

Wednesday, December 4, 1991

Computers and religion - will ever the twain meet?

By **JIM RYAN**
Herald Special
Second Sunday of Advent
Luke 3:1-6
Dec. 8, 1991

JOHN THE BAPTIST OF THE IBM CLONE

Three Statements about Computers

1. Robertson Davies has been quoted as saying, "A computer is the work of the devil."
2. Pablo Picasso said, "A computer only gives you answers."
3. But, Umberto Eco says, "I don't use a typewriter anymore. I think a computer is more spiritual. It works with you and is silent."

A PILGRIM IN THE LAND OF DOS

A friend of mine recently bought a computer. I greet him in the morning with the question, "Are you lost in Dos yet..."

(Dos is a spiritual landscape that is constantly being broken into. It's like heaven or the Promised Land. To be lost in Dos is to be lost in mystical delight.)

I can laugh. I'm still using a twenty year old typewriter that my wife bought used for \$50.00.

I'll admit to you that I'm getting tired of White-out and tapers. I'd like to White-out my IBM (The Real Thing), to buy an IBM clone.



Religion and Reality

by
Jim Ryan

A PROPHET IN THE LAND OF DOS

This past Friday, my friend came in to work with the news that he'd conferred on himself the degree of Master of Dos, a rare and mystical degree.

He had vanquished a demon that had been possessing his IBM Clone. Whenever he tried to save something he'd receive this command from the Land of Dos, "Parity Error." (Note the theological language: to be saved is to exist in the active memory of God forever.)

My friend, peerless pilgrim in the Land of Dos, persevered.

With sword in hand, and with his faithful companion, Mouse, he slew the Parity Error and freed Dos from the oppressive intruder. (As it turned out, the

Parity Error was a faulty disc.) My friend is acquiring the reputation of a prophet of Dos among his pilgrim peers.

JOHN THE BAPTIST IN THE DESERT OF DOS

John the Baptist is like my friend. John discovers the errors in the system. And not in just one system.

In his account of John, Luke names all of the Lords of the Systems that ruled during the time of Christ. We can even date them. Tiberius was sole emperor from Aug. 19, AD 14, until AD 37. The fifteenth year of his reign was probably from Oct. 1, AD 28. Pilate was in Judea from AD 26-36; Herod was in Galilee from 4 BC to AD 39.

John has discovered the source of all systems. He has been called by the Power Source. He has two tasks: to name the errors in earthly systems, and to point to the One who will lead us into the light of the Power Source itself.

Endnote: If you, like me, belong to the few who haven't become pilgrims yet, some of the above terms may seem as mysterious as the terms of a Gnostic cult. Let me assure you, whether the work of the Devil, or tool of the Spirit, you too can become a pilgrim with a few easy lessons. Dos is an operating

system in a computer. It's a power center; it does nothing in itself. It's like electricity in the brain. Computer systems are now becoming more and more user friendly. This is like a Gnostic cult having a membership drive.

BIOETHICS AND THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

This Saturday is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. With the advances in Artificial

Insemination (O.H.I.P. pays for it), Test Tube babies and Genetic Engineering, science has invaded this most basic of human operations.

But if you're neither scientific nor Catholic, don't be put off by this feast.

The Immaculate Conception is a way of illustrating the total surrender of Mary to the will of God. It's a feast that stresses the way disciples can change the world.

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God can help with the answers

By **REV. FRITZ SCHMITT**
Herald Special

In the wake of recent elections it is interesting to note how often people have tried to remedy their problems by voting out one government and voting in a new one. Though the last elections were only at the local level there still had been much thinking in that direction as people went to vote.

"What has the incumbent done to see that my street finally gets the long-promised sewer repairs?" "The present council hasn't truly solved or even rightly addressed the question of growth in our community," are some of the comments you may have heard during the campaign.

But then now, after elections are over and the re-elected and newly elected officers begin their terms also begins the frequently experienced period of disappointment. I think that most politicians intend to keep their promises, to do everything their constituents want, to solve all the problems they addressed during the campaign. Yet, the reality of life, and of public office, presents conflicting desires from the community. Solutions that don't work as expected or planned, as well as the usual assortment of human failures, mistakes, and improper motives and emotions.

The question we need to ask ourselves is, why expect so much from governments, and get so



CLERGY COMMENT

disappointed when they can't deliver what we need? We expect them to get to the heart of the crime problem, yet can they get to the real heart of the problem, the human heart? Likewise, we hope they can resolve the pollution problem. Yet, if we carefully consider it the problem lies in our desiring more material goods than we really need, in buying things or throwing them away merely on the dictates of style and fashion, and in the unwillingness to properly manage the resources God has given us.

At this point many readers might think that I am implying that coming to faith in Christ, turning to God in every trouble is the complete solution to all their problems. In most cases such is only the beginning, but it is the best beginning we can make to every problem we encounter. Rather than turn to politicians and governments who are often powerless to effect the changes we desire or need we should turn to God and learn His plan for renewal, reform, and recovery of the human spirit, mind, and body.

The Christmas season has been used by the Christian Church not just to remember the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, but also to recognize His status as our Saviour and King. As we came closer to that time it would be good to consider whether we count on Him as much as we might our local, provincial, or federal government to come up with the answers we need in our lives, for our community, and for the world.



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Sunday, December 8th
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