

Stallings: Break with church 'inevitable'

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consistently talks that talk and walks that walk when it comes to addressing racism but they have not come up with a way to determine how to eradicate the effects of racism in their own church."

The ultimate result of Stallings' defiance could mean his excommunication from the Catholic Church, a definitive action only the Pope can undertake. Thus far, the Pope

has remained silent on the issue of Father Stallings' church. The priest said that is probably due to the fact that, according to church law, in order to be excommunicated he would have to differ in doctrine, matters of faith and morals. Father Stallings said that Imani Temple has not violated any of the Catholic principles in those areas. Although his Masses feature African ritualis-

tic music and customs, a discussion of Afro-American leaders and a preaching style more associated with a Baptist Church, Father Stallings said that the substance of the service remains decidedly Catholic.

"We differ from the Roman Catholic Church in substance, not form," he said. "We have reshaped the form of the liturgy so that it is

Afro-centric and not Euro-centric. We've done away with the redundancy of constantly beating one's chest and asking God to forgive us. But we have not changed the substance. The sacraments are the same."

But Father Stallings admitted that he expects that he soon will be forced to remove his African-American Catholic congregation com-

pletely from the umbrella of the Roman Catholic Church. At that point, he said, the public can expect major overhauls in his Imani Temple and the churches that follow.

"If the Roman Catholic Church does not allow us to practice parity...then it is inevitable that, as African-American Catholics, we will follow the same path as the AME Zionists in America and

break away from the Roman Catholic Church. We as African-American Catholics have no intentions of returning to the fleshpots of Africa in terms of our being enslaved by this church. If we form an independent church, we will have women as priests, optional celibacy and we will establish our own hierarchy. That point, I'm afraid, is not too far away."

Candidates regroup, prepare for runoff

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and that the Carver School Road precinct was Mrs. Burke's home precinct. Mrs. Wood said she would wait before announcing that she would be in an October run-off.

"As you know I don't make any decision until all the facts are in, so we'll just have to wait and see," Mrs. Wood told supporters, drawing loud applause and approving nods from the group. "There are still two precincts out. One of them is the Martin Luther King precinct. The other is the Carver School Road precinct. As you know, Mrs. Burke supported Mr. Smith. We'll see how it will go. We just have to wait patiently."

Just up the street from Mrs. Wood's gathering, Mr. Smith and his supporters huddled around a television at his headquarters on the corner of Fourth and Marshall streets. With only the two precincts left to report in, Mr. Smith was 524 votes ahead of his closest opponent, Mrs. Wood. But supporters at the Smith camp were less confident about the number of votes that would come from the remaining precincts.

The final reports from the two precincts came in at approximately 10:30. Both precincts came in strongly in favor of Mrs. Wood, pulling her to within 87 votes of Mr. Smith and setting the stage for next month's run-off.

While her supporters congratulated one another on the prospect of a run-off, the candidate anxiously greeted each new arrival with a hug and a query as to the progress being made at the final two voting sites. Gathering her family members and campaign team leaders together, Mrs. Wood

approached the podium as chants of "Martha, Martha," rang through the Sawtooth gallery. Her husband, Frank, was the first to speak.

"I have never seen Martha as persistently upbeat and steady and forthright over such a long period of time in my life," he said. "It was really a sight to behold to see her as vibrant and effective as she was throughout this campaign."

Finally feeling comfortable enough to agree that a run-off was apparent, Mrs. Wood, flanked by her sons, daughter and mother, changed her tone from caution to pointed determination. She noted the significance she saw in the fact that the MLK precinct was the precinct that helped close the gap with Mr. Smith.

"I am a child of the '60s. I remember vividly Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech at the foot of the Lincoln Memorial. He moved me and he won me. He said that he had a dream that one day all people would be judged by the content of their character and not the color of their skin. I believe that

because my mother and father taught me that. I'm not going to change," she said. "If you want us to go out in October and show these people that Winston-Salem is a progressive city for the 21st century, where we judge people by their quality and not by any other reason, you've got to help me. I can't do it by myself. You've got to help me. We're going to have to dig deep and come up with the energy, enthusiasm and motivation to make it happen."

Just up the block, Mr. Smith said that he was not surprised that the race had resulted in a run-off nor was he

surprised that he did not do well in the Afro-American precincts.

"I would have liked to have won this without a run-off but I'm not really surprised," said Mr. Smith. "I realize we continue to run behind in the black community. I really want to work on working with the black community. I want them to know that I'm interested in them and that I need their votes."

He said his early stance on the at-large voting issue may have placed

him in some disfavor within the Afro-American community.

"Earlier, I pointed out that I was for at-large voting," he said. "After I got all the information in and I reconsidered, I no longer support the at-large system. But I think that early position hurt me in the black community. Also, there were some fliers sent out by my opponent that had a lot of negatives about me. I've had to try to overcome that by playing up my positives."

But members of the Wood camp said that they, too, had to deal with what they considered "negative campaigning." During Mrs. Wood's celebration, some supporters were upset by events they said took place on the South side of the city. They said that many of the residents in that area were told to call a phone number that put the caller in touch with a recorded message that contained negative criticisms.

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