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#### A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY

A recent conference held at the New York School focused on the Father Edward McGlynn controversy.

Dr. McGlynn, a contemporary of Henry George, was excommunicated from the Catholic Church because of a bitter battle with his superior, Archbishop Corrigan of New York. Ignited by the spirit of George, Father McGlynn campaigned for him during the 1886 mayoral race. His advocacy of the Georgist solution to the land problem brought him into conflict with various church officials.

It was a controversy that shook the foundations of the church in the United States, leading eventually to a letter from George to Pope Leo XIII in defense of Father McGlynn. Although the excommunication was lifted, many questions were left unanswered.

An important one concerned the role religious groups and organizations should play in social matters. This question was hotly debated for the next 100 years. Significant changes have occurred, however -- not only within the Catholic Church, but in other denominations as well. Today, the Church has enmeshed itself in such crucial concerns as the nuclear arms race.

Having expressed their views on war, the struggle for military superiority and the advancement of weapons technologies, the Catholic Bishops of the United States will turn their attention, in the near future, to American capitalism. Without question, advocates of Henry George should be tuned in to the Bishop's prognosis for our economic system.

The slow process of preparing a statement on such a wide-ranging issue offers Georgists a golden opportunity to enter the dialogue in an atmosphere radically different from Father McGlynn's era. It can establish the harmonious relationship George alluded to after listening to a speech by Father McGlynn:

"It means the marriage again of what too long has been severed -- the union of religious sentiment with the aspiration for social reform; of the hope of heaven with the hope of banishing want and suffering from the earth."

How prophetic! How unfortunate if we do not seize this opportunity to realize George's vision.

--Stan Rubenstein