

# CHARLES H PHILLIPS

RANDOLPH, VERMONT K of C Council #14351

## THE GK'S MESSAGE

My Brother Knights,

At this very difficult time for our council, when we are no longer welcome in the parish we helped build, it is essential to remain positive and trust that our Lord will sustain us and show us His plan. Despite the recommendation of our Worthy State Deputy that we consider merging our council with Bethel, we voted unanimously at last night's meeting to maintain our own identity as the Charles H. Phillips Council #14351. At what was the best attended meeting in memory, the unity demonstrated by our brothers was impressive. After exploring our options, it was agreed that we would continue the good works of our order and remain true to Father McGivney's dream of a council in every parish.

As Knights of Columbus, we confirm our solidarity with our Bishops and Priests. We take that pledge seriously and with great sincerity. It was, after all, for the express purpose of offering our total support to our pastor in building a new church that our council was formed. Evidence of the sacrifices made by our Knights and their families are everywhere to be seen within our parish facility. Such service was our joy.

This solidarity, however, does not excuse us from the great moral obligation to object to abusive behavior when we witness it, regardless of the offender's position. There are some who feel solidarity must represent a *carte blanche* for any behavior no matter how damaging to the Church. We disagree; Catholics everywhere are dealing today with the bitter fruits of that attitude. Calling attention to the mistreatment of our parishioners has made us rather unpopular in certain quarters, but our silence would have brought shame to our order and to us as faithful, practical Catholic gentlemen.

We are, therefore, resolved to continue to serve our Church as Charles H. Phillips Council #14351.

I wish all of you and your families a very happy Thanksgiving. I hope you will plan to be with us at our next meeting — also at VTC — Tuesday, December 13. And please, continue to pray for our parish.

*Vivat Jesus,*

*John Tuz, G.K.*

# IF THE SHOE FITS . . .

## A Catholic Application of Adlerian Psychology

Alfred Adler, a contemporary of Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung, shows a refreshingly logical and common-sense approach to the mysteries of human behavior. I studied Adler's work long before I became a Catholic, and the more I learned about the Church's teachings, the more I found myself saying "Why, that's a very Adlerian way of looking at things!"

Last month, my wife discovered that Adler was a Catholic; at that point I began looking at things the right way round, saying "Why, that's very Catholic of old Alfred, isn't it?"

Though I've studied psychology, I of course have no credentials along those lines, so please take what I say with a grain of salt . . . but do, at least, think about it.

Last week, while thinking about this editorial, among the terms I looked up were "psychopath" and "sociopath." Oddly enough, their definitions are strikingly similar; the major differences lie in what the analyst involved feels is the root of mental disorders — either genetic/chemical or societal influences.

In fact, from what I can see from a quick overview of the literature, most mental disorders can be pegged somewhere on one psychopath/sociopath scale, placed according to *a*) which symptoms are observed and *b*) their severity. Now, this is really a rather striking observation: no matter what names we give them, aberrant behaviors can be classed *on the same scale* according to their degrees of deviance from the rational norm.

In other words, all the plethora of mental illnesses would appear to be not only related but are simply varying degrees of the same sickness. Keep that thought in mind; we'll come back to it.

As I have intimated before — and I believe the Church and Adler are both right in this — anything we do (and this includes our behavioral responses) is the result of our conscious choice. The phrase "freedom of choice" extends to all but a few of the most instinctive levels; we have, in any given circumstance, the ability to choose a response, a split second in which we decide whether or not to do the wrong thing.

As I've tried to teach my kids, making the wrong choice is very human of us. As is not accepting responsibility *for* that choice by saying "I just did it without thinking," or "I just couldn't help myself" or "I said it (or did it) in the heat of the moment." The truth of the matter is, however, that we *did* think, and we *did* decide to do exactly as we did. The more

often we follow that pattern, the easier it is to make the same, wrong choice, and the more difficult it becomes to break the habit.

Putting it another way, as all good Catholics know, it's not up to us to forgive ourselves.

The habit can be broken. It's a matter of admitting to ourselves that we made a choice — a wrong choice — and we could have, should have made the right one. This is the part that Adler calls "Spitting in the soup." No matter how large the cauldron, if we spit in the soup it never tastes the same again; once we admit that our actions are the result of our own conscious decisions, our old excuse of "I did it without thinking" will never work again.

Once we accept that we are responsible for all the choices we make, it becomes eminently possible for us to begin making right choices.

Now back to that earlier thought: if we look at the attributes of psycho-/sociopath behavior, we are struck by the fact that they are also the hallmarks of sin. I believe a strong argument could be made that psychopathic behavior is a direct outgrowth of Original Sin, and that even the smallest sins we commit against our fellow man can be said to be numbered among the consequences of Original Sin.

It's not for us to excuse our sins, but to recognize them, acknowledge our responsibility for them, ask forgiveness, and, with God's help, to stop committing them.

It's really that simple. The Church and Adler both recognized that making psychology into a complicated mystery that only some specialists could understand was just one more way of making excuses for our own inherently sinful natures. The answer is simple, understandable, and doable.

No more excuses; if the shoe fits, admit that it's your shoe . . . and *do* something about it!

## THE INSURANCE CORNER

Christopher J. Kane  
16 Beverly Street  
Newport, NH 03773  
(603) 443-0068

*christopher.kane@kofc.org*

The C.H. Phillips Council Newsletter  
% John Mahaffy, Editor  
1511 VT Route 14N  
East Randolph, VT 05041



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Tuesday 11/15	7:00 PM	Assembly Meeting, Barre
Thursday 11/24		Thanksgiving
Tuesday 12/13	7:00 PM	Council Meeting, VTC
Tuesday 12/20	7:00 PM	Assembly Meeting, Barre

## POPE BENEDICT'S NOVEMBER PRAYER INTENTIONS

**General Intention:** *Ministers of the Gospel.* That bishops, priests, and all ministers of the Gospel may bear the courageous witness of fidelity to the crucified and risen Lord.

**Missionary Intention:** *Pilgrim Church.* That the pilgrim Church on earth may shine as a light to the nations.