: 9:45 a.m. 11 a.m. Sunday Youth Hour (for all ages) 6:30 p.m. Sunday 7:15 p.m. Wednesday Church 255-3020 Call 261-8600	

Panel Set On Drugs

The social action committee of the Birmingham Temple, 26111 W. 12 Mile, Farmington, will present a program on drug abuse, treatment and rehabilitation Tuesday, June 12, at 8:30 p.m.

Five panel members will make brief presentations on various aspects of the drug problem and then there will be open discussion.

All interested are invited. There will be no admission charge.

Panel members include Dr. Bernard Chodoff, staff psychiatrist at Sinai Hospital; Frank DiNieglio, Synanon representative; Ernest Cooper of Cannon Guard; Christine, Plymouth, psychologist; and Herman Kiefer Hospital, and Helen Pilmer, director of social services at the Salvation Army drug addiction center.

St. Mary Unit To Hold Sale

The Ladies Society of St. Mary Syrian Orthodox Church will hold a garage and antique sale May 31, June 1 and 2, in the church parish house, 18100 Meridian Livonia. The hours are 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day.

Squad Aljouny and Selwa Aljouny are chairmen of the sale.

NEW OFFICERS of the Rosary Altar Society of St. Genevieve Catholic Church in Livonia will be installed June 5 during a dinner in the parish activities center. They are pictured here with the Rev. Ferdinand Wolter, pastor. In the front row, from left, are Betty Rosenthal, second vice president; Dorothy Zaslako, president; and Marilyn Pachota, first vice president. Second row, from left, are Julie Fischer, recording secretary; Dolly Ellis, corresponding secretary; Julie Dudek, program director, and Rose Volpe, treasurer.



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Area Deaths And Funerals

IMMA J. PERKINS—Services for Mrs. Perkins, 66, of 3771 Seven Mile, Livonia, were held in Holy Sepulchre Catholic Church, Huron Valley, on Monday, May 21. Burial was in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Huron Valley. Mrs. Perkins was born in Poland and came to the community 30 years ago and was affiliated with St. John Bosco Church.

YUNYUNO IZUMI—Services for Mrs. IZUMI, 66, of 2281 Beaton Drive, Farmington, were held in Trinity Lutheran Church, Farmington, on Monday, May 21. Burial was in Holy Sepulchre Catholic Church, Huron Valley. Mrs. IZUMI was born in Japan and came to the community 30 years ago and was affiliated with St. John Bosco Church.

LAURA M. SIEGFF—Services for Mrs. Siegf, 73, of Bellevue, Ohio, were held in St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Farmington, on Monday, May 21. Burial was in Holy Sepulchre Catholic Church, Huron Valley. Mrs. Siegf was born in Pennsylvania and came to the community 30 years ago and was affiliated with St. John Bosco Church.

WILBERM M. MURPHY—Services for Mr. Murphy, 84, of 2281 Beaton Drive, Farmington, were held in Trinity Lutheran Church, Farmington, on Monday, May 21. Burial was in Holy Sepulchre Catholic Church, Huron Valley. Mr. Murphy was born in Pennsylvania and came to the community 30 years ago and was affiliated with St. John Bosco Church.

ANNA MATTICA—Services for Mrs. Mattica, 58, of 32503 Alan Court, Livonia, were held in St. Martin Catholic Church, Farmington, on Monday, May 21. Burial was in Holy Sepulchre Catholic Church, Huron Valley. Mrs. Mattica was born in Italy and came to the community 30 years ago and was affiliated with St. John Bosco Church.

STELLA A. MATICA—Services for Mrs. Matka, 58, of 32503 Alan Court, Livonia, were held in St. Martin Catholic Church, Farmington, on Monday, May 21. Burial was in Holy Sepulchre Catholic Church, Huron Valley. Mrs. Matka was born in Italy and came to the community 30 years ago and was affiliated with St. John Bosco Church.

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HARRY J. WILL
 Funeral Home
 4412 LIVONIA AVENUE
 255-3272

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FRANK W. WILSON—Services for Mr. Wilson, 76, of 9710 Good Arbor, Farmington, were held in Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Church with the Rev. Francis C. Byrne officiating. Burial was in Glen Eden Cemetery. Mr. Wilson