

Christianity and social action



by Tim Trainor

Recently I attended a National Conference of Canadian University Newman clubs held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and I would like here to share my overall impression of and general reaction to the dominant theme of this gathering of Christian students. There was at the Winnipeg conference a great stress on social and community action, or involvement. A sort of

"getting out and changing the world" mentality. The whole thrust of the conference seemed, to me anyway, one of "getting involved" to try and bring about a more just society for all. Well, that is all very noble and praiseworthy and in itself good, but it misses, I think, the point of being Christian.

In my opinion, humble as it is, performing 'good works' is not the primary element of Christianity, nor the primary expres-

sion of my being Christian. The primary element or the core of Christianity, I believe, is my relationship, as a member of a community, with Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is the Head of the community. What constitutes my being Christian, whether I am a social worker or a Trappist monk, is how I respond to the call, or invitation, of Jesus Christ or better, how I respond to the invitation of the Father given thru Jesus Christ. The acid test of that relationship is, of course, to what degree, if at all, my initial response to Christ, assuming it is a positive response, is incorporated into everything I say and do.

What I am saying is that Christianity is not a synonym of 'social action'; although most, if not all true Christians will be involved, in varying degrees depending on vocation, with 'good works', at least in their own communities—this being a spontaneous consequence of their loving relationship with the Christ, as well as arising from an obligation following commitment to the community.

Probably the trouble with a lot of Christians is they try to do too much at one time and they become frustrated. Before we can take on the respons-

ibility of Christian community action, especially on a large scale, we must be strong spiritually and we must be in tune with

the will of God. Even Jesus, who was perfect man, spent a long time in the desert building up his spiritual energies and sort of getting his head together about what the Father expected of him. We too, especially since we are imperfect, must seek the will of our Father.

So, while I am not suggesting that Christians should cut back on social activity, or that we discontinue good works and go into seclusion and pray and meditate for the rest of our lives, what I am suggesting is that when we as Christians go about doing works in our communities, or in the global society, we should do so with the proper attitude and motivation, and with the proper spiritual foundation. We must all go thru a kind of desert experience, we must seek the will of the Father in prayer and meditation, in the reading of scripture, and then go out, while not discontinuing prayer and meditation and scripture reading, and see what we can do to further advance the Kingdom of God..... on Earth, as it is in Heaven.



winning defence
david p. gallant

NORTH
S A 8 7 4
H A 6 5
D Q J 10 2
C 3 2

EAST
S K 10 2
H K 8 7 4 2
D 7
C K 10 9 4

BIDDING

S	N
1 H	1 S
1 NT'	3 H
3 NT	

' Shows 15-16 points.

Your partner leads the three of clubs and the two is played from dummy. How do you plan the defense?

If West had a five card suit he would probably have led it, so his distribution is likely to be 4-1-4-4. He would not have led his lowest club from four by the eight, so he will have an honour. Could it be the queen? Only if declarer is a very poor player, for with three clubs to the ace in his hand his proper play would be the jack from dummy. Partner has the ace of clubs then, and it is time to count points. Add partner's ace to the twenty-one points you can see and it leaves only fifteen for declarer. He must have every outstanding face-card.

You now know everything so we may as well put down the other two hands and treat this as a

double dummy problem.

WEST	
S 9 6 5 3	
H 10	
D 8 6 4 3	
C A 7 6 3	
	SOUTH
	S Q J
	H Q J 9 3
	D A K 9 5
	C Q 8 5

Clearly, you must not duck the first club, or declarer will make nine tricks before you can make five. Spades cannot be attacked from your hand so, after winning the king of clubs, you must return the four of clubs to your partner's ace. Your partner will also be counting and he will realize that a spade is allowed to win you will switch back to clubs, taking three clubs, a heart, and a spade to defeat the contract.