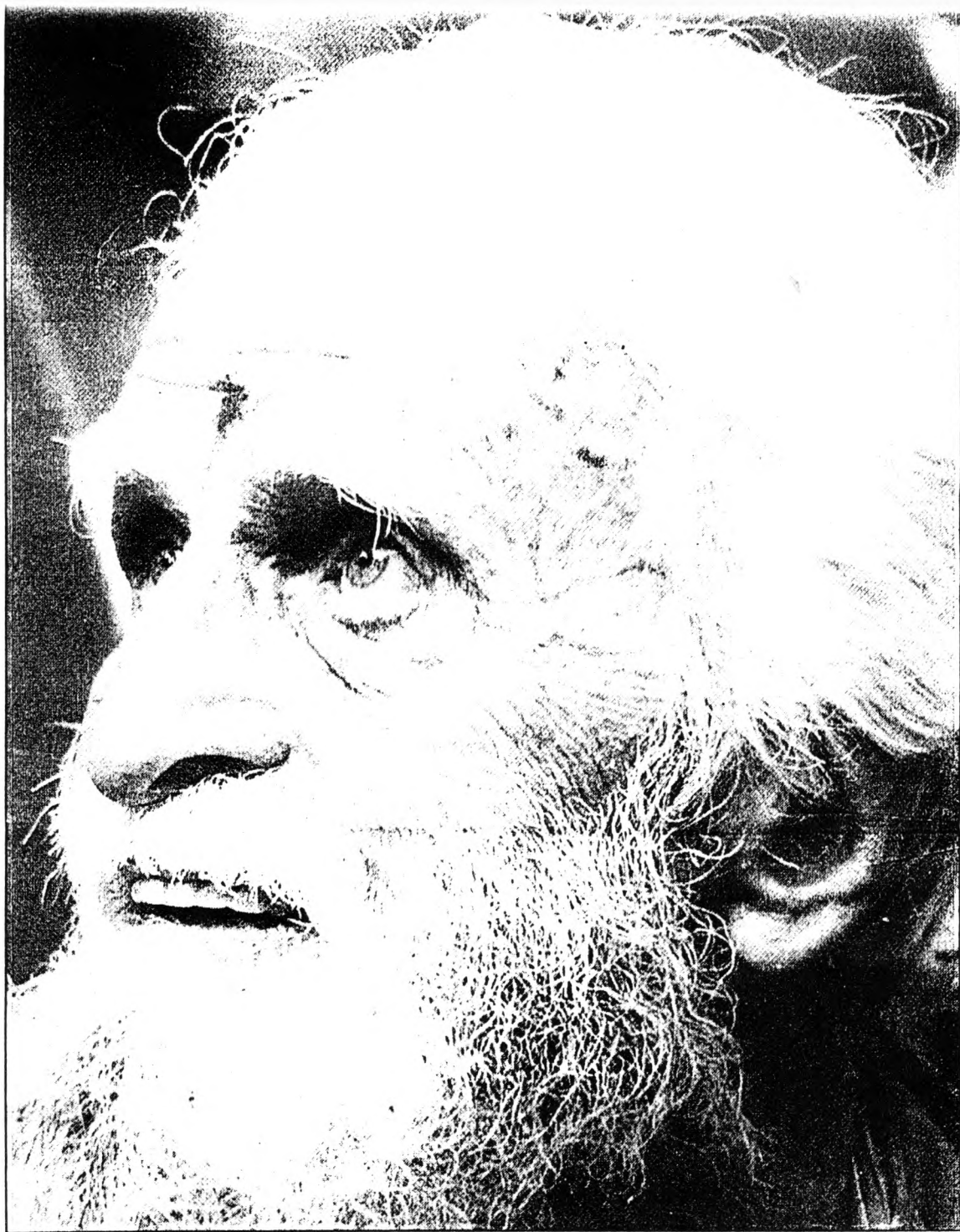


For those without sin



- D. Conlan

Benedictine Father Bede Griffiths, the West's most famous Eastern mystic, last month sent the following remarks to NCR after reading the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith's statement on homosexuality "Some Considerations Concerning the Catholic Response to Legislative Proposals on the Non-discrimination of Homosexual Persons (NCR, July 31).

Griffiths went to India in 1955 and cofounded the Kurisumela Ashram and has lived at Saccindananda Ashram, Shantivanam, since 1968.

I am sure that all those who believe that the church should uphold a strict Christian morality will rejoice at the publication of the new document on homosexuality, which calls for a ban on all those who make public profession of this vice and for action against them in regard to admission to the public services, especially schools and the military. But why stop at homosexuality?

Should not the church be equally severe against all those who offend against public morality, particularly, for instance, against those who frequent brothels. But then again there are the innumerable people today who are known to be living in sin, that is, couples living together without the bond of marriage. But then

there are all those married people who are known to be unfaithful to their marriage vows.

Should not all those people come under a similar ban? The church should be seen to stand against every form of fornication and adultery, especially in regard to housing and employment. A ban on all such activities could have a profound effect on society.

There is a danger, however, that this would seriously affect recruitment for the armed services and also schools and hospitals. This could lead to a severe crisis, which might force the church to attend to the saying of the gospel: "Let one who is without sin among you cast the first stone." This would change the whole situation. Instead of upholding a legal morality like that of the scribes and Pharisees, the church might then be seen to be preaching the gospel of Christ.

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