

✦ The Good Shepherd Church in Mount Vernon, Va., has changed lifestyles along with its pastors. Until recently under the direction of the Rev. Thomas Quinlan, the parish featured such liturgical oddities as orange Volkswagens and flower-decked forklift trucks in its processions. But when the new Arlington diocese was created, the Rev. John P. Hannon replaced Fr. Quinlan by order of Bishop Thomas J. Welsh. Before his first sermon, Father Hannan had dismissed the church's six lay women ministers, stopped work on a new building, put an end to Communion in the hand and declined to meet with the lay committees of the parish.

✦ "A review of the 10 leading books on how to improve one's sex life," said Jesuit Father Richard McCormick, "leaves only one impression: the dominance of the concept of work in something that should be play. The human meaning has been drained out of it." Speaking before a theology seminar sponsored by the Newark archdiocesan Committee for the Continuing Education of Priests, Fr. McCormick said he saw three sexual attitudes developing: sex turning into a mechanical, calculated event; sex separating itself from the ordinary world; and sex becoming depersonalized.

✦ According to a study made jointly by a Catholic research organization and the U.S. Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy, liturgical education is getting short-changed in U.S. Catholic seminaries, where "theology is insufficiently related to practical piety as expressed in the liturgy, and pastoral preparation is insufficiently related to the priestly task of presiding over and interpreting the liturgy."

✦ On the international scene, Msgr. Richard J. Schuler, St. Paul, Minn., told the sixth International Church Music Congress meeting in Salzburg, Austria, that sacred music has all but disappeared in the training of seminarians, but he stressed that the problem is not essentially a musical one. "When man," he said, "in a sense, assumes the place of God in the liturgy by an exaggerated humanism, then the need for the sacred ceases . . . The malady that afflicts the Church today was first detected in sacred music and liturgy."

✦ A continuing model of the place of sacred music in the liturgy is the 10 A.M. Latin High Mass in Washington's St.

Matthew's Cathedral. Just renewed after the usual summer hiatus (when the choir is on vacation), this season's first Mass, in which the Ordinary (i.e., Kyrie, Gloria, Sanctus and Agnus Dei) was sung in Latin, prompted the Washington *Star-News* to observe: "It is paradoxical that what appears to be a step backward is actually a step forward, but anything designed to improve the quality of church music in use is surely progress. May other bishops be wise enough to follow Washington's example."



## Catholic Currents

✦ This view was echoed in Rome where the unique nature of sacred music as a means of evangelization was praised in a letter sent in Pope Paul's name by his Secretary of State, Cardinal Jean Villot. Church music "cannot be of a kind that conflicts with the divine message, nor be of a sort or tone which would liken it to some superficial expression of escapism or of amusement, distracting the mind of the faithful from contemplation of celestial truths," the letter said. And added, "Indeed, from earliest times the Church has raised [Gregorian] chant as an integral element of liturgical action and as a means of evangelization."

✦ Father Leonard Feeney, the brilliant and controversial Jesuit who was excommunicated in 1953 for preaching a literal interpretation of the doctrine, "outside the Church there is no salvation," has been reconciled with the Church along with 29 of his followers.

✦ Broadway's popular comic revue, "Good Evening," continues to draw fire from Catholics in New York. The protest is led by Andrew J. McCauley, president of the newly formed Citizens Against Sacrilege in the Media, who claims that the show mocks the birth of Christ and "slurs the Holy Ghost as a womanizer."

✦ Archbishop Angel Suquia of Santia-

go de Compostela declared that the situation of Spanish major seminaries is precarious due to a two-thirds decrease in vocations during the past ten years, but refrained from offering any explanation for the slump. A more heartening finding was that of the Information Center on Religious Vocations in Freiburg, Germany, which declared that aspirants to the priesthood had increased 18 per cent last year. And gave as its reasons: "a personal relationship between priest and the young" and "a truly Christian family environment."

✦ Equally heartening was the glad report, "We have no vocation crisis," of Sister Frances Gumino, the Superior of the Salesian Sisters. Unlike those religious orders that are experiencing declines in vocations, the Salesian Sisters have retained their strict discipline and the traditional habit. "Young girls are attracted to our way of life," Sister Gumino said. "They find the discipline and sacrifice appealing."

✦ In a letter sent to members of the U.S. Senate, Bishop James Rausch urged that the Soviet Union not be given "most-favored nation" treatment by the United States. The bishop, and general secretary of the United States Catholic Conference, based his opposition on the continuing Soviet restrictions on human rights and freedoms, citing the harassment of Soviet Jews in paragraph after paragraph, with nary a word concerning the martyrdom, living and otherwise, of Christian people and nations under the Soviet boot.

✦ Perhaps because of their unsung sufferings, Christians living behind the Iron Curtain are spiritually stronger than those living in the West, according to Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen. Speaking before a men's club in Hyde Park, N.Y., Archbishop Sheen said that "Christ without the cross is weak, effeminate, dull. Who picks up Christ without the cross? Our Western, affluent society. The ascetic principle of Christianity has moved to the totalitarian states, and that's why they [persecuted Christians] are strong . . . We are witnessing the end of Christendom, not the end of Christianity." The archbishop characterized Christendom as that period wherein the Western nations were profoundly influenced by the Gospel. "Now we have to resist the current," he stated. "God is thinning our ranks in this stressing period of the Church." ■