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The Loyal Opposition

The Courier-Journal recognizes that many diocesan and parochial policies are not happily approved by all the laity and the clergy. We acknowledge the existence of "the loyal opposition" and respect their desire to be heard. When space permits we will gladly give critical spokesmen a platform to present minority opinions or state issues which they regard as misunderstood or undervalued by the average Catholic. To allow free expression is to stimulate pro and con thought and hopefully clarify debated issues.

By CLARENCE A. AMANN
Rochester

I have read with dismay and some irritation the article entitled "Catholic Schools Needed Today" reporting Monsignor William Roche's sentiments on this issue in last week's Courier-Journal. The contentions he makes must be challenged.

As one who has seriously and prayerfully thought about this with the mind of a layman, a parent and a teacher in the Catholic school system, I would submit to every Catholic interested in this problem the following considerations:

1. I believe it's absurd to think the Catholic school system, without public funds, can continue to compete at par with the public school system;
2. I believe it's unfair, in the face of consequent costs annually, in the way of taxes, tuitions and so on, to expect struggling Catholic families to support two school systems, even partially dedicated to the same functions;
3. I am not convinced that Catholic education has been generally as successful in turning out "good Catholics" as we have thought. I've seen too much resentment, conscious and unconscious, to the monolithic religious and social experience implicit in it;
4. I am convinced we must use the public facilities much more willingly and realistically and bend every effort to that task which is much more properly the lack of the Church, namely spiritual and moral formation. We ought to get out of the very expensive and pre-occupying business of secular education;
5. I believe that there are certain viable alternatives for accomplishing this prime function that have been

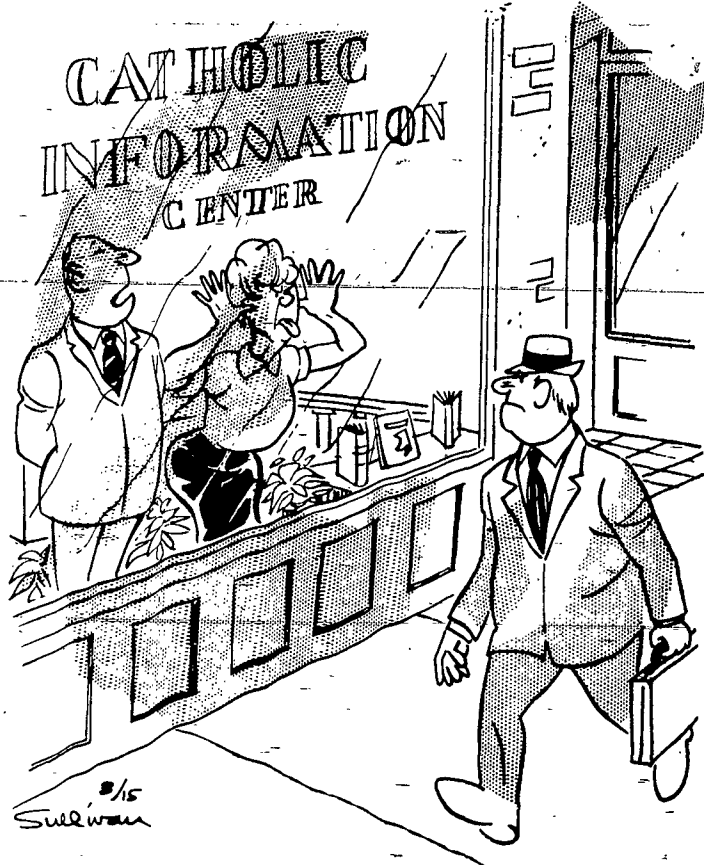
and continue to be ignored because we have taken as articles of faith certain dicta which may have been at one time vital, but which are now obsolete, to wit: "Every parish its own Catholic school" and "Every Catholic child in a Catholic school."

6. I am further not now convinced that Catholics schools are now Catholic in the way they used to be. (Nor, I must add, would I expect or want them to be.)

7. Finally, and perhaps most serious of all, I think that in persisting in this present course the Church is in fact violating the very right and responsibility it is trying to implement. It is cultivating a continued apathy on the part of parents — a continued willingness on the part of parents — to turn over to the Church this that is their most serious duty and right, namely educating their children in spiritual matters and disciplining them in moral affairs.

As long as the Church will tend to it for them, they will gladly abdicate this right and duty to the Church. In this day of better educated and more sophisticated parents, we ought to be making a more determined effort to give this task back to its prime owners, with a view to providing minimal institutional help. The whole spirit of the Council is to reinvest in the People of God the things that are theirs.

Please do not mistake me. I don't advocate this be accomplished overnight. But I see no thought or willing effort in that direction. It's time some courageous Bishop began phasing out all his schools and looking to a different kind of education, focused to those functions and disciplines more immediately spiritual and moral, and so, more properly the Church's.



EVEN IF HE IS AN ATHEIST, ISABEL, THAT'S STILL LOUSY ECUMENISM.



Rabbi Michael L. Kunz of New York City is seen in prayer at memorial service for Dr. Martin Luther King Sunday, April 7 at St. Mary's Church in Auburn.

Dr. King's Slaying A National Warning

Within the last few years America has witnessed the assassination of a President and the assassination of a King. The same target was telescoped before the barrel of each gun — leadership. It makes little difference who was the white man and who was the black. What was attacked was leadership! If we kill the trumpeter, who shall arouse himself to action? If we murder peacemakers, shall we not all be at war? If we slay the conductor will the musicians produce harmony?

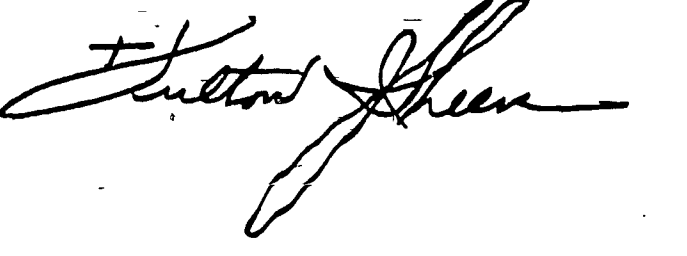
Society can never go forward to unity and peace except by and through somebody. A superior leader always creates conflicts. This is to be expected as more sticks are to be found under the tree with the best apples. But the hatred and violence lodged against him will often be the measure, not only of how much he has risen above mediocrity, but also of how far we have sunk into the morass of violence. What kind of a society are we that can spawn men who will re-echo from Pilate's porch: "We will not have this man rule over us."

While we mourn, Europe adds to its mourning a concern for our future. It knows what happens to a civilization when it hates. If our society is stronger in protest than its reform, if it is against something without being for something, is there not a danger that will come along a catalyst of our hates, as Hitler brought to consciousness the subconscious hatred of his people. We know all about barbarism from without. But do we fear the barbarism from within? Is there not a connection among God is dead, the President is dead, King is dead? If we are making ourselves no more than animals, can we not at least be animals that romp, rather than animals that kill?

On the very day Dr. Martin Luther King was assassinated we read in our liturgy the words, "It is fitting that one man die for the nation rather than the nation perish." These words apply to him and his works. Death is redemptive — sometimes more redemptive than life itself. It may very well be that he, who a short time before he died said: "Lord take my hand," may be the means of deepening brotherhood in our nation under the Fatherhood of God. He who bade all swords be put into the scabbard, may make us all see that true violence is against hate in our own soul, rather than violence against neighbor.

I see in the death of Dr. King, modernization of the story of another Passion when the long arm of Roman Law reached out to a man from Africa — Simon, of Cyrene (Cyrene is in Africa — was he the same man later on called Simon the Black? Probably he was!) To him came the command, "Carry that cross." He did not want to do it. But by following footprints of the Lord who was going to a violent death, the black man's burden became one with the white man's burden! It was an African who first halved the cross of Christ! Two march together.

May this be the picture America will keep before its eyes, a Black Man and a White Man carrying the Cross to save the world from hate, from violence and from inner decay!



Light In The Dark

America needs the Good News of Easter this year in a very special way.

Still stunned by the tragic death of a great Christian leader, Martin Luther King, Jr., deeply disturbed by the spectacle of flames, looting and rioting which ravaged many cities last week-end, puzzled and discouraged over the long and seemingly endless war in Vietnam —

We need, desperately, a massive injection of hope.

Surely, for those who will celebrate Easter as the return from the grave of the world's Savior, this coming Sunday can provide that hope.

Jesus of Nazareth brought light and courage and fresh determination to His followers that first Easter morning. Their mission, to carry His love and salvation to the whole world, became possible once again.

The same men who had been crushed by their Master's crucifixion were vivified by His Easter triumph. Americans, momentarily stymied by the size of the problems facing them, can find new vitality from the same source. We may be forced to our knees just now, but that's not so bad, only recently President Johnson reminded us that the country is "never taller than when it is on its knees."

Those who believe in the Risen Christ can never be really defeated, for their inner drive wells up from the Living God, the Unconquerable One.

True enough, faith without the works which should follow that faith, is dead — St. James insists on that in his Epistle. But the faith which is rooted in God's Word, the faith which stems from a living friendship with the Risen Christ — that kind of faith will move us to the works needed.

That kind of faith restores hope, rekindles courage, and stirs up positive action.

We can languish on the road to Emmaus, as men who have no hope, or we can look into the face of the Risen Christ and move forward with Him.

With God's help available, it's up to us.

—Father Robert Kanka

The Vatican

Impatience Can Hurt Faith

(From an editorial on Vatican Radio)

The discussion on birth control in Catholic circles is becoming more and more widespread and more mature. Until recently the subject was not considered too apt for public discussion.

If an air of debate somehow attends the problem of birth control it only shows the sense of urgency with which the approach is made and the need for change in traditional Catholic teaching.

Today more and more married couples are exposed to anxiety about the morality of certain means of contraception which often makes their lives morally unhappy and spiritually barren.

What makes the evolution of a clear birth control embraces a number of independent branches of knowledge at the same time: moral philosophy, economics, sociology, psychology, medicine and physiology.

For the Christian believer the task of finding a clear solution becomes ever harder. He has to integrate the data of all the above mentioned natural sciences in the light of faith and theology. As Father Lionel Kearney writes in a recent issue of The Tablet of London, the authority of the Church in the sphere of morals and the sources of her knowledge of natural morality are involved in the question of birth control.

He feels that the time has come for the Church to look beyond St. Thomas for the solution to this modern problem and to introduce new methods of understanding and communicating natural moral philosophy.

Traditional Principles

In the traditional teaching, birth control is treated in a priori manner based on deductions about man's nature. According to this a priori method the purpose of sexuality is declared to be primarily for procreation. The traditional doctrine of birth control grew when the methods of study of moral issues connected with it were still inadequate.

Today empirical sciences like economics, sociology, psychology are throwing more light on the nature of human sexuality, so that the Church has to reexamine its methods of teaching and adapt the teaching itself.

Once it is accepted that the Church's teaching on natural morality must be based on empirical knowledge of man's nature and not on the fixed notions of a bygone age, then the Church may be able to bring her teachings to the present requirements of man's being.

The Church's tradition is not of immobilism which is insensitive to the great question of the day, but rather one of combining the old with the new, of upholding traditional truths while new doctrines are being evolved.

In looking for a solution to this most urgent problem, the Church cannot abdicate her role as the teacher and interpreter of God's revealed law.

The Sacred Love

Pope Paul declared the Church cannot approve much less advocate, any theory that would mean a diminution of appreciation for the gift of life. The Church cannot do anything that will lower the esteem of the sublime character of conjugal love that is capable of surpassing itself in the self-gift of husband and wife, and hence in the still more disinterested gift of each to the new being, the child.

Letters to the Editor

A Call for Rural Help

A family of 14 living in a three room shack the seven sons sleeping in a woodshed... a mother carrying her sick child almost 10 miles in the dead of winter to get a doctor while the child dies in her arms — a child born in a corn crib in 15 below zero weather.

John Kenneth Galbraith, the noted economist wrote in "The Affluent Society," "The modern locus of poverty is more the rural than the urban slum."

And it's easier to hide that rural slum, to pretend it's not there. There have been no riots or uprisings yet among the rural poor of our diocese (although this summer may be a troubled one in some rural parts of the diocese).

We are sending all kinds of people into our inner cities; we are spending billions of dollars there but what are we doing about the root cause of the inner-city slum — the migration of the rural poor.

The slums of the majority of this diocese's communities are spread over its rural hillsides but what have we done for the marginal farming family of 15 trying to live off a couple of milking cows and a field or two of oats.

The poorest people in our diocese, the most "culturally deprived" aren't found in the inner city; they're found in our migrant camps, they're found sleeping with their three kids in a car on a back road; 11 men, a mother in her 20s and her 5-year-old daughter living together in an old "chicken coop."

But what has the Christian done? We take them out a warm coat and a can of soup and leave them to live and die — in their old shack or shanty.

But we have begun — on a shoestring. This summer, three nuns, two seminarians, three college students, four high school seniors and a priest will be living and working out of an old school building in the hills of our diocese.

They'll be traveling the "less traveled" road to the migrant camp, to the marginal farm. They'll be carrying the babies to the doctor, teaching the migrant children, helping the nurses, sharing their food with the hungry, building a clinic, giving rural youth a horizon.

Who are they? They're Operation REACH of Bishop Sheen's Secular Mission. And they need your help.

Our only recourse is to beg. We are begging Christian communities.

Tithing for the Poor

Your editorial (April 5) about parishes tithing some percentage of their weekly Sunday offering was probably intended to stimulate or be prophetic. You suggested that parishioners ask their pastors, or the new parish councils, "Why don't we give money away regularly and directly to the poor?"

But the whole parish should know about it: should be told each week what the tithe intention is for that day and should be informed on the following Sunday how much their gift amounted to. If the people knew precisely that 10¢ of each dollar contributed was going to be given to the poor, I believe there would be fewer people putting only a quarter or a dime on the plate. People always give better when they know what the money is for.

—J. K. Resson, Rochester

Close Some Schools

Parochial school grade closings are necessary. On the grade school level an adequate kindergarten, 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th grades should be the parochial school aim. A re-inforced and adequate Saturday School of Religion should take care of the upper grades.

It is a sad fact that enough information regarding debt on schools has not been made available to the public. For example why pump money out to serve out-dated Aquinas when the two newest Catholic High Schools, Cardinal Mooney and Bishop Kearney, have money problems?

This is one time that sentiment cannot play a part in decisions.

—Bernard H. Florack, Rochester.

Vatican II Not Just to Change, Pope Paul Says

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI, speaking at his usual mid-week general audience, emphasized that the Second Vatican Council was not held to "change" Catholic doctrine, but to make it "more adequate and profound."

He noted that in convening Vatican II the late Pope John XXIII had stated that it would reaffirm all Catholic doctrine "without taking away any part of it."

Pope Paul began his address by observing the problem of modern times, that some feel "nothing is certain, nothing is definite, nothing is acceptable, and one cannot believe anything as being of absolute value which could become the guide and the sense of life."

This same sense of doubt regarding faith, he said, has also penetrated the Catholic Church.

"There are many who would like to subject it (the Church) to a radical revision," he continued, "trying to cleanse it of these dogmas or of these doctrines which appear to be outdated to them—in the light of the recent progress made by science, and which are incomprehensible to contemporary human mind."

"They want to change it to make it conform to modern language and mentality, that is, to revise religious teaching, often unfortunately subverting the intimate reality and trying to make it intelligible, first by changing the formulae which the Church, our master, has given it and almost seated in order to conserve its identity, and then by altering the content of traditional doctrines and subjecting them to the dominating laws of transforming history."

"Thus the Word of Christ is no longer the truth — this truth which always identical and equal to itself, always alive, luminous and fruitful even if it is often above our rational understanding."

"And it is reduced to a partial truth which in successive generations will be reworked to change and give it another expression."

The Word for Sunday

The Church on Wheels

Christianity is an Easter faith — a story of Christ's victory over death, and all that that implies. The resurrection stories all say the same thing, namely, that after the crucifixion "the body of Christ" did not remain entombed, but was living and active; it broke out into the world, was on the move to Jerusalem, Emmaus, Galilee, Olivet — whenever the need was.



In an agricultural society when change was slow and there was little mobility — life could "center" nicely around the "parish church." But today everybody's on the move. How can the Church meet the needs of a moving world?

In a small town in East Germany, the church building had been destroyed. Permission to build a new one was denied. An old circus wagon was found; it was pulled into the courtyard of an inn; and in it worship was held. So long as the wheels remained on the wagon, so long as it was capable of movement, it was not just another building and worship could be held in it. As soon as it lost its wheels, however, it became "just another building, and under the regulations of the state, could not be used for religious purposes."

So long as the Church "keeps its wheels," so long as it retains mobility, it may continue to function as the Church. But should it "lose its wheels," should it become incapable of shifting its position in a rapidly shifting society, it might well cease to be a relevant Church. The Church keeps its wheels if, obedient to the Lord of history and sensitive to the needs of changing times, it is willing to move into hitherto uncharted lands.

In the first 300 years, the Church had no church buildings. It consisted of tremendously flexible congregations, meeting in homes, catacombs, anywhere. Emphasis was not on places, but on the good news of life given by Christ.

We need buildings, but are they golden calves or servants? Do we retreat from the world to them or do we break out from them into the world? Are we bringing the world into the Church or are we putting the Church into the world? "We don't want a Church that will move with the world," said Chesterton, "We want a Church that will move the world. We want one that will move it away from many of the things toward which it is now moving."

Easter was the day of Jesus' breaking out into the world.

3 Faiths Participate

Representatives of the Protestant, Jewish and Catholic faiths participated in Memorial services for Martin Luther King Sunday, April 7 at St. Mary's Church in Auburn.

The interfaith program began St. Mary's at 2 p.m. with Monsignor James Cuffney of St. Mary's, Rabbi Michael Kurz of Congregation B' Israel, Rev. Pictured Johnson, pastor of the Protestant church.

More Homeless As King Dies

Rochester's Catholic Interracial Council (CIC) this week backed Mayor Frank T. Lamb's proposal for a memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King, but urged that the most fitting memorial would be HOUSING.

The CIC's executive board, met last Monday (April 8), pointed out in a letter to Mayor Lamb that such a memorial would answer the most critical need of the poor whom King championed.

Following through on the suggestion, the CIC leaders urged the Council to press ahead with "whatever action is necessary" to get housing erected for the poor. They suggested the possibility of 100 per cent tax abatement to non-profit groups interested in building public housing. Noting that such a tax abatement was unprecedented locally, the Council insisted that "unusual situations" demand "unusual actions."

Only by such action, the CIC committee concluded, will Rochester poor people be convinced of the city's dedication to the ideals for which Martin Luther King died.

The CIC board at the same meeting unanimously voted to support a 12-point social action program adopted by 300 Rochester clergymen last Friday.

Msgr. Roche Closing of Precious Blood School

The scheduled June closing of the Precious Blood School was prompted by a long-standing diocesan policy that "a program of quality education cannot be sustained with double grades," Monsignor William M. Roche, diocesan superintendent of schools, told protesting parents of the parish this week.

Eight grades for 165 pupils are crowded in four classrooms of the 1-year-old school building. Three Sisters and two lay teachers constitute the staff. Nearly all the pupils are bused to the school twice daily in parish buses driven by the pastor himself, Father Sebastian Costagiacom.

When Monsignor Roche informed Father Costagiacom on April 4 that the Pastoral Office and the Diocesan School Office expected the small school to close this June, it was planned that the children could all be accommodated in Holy Apostles and St. Anthony's parish schools.

"It is not a question of putting children out of a Catholic school. We know that the Precious Blood pupils can be accommodated and given better education elsewhere," Msgr. Roche said. "Most of them live closer to larger neighboring parochial schools than to Precious Blood."

"The critical teacher-shortage makes this step necessary for good education," the superintendent said.