

"Old time religion" baffles, comforts PSU students

By KAREN BOUGHTON
Collegian Staff Writer

"If God did not exist, it would be necessary to invent Him."
— Voltaire

Penn State students' attitudes about religion are just as profound as Voltaire's. Their enthusiasm for religion, however, is debatable.

In the late '60s, the "Jesus movement" swept college campuses. According to "Christianity Today," the movement began in the summer of 1967 when "hundreds of young people forsook drugs, free sex, occultism, and Eastern mysticism to follow Jesus."

Recent studies, however, indicate this enthusiasm for religion has apparently diminished on campuses in the '70s. "Christian Century" magazine stated that "institutionalized religion is held in low regard by the majority of college students today." A 1973 study showed that only 28 per cent of the college students surveyed indicated that religion was a "very important personal value," a decrease of 11 per cent since a previous poll in 1969.

The religious attitudes of students at Penn State, as seen by professors and the clergy on campus, contradict some of these statistics. Most of these people feel religious interest and attendance at services are on the rise at University Park.

Professor Yoshio Fukuyama, Religious Studies Department Head, has noticed a declining enrollment in religious studies classes. This decline in fall 1972 ended a peak of interest which began in the late '60s.

Professor Fukuyama feels the enrollment in religious studies classes declined because of the type of student on campus. "Students are more career oriented now. They'd rather take courses that prepare them for a job," said Fukuyama.

Despite this declining enrollment, courses in Eastern religions still attract students. These courses have the highest enrollment of all religious studies classes. Professor Fukuyama explained why students tend to take courses in religions other than their own:

"Students may be afraid to study their own religion because they may find there is more to their religion than they thought. They may even find that their own religion is not the right one for them. Students, however, can take an

Eastern religion course like Buddhism and know that they do not have to get involved. There are no Buddhist temples here that they could go to if they decided they wanted to practice Buddhism. It is, therefore, something interesting to study, not something the student has to practice."

Father Leopold Krul, one of the Catholic priests on campus, said that students' attendance at Mass has increased in relation to the '60s. He estimated that 3,200 out of 4,500 students attend Sunday mass. There are 9,100 students who have identified themselves as Catholics in the University records, but Father Krul said half of them are expected to go home each weekend.

Father Krul is pleased with the attendance at daily masses. He said attendance has increased from about 75 per day in the '60s to 125 a day now. "I think this is a very good sign of interest in religion. These students are not being forced to come on weekdays. They want to come."

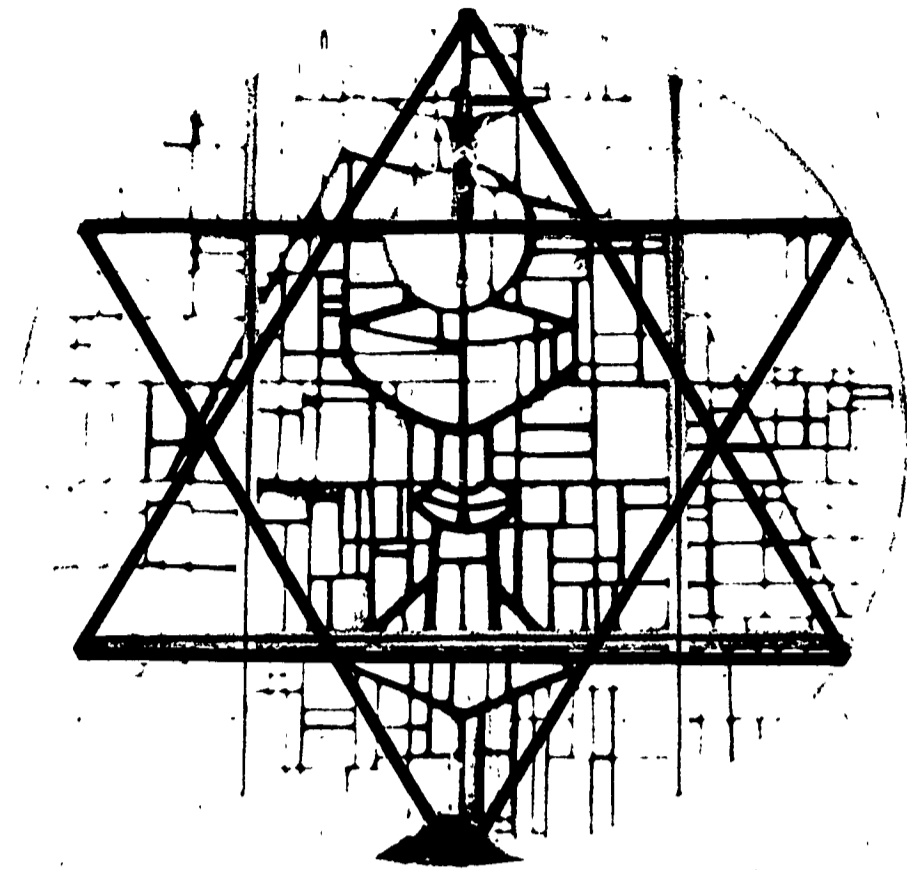
According to Father Krul, the Roman Catholic Church as appeal to some students. "Throughout the time the Catholic Church has maintained that it is Christ's church. The Church puts down rules on which to hang onto and many people, including students, need this today," he said.

Many students come to Father Krul and question their faith. He said he is glad about this because it shows "they are thinking more seriously about God in their lives."

Problems concerning peer group pressure and worldly talk confuse many students, in Father Krul's opinion. "They hear everyday that such things as shacking up, abortion, and fornication are okay. This confuses many students on just what is right and wrong," he said.

He believes that most Catholic students tend to keep their religious beliefs to themselves. It is wrong, he thinks, that "Catholic students do not seem to give solid witness of their faith to other people as they come in contact with them everyday. They believe that religion is a private affair."

The Rev. Robert Boyer is one of the campus ministers involved in the United Ministers in Higher Education which serves seven denominations — Presbyterian, Methodist, United Church of Christ, Baptist, Mennonites, Society



of Friends, and Church of the Brethren. The Methodist and Presbyterian religions involve the most students at Penn State. There are no church services for these religions on campus, but students attend the churches in the area.

Rev. Boyer said the late '60s brought rebellion against formal religion, but that the last few years there has been a return to church and formal religion. He said students are "idealistic, but frustrated by the economy and world situation."

"Most students take a vacation from their religious orientation while they are students," said Rev. Boyer. "Students do not get involved with religion because their religion was their family's concern. They come here without any of their own religious sense."

The Rev. Boyer also sees the students' problems in coping with life on campus. "One problem students have is how to enjoy being a student," he said. "It's hard to see how anything they do here

relates to their religious orientation. Other problems we try to deal with is how to help people feel they have some worth, and how to counteract loneliness, which is a major problem on this campus."

The United Campus Ministry, of which Rev. Boyer is a part, tries to help students with their problems by offering programs like the Buddy Program, in which Penn State students spend two hours a week with an elementary or junior high school child, "Seminar in Silence," a Free U course where people learn to meditate, and residence hall programs such as "How to Become a Virgin" and "I Love You vs. I'm in Love With You."

The Rev. Boyer said these programs are helpful to the student because "although they may not be brought back to church, it reminds them that they should be involved in some disciplined effort, which may turn out to be religion."

He also said that "religion and church cause negative feelings in students but they can relate to and want to talk about good and bad."

Rabbi Chaim E. Schertz, director of the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation, said Jewish students comprise 6 per cent of the total student population at Penn State.

According to Rabbi Schertz, 30 to 50 students attend services regularly at Hillel. "This is an increase over the last couple years," he said. "Those that have an interest in religion to begin with, come to services regularly. It is very hard, however, to generate religious interest in students who have negative feelings toward religion. Those who have no interest at all must be turned on to religion by an emotional experience or their intellectual curiosity."

"One of the facets of the Jewish religion that appeals to students is the Jewish sex laws," said Rabbi Schertz. "Most religions are very negative and repressive towards sex. The Jewish religion, however, has a very healthy attitude toward sex. Students may also find that what they thought were novel ideas have been expressed by Judaism for years."

Rabbi Schertz finds that students come to talk to him about Judaism. He said there is an increase in those interested in finding out about Judaism. He also finds that students who are intermarrying outside of the Jewish faith have much difficulty in coping with this situation. "Also there are the routine problems such as not wanting to take exams on Saturdays and having difficulty in keeping to the dietetic laws," he said.

Students' feelings toward religion are as varied as the views that have been expressed by those who come in contact with students at Penn State.

One Jewish student said her religion is not just a religion; it's a way of life. "It's a close-knit group with the common bond of being a minority," she said.

She keeps her religious beliefs to herself. "That's one thing about college," she said. "People force their religion on you."

"A religion should not involve itself in social issues. A religion is what you choose to believe in — you shouldn't be under any strict rules," she added.

"Christ's teaching about a life hereafter and that one day we'll all be

saved is what appeals to me about my religion," said one Catholic student.

She also said, "I'm not a strict Catholic, but I'm not eating meat on Fridays and if someone questions me about my religion I'll throw answers back at them."

She said attending a Catholic school for 12 years influenced her religious beliefs, but she does find weaknesses in her religion. "I think priests should be able to get married and you should be able to go at any time during the week to fulfill your obligation of going to mass," she commented.

Jan (5th-speech pathology) was christened a Methodist, went to a Presbyterian church when she was younger, but now attends Methodist services. She changed churches because she liked "the openness and pleasantness of the Methodist church."

structured. I don't think going to church proves that you are a Christian. To be a Christian you believe in God and you pray."

Barry Taerbaum (12th-folklore) said, "My desire to practice my religion is increasing as I become more aware of my Jewishness. I feel I want to keep my ethnic identity, and my religious identity follows that. As I meet more Jewish people, I feel like I want to be more involved than I am."

Barry said he is very open about his religion and ethnic background and some people tend to think he is too proud of his ethnic heritage.

Stef is a Catholic who goes to church once every three months. Her reason for not going to church regularly is "when I was going to make my Confirmation, I was made to memorize 100 questions from the catechism. Then the nun scared us by saying the bishop would throw us out of the church if we didn't know the answers to the questions. This was the first thing that turned me off of my religion."

Stef also said, "My family made me go to church when I was younger and I don't like anything that I'm forced to do."

She said nuns and priests should be allowed to get married and the Catholic church should not involve itself in controversial issues such as birth control.

Stef added a reflective thought about religion. She said, "Sometimes I think that man created God, instead of God creating man."

Parishes and pulpits favor males; Women still occupy back pew

By JANIE MUSALA
Collegian Features Editor

A young priest knelt at the altar of Manhattan's Riverside Episcopal Church on Reformation Sunday last November and waited to receive communion from the Rev. Carter Heyward. As he sipped wine from the chalice held out to him, the young priest dug his fingernails deeply into Heyward's hands.

Heyward winced, but said nothing, not wishing to disrupt the sacred ceremony. Only when Heyward began to bleed did the young priest stop. Looking at Heyward coldly, he slowly whispered, "I hope you burn in Hell."

As a recently-ordained Episcopal minister, 27-year-old Carter Heyward had a problem. Her sex.

Heyward's drama began on July 29, 1974, when she and 10 other women deacons defied 1,900 years of church history and tradition to become the first females ordained to the Episcopal priesthood. The controversial ordination, which took place in the diocese of Philadelphia against the orders of its presiding bishop, brought to a head one of the most fiercely-debated issues in the three-million-member Episcopal Church.

One month after the 11 women were ordained, the Episcopal House of Bishops — comparable in church authority to the U.S. Senate — held an emergency meeting at O'Hare International Airport in Chicago. Charging that the women had failed to be approved for ordination by the bishops in their own home dioceses and that the ordinations were performed by other bishops who had no formal jurisdiction in the Philadelphia area, the House of Bishops declared the ordinations invalid by a vote of 128 to 9.

But Heyward refuses to believe that the decision was made strictly on legal grounds.

"If ever there was a bunch of people qualified for ordination, it's us," she argued. "If we were men, we'd have been ordained a year ago, three years ago, 50 years ago. All we lacked was male anatomical appendages."

In a recent interview with Ms. magazine, Heyward said she wants straight talk from the House of Bishops:

"I'd rather have a bishop say to me, 'Look, I just can't hack this; I get upset at the idea of a woman priest.' But when they spout off about how our ordination is strictly a law-and-order issue, that's poppycock. It's strictly a woman's issue."

While many of the 11 women continue to perform their priestly duties, Presiding Bishop John M. Allin has asked their no further action be taken against them until the question can be decided once and for all at the Church's General Convention in 1976.

The issue threatens to tear open this year's biennial meeting. It has the potential, many church leaders say, to either make or break relations between the Episcopalians and their closest relative, the Roman Catholic Church.

While the Episcopal bishops maintain that Church law is unclear regarding the ordination of women, Catholic Canon 968 plainly states that "only a baptized person of the male sex may receive Holy Orders," the Catholic ordination rites.

Although Heyward believes that ordination of women in both faiths is inevitable, she is unwilling to wait.

"The God I believe in is calling women to the full ministry right now," Heyward told the Ms. reporter. "You don't respond to God by saying, 'Well, okay, but I'll wait until everybody else is ready for it.'"

Heyward and her 10 companions are not alone in their fight against second class status and male-dominated church leadership.

Two years ago, Mary Daly, author and Boston College professor, was the first woman to deliver a sermon at the Harvard Memorial Church. When she had finished, Daly led a walkout, protesting the Catholic Church's attitude toward women. Asked if she had left the Church, Daly replied, "The Church has left the modern woman."

Though most major Protestant denominations have of-

ficially opened the doors of ordination to females, less than five per cent of all Protestant ministers are women.

The 10-million-member United Methodist Church, for example, has ordained women since 1956. However, in 1971, less than one per cent of its 40,000 ministers were female. A similar percentage holds for the United Presbyterian Church, where 107 women can be found among the denomination's 13,000 ministers. Even in the two-million-member United Church of Christ, which has ordained women for more than 100 years, less than three per cent of the Church's 9,000 ministers are women.

Traditionally, women have been discouraged from breaking into major institutions — not by law, as one minister comments, but by attitude. The church is no exception. "So much of what the church does is just a reflection of society," says the Rev. Richard L. Christensen, pastor of St. Peter's United Church of Christ in State College.

In some denominations, women were actually better off years ago than they are today. In 1908, 20 per cent of the ministers in the Church of the Nazarene were women. By 1973, that figure had fallen to six per cent.

"Wives, be subject to your husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church."

— From a letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians

"While the Church was once considered progressive in its treatment of women, it now is found to be reactionary," wrote the editors of Christianity Today in 1973.

According to a 1975 report from the Auburn Theological Seminary, educational training was not always required of a minister. But as seminaries became established and the ministry became a respected profession, women were quickly excluded.

Even in denominations such as the United Church of Christ, which routinely accepted women into their seminaries, a subtle pressure directed women away from the pastoral ministry and encouraged them to become directors of Christian education.

"Women seminary graduates were glorified Bible school teachers," Rev. Christensen says. "This was absolutely unfair, but those were most often the only jobs they could get."

Recently, however, women are entering the nation's seminaries in record-breaking numbers. And they are a new breed of women.

In 1974, 40 per cent of the freshman class at the United Church of Christ's Andover Newton Theological School in Massachusetts were women. Within two years, 700 women already qualified as ministers. The Lutheran Church in America approved the ordination as late as 1970. But already, one-third of the students enrolled in the Church's two major seminaries are women, one minister estimates.

In the next few years, large numbers of women seminary graduates will flood the job market. And, unlike female graduates of an earlier period, these women will not be satisfied to teach Sunday school, direct church choirs or sponsor bake sales.

They were trained for the pastoral ministry, and that's what they want, says the Rev. LaVonne Althouse, a Penn State graduate and one of the handful of ordained women in the American Lutheran Church.

Whether they will get what they are after is a different story. And that is when the real trouble will start.

In a 1974 survey of 700 persons in the United Church of Christ, 68 per cent of those questioned said they would choose a male pastor over a female one. Typically, residents of large cities, persons over 60, and those with no college education found it hardest to accept a woman pastor.

But even when a similar survey was taken among a more liberal group of students, teachers, college deans and magazine editors, the results still did not show an overwhelming acceptance of women. Sixty-two per cent said they would agree to hire a female pastor.

As one unidentified editor put it: "Mentally my mind says yes. Emotionally I hesitate, and theologically, I don't know."

"Things are so structured culturally that people automatically look for a man in a position of authority," the Rev. Christensen explains. "But there's going to be a real stink in the United Church of Christ and in the United Presbyterian and the United Methodist Churches when a lot of the women now in the seminaries can't get jobs."

At present, only 10 per cent of the women ministers in the United States have parishes of their own. As one Baptist minister puts it, "We have always ordained them, but we have not always employed them."

Protestant women are not the only ones frustrated by a male-dominated church.

According to Monsignor Andrew McGowan, head of the National Conference of Diocesan Vocation Directors, Catholic nuns became increasingly dissatisfied with their situation after the Second Vatican Council. Rev. Vincent O'Keefe, second in command of the Jesuit Order, explained the post-Vatican sentiment to feminist Betty Friedan during her recent visit to Rome:

"All of a sudden the roof fell in. The nuns running the schools, the hospitals, the colleges, doing the work — they were tired of taking orders from creepy old men who knew nothing about women except to keep them at a distance, as a danger, the temptation to sin."

While Catholic seminary enrollment was down 55 per cent since 1965, McGowan reported that enrollment in schools which train women for the sisterhood dropped by 61 per cent. From 1964 to 1974, the number of Catholic priests declined by less than one per cent. In that same 10-year span, the number of sisters fell by 22 per cent.

Anne E. Patrick of the National Assembly of Women in Religion suggests that the shortage of nuns is due to the Church's refusal to adapt to the changing status of women. Despite the declining numbers of nuns, "Church leaders have yet to demonstrate in a significant way that they are concerned," she says.

Patrick says, for example, that the National Bishops Conference recently gave \$500,000 for a study of the American Catholic priesthood. Even though four times as many nuns as priests are leaving the religious life, when the National Sisters Vocation Conference wanted to conduct a similar study of women in the religious life, they received \$4,000.

"Sisters were and still are 'minors' in Church law, subordinate to men at all levels of the Church Structure," says Sister Annette Walters, a leader of the Sister Formation Movement.

Father O'Keefe warns that the Catholic Church cannot afford to view the situation lightly: "You can't make a go of it without the nuns. You have to meet them on a profound level. You do it with them or it won't get done, the work of the Church."

Even at the Second Vatican Council, which was to eliminate much of the narrow-mindedness of the Catholic Church, women were excluded. In her 1968 book, "The Church and the Second Sex," Dr. Mary Daly states that women were not permitted to attend the sessions until the fall of 1964, two years after the Council convened. At no time, Daly says, did women have a voice in any decisions that were made.



"The myth of Eve as Adam's rib and the images of women as temptress, virgin or mother had more to do with keeping us subordinate than almost any other factor operating in the course of Western history."

— Feminist author Sheila Collins

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