

# Who Is The Keeper Of Our Homeless?

Am I my brother's keeper? This question has plagued mankind since Cain first dared pose it to God. All people of the Christian faith know the question intimately. Do we remember God's answer to Cain? At the Christmas season, we should be mindful of that.

The Eternal Question came to mind recently while I was reading from the works of Seneca, the Roman soldier-statesman. But what could anything about ancient Rome have to do with business and American commerce? Well, Seneca said the mark of a truly great society is the way it treats the least of its members.

Put that together with the fact that our system of laws and justice is patterned on the Roman model and you see connections.

Also, the Romans were great capitalists, as well as warriors. Jesus was born in the reign of Augustus Caesar, during the Golden Age of Rome.

The point is, Seneca was a pagan-yet he strikes at one of the fundamental elements in Christian faith. Lately, even the Harvard School of Business has been reinforcing the teaching of business ethics.

It boils down to a case of the bottom line versus the bot-

tommed-out. Charlotte Uptown Development Corp. wants to block the creation of a permanent shelter for the homeless uptown. Mayor Sue Myrick is determined to build the shelter, primarily because it can be done at a savings to the city.

The federal government is willing to give Charlotte its old Naval Reserve building on 5th Street as a homeless shelter. CUDC says the building should be torn down, so that the property can be developed for office space. A battle looms between city and commerce.

Now, regardless of how some of us might feel toward the Mayor and her programs, there is a real moral issue here, and a fiscal one.

Should the city be devoted only to the making of money? What about our less fortunate-many of whom are black and female? Do they have no stake in our good life simply because they lack economic leverage?

Many of the homeless in America are former mental patients, who are incapable of getting work. The Reagan Administration turned them out of institutions into the streets, to save federal money. Some are working people down on their luck.

Can we forget that Jesus was



Main Street  
by Jimmy Brock

from the working class? Luke, the Apostle, said, "...even the little foxes had holes to live in, but the Son of Man had nowhere

to lay His head". That's right-Jesus was a homeless street person. He never owned any property other than the clothes on His back.

Born in a stable. He died homeless--despised by all but a few. Ironically, a rich merchant-Joseph of Arimathea--donated a tomb in which His body was laid to rest. If that ancient businessman could be generous in spirit, cannot our businessmen do the same?

God's answer to Cain was, "the brother's blood crieth unto Me from the ground." It is so today with our homeless brothers and sisters. They are also God's children.

## Homeless Shelter Plan

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turn the building over next year.

The shelter plan closely resembles the St. Vincent dePaul shelter in San Diego. Myrick stated. Charlotte's facility should be built with private funds and Myrick has enlisted the help of George Shinn, owner of the National Basketball Association Charlotte Hornets to lead the fundraising effort.

There may be some opposition to the proposed site, which some critics say is too close to the uptown area. Myrick, however, said the Navy building is the best possible site because of its location near self-help organizations and assistance agencies.

"No matter where they put it, it won't be popular," she said. "Cities have tried over and over to take the homeless away from downtown and they always come back."

Some modifications will be needed to make the facility more attractive to ease the fears of uptown shelter opponents. Myrick said she has been contacted by a local architect who has volunteered to design a facade, probably stucco, to give the building a more pleasant look. The site is sandwiched by a graveyard and businesses and wouldn't pose a threat to homes in Third and Fourth Ward, Myrick assessed.

"Architecturally, it will be very pleasing," she said. "I see it as a definite plus instead of a detriment. It'll be an attractive addition to the neighborhood."

Once the shelter is reality, Myrick envisions a facility that doesn't "warehouse" the homeless. Rather, it would be a place of rehabilitation and a starting point for people to put their lives

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## First Citizens Bank Establishes Local Board

First Citizens Bank in Charlotte has elected 11 business and professional leaders to serve on its newly established local board of directors, according to Lewis R. Holding, chairman of the statewide bank.

The directors will assist bank management in business development and policy matters and will serve as liaisons between First Citizens and the Mecklenburg County community.

Elected to serve where: F. Culbreth, an orthodontist; R. Gordon president of R & S Textile Machinery Company; Dale F. Halton, president and chairman of the board of Pepsi-Cola Bottling Company of Charlotte; John E. MacClements, president of Carolina Rim and Wheel Company; Daniel Rufus Martin, president and treasurer of Mayer, Patterson & Martin, Inc., an insurance firm; Charles W. McClure, president and owner of McClure Properties, Inc. and Northwest Funeral Home, Inc.; Herman A. Moore, president of Herman A. Moore and Associates, Inc., a real estate development compa-



McClure

ny; Harry S. Swimmer, president of Swimmer Insurance Agency, Inc.; Rex H. Wheatley, president of R.H. Wheatley Company, a construction firm; Harry J. Nicholas, a First Citizens Bank vice president and Charlotte area supervisor; and Robert L. Johnson, a First Citizens Bank senior vice president and city executive in Charlotte.

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