

ALTAR CALL

By EMORY G. DAVIS, D. D.
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FISH, FRIDAY AND FREEDOM

Now that millions of Catholics have been released from the more than 1,000-year tradition of substituting fish for meat on Fridays, they are now freed by the Bishops of the Church to voluntarily select another form of penitence.

Reactions to meatier Fridays is varied. Some welcome the change and interpret it as an opportunity for a more personal confrontation with the significance of the act of penitence, while others feel compelled to hold on to tradition whether the act itself has meaning or not.

IN MANY instances, traditionalism becomes a cult with devotees who, upon questioning, could not give any logical or meaningful reason for their worship of it. These would cry "foul" if accused of idolatry.

But, this is surely what it can become. Wherever people give more devotion to the rite, the object, the symbol, than they do to what the symbol is calling them to, they erect for themselves an idol god.

It was heart-warming to read the comment of Mrs. William Chidester of Elmwood Park, Ill., President, 450,000-member Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women, who said in welcoming the meatless Friday ruling, "They (the Bishops) have placed the observance of Friday abstinence on a voluntary basis. In other words, we ourselves must choose whether to abstain from meat on Friday."

AFTER ADMITTING that the tradition "was getting out of hand" this mother of four children explained: "Catholics were eating fish on Friday but were not practical Christians as far as race relations are concerned."

This type of reasoning removes the possibility of idolatry from the continuance of object-centered rituals and traditions, directing the individual toward realistic life involvement.

Just think, if all the white Catholics who, instead of even eating at all on Friday, could get acquainted with all the Negro Catholics with part of the day, evening involved in interracial dialogue, what would REALLY happen.

It may be drastic to suggest total food abstinence, but the critical nature of our racial situation suggests that a REAL workable abstinence and reminder of the church's founder--the Man of Nazareth--could be observed with LIVING symbols--humans of varied races and religions.

Pardon my suggestion for another altar for Roman Catholicism, but the Altar of Abstinence from Racial Prejudice is worth thinking about.

Adventist Minister Pastors West LV Church



ELDER ISADORE D. EVANS with wife, Violet, and daughters Lacynda and Donice--Front - baby Isaac, Ila, and Isadore, Jr.

Elder Isadore D. Evans, who recently completed a three month evangelistic effort in Las Vegas, this past summer, serves as the pastor of the new Seventh-day Adventist Church recently established on the Westside of Las Vegas at 1048 Lawry. This makes two Adventist churches in the city of Las Vegas; the other is located at 128 S. Tenth St.

PASTOR EVANS was graduated from Oakwood College, in Huntsville, Alabama, in 1951. In addition to his Oakwood curriculum, he also took extension work from Andrews University at Berrien Springs, Michigan which is an Adventist Theological Seminary. Credits earned from Andrews applied towards his Masters degree. He minored in World History.

After serving as a ministerial intern for six years, Pastor Evans was ordained as a minister of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in 1957 in Lodi, California. From 1951, until he assumed his present position, he was active in evangelistic and pastoral work throughout the Southeastern and Southwestern United States.

ARRIVING IN Las Vegas in November, 1965, from his church in Fontana, California, he immediately began making plans for the establishment of this church through evangelistic meetings and home study Bible lessons. Over 500 people took these courses with 106 recently graduating and 391 continuing their studies; 277 free Bibles have been distributed to those who have completed half the course.

The pastor and his wife Violet, have five children; three daughters, Lacynda, Donice and Ila and two sons, Isadore Jr., and Isaac. Mrs. Evans, who serves as church treasurer, along with her many other church activities, is also a registered nurse. She attended Morgan State College in Baltimore, Maryland. She took her pre-nursing at Oakwood College and was graduated from the Seventh-day Adventist Loma Linda University, at Loma Linda, California, in 1952.

THIS NEW CHURCH follows in the tradition of the 90-year history of Adventists in Nevada in that the first Adventist church was established in Stillwater, Nevada in 1876 when Jackson Ferguson, an Adventist from Santa Rosa, California, held the first Sabbath services on June 1st. In 1878, the Seventh-day Adventist Association of the State of Nevada was formed. Nevada was organized as a mission in 1913 and the present Nevada-Utah Conference, of which both churches are members, was formed in 1931.

Sabbath observance in the church will begin with Sabbath School convening every Saturday at 9:30 a.m. with youths and adults studying the Bible. Following at 11, will be the morning Worship hour. At 2:30 Sabbath afternoon, Pastor Evans will conduct a layman's course of instruction for giving Bible studies. Ending the Sabbath day, every Saturday, there will be a Junior Missionary Volunteers meeting for the youth of the church. Every Wednesday evening at 7:30, a prayer meeting will be held.

THE PASTOR and his congregation welcomes all of those who have the desire to attend any of these services. "Every individual should worship God daily and especially on the Sabbath," declared Pastor Evans.

THIS WEEK IN NEGRO HISTORY

AN "NPI" FEATURE

- Dec. 1, 1869 First National Negro Labor convention, Washington, D.C.
- Dec. 2, 1492 Columbus discovered the Caribbean Island of Haiti.
- Dec. 2, 1859 Famed abolitionist John Brown and his Negro co-conspirators--Shields Green, Dangerfield Newby, Sherrard Lewis Leary and John A. Copeland--martyred. Osborn P. Anderson (A Voice from Harper's Ferry) escaped to later serve with distinction in the Civil war. Brown and his followers were hanged for raid at Harper's Ferry.
- Dec. 2, 1891 Dr. Charles H. Wesley, former president, Central State College, Wilberforce, Ohio and now director, Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, was born.
- Dec. 3, 1948 The Rev. Silas A. Peeler, former president, Bennett College and Methodist minister, died.
- Dec. 4, 1833 First convention of the National Anti-Slavery Society held in Philadelphia.
- Dec. 5, 1955 The first mass meeting, out of which was born the Montgomery (Ala.) boycott movement, was held.
- Dec. 6, 1849 John M. Langston, acting president, Howard University, Washington, D.C., from 1873-75, was graduated from Oberlin College, Ohio.
- Dec. 6, 1869 National Labor Convention in Washington creates Colored National Labor Union.
- Dec. 6, 1949 Huddie (Leadbelly) Ledbetter, king of the 12-stringed guitar, died.
- Dec. 6, 1956 Col. Paul E. Magloire, President of Haiti, was forced, by popular opinion, to resign. He was elected in 1950.


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