

Want to Help? First Ask How

"We're only doing it for your own good."

How aggravating a remark that is for youngsters to take from their parents. Yet there is basis for it in parental guidance.

However, when community organizations imply the same line of reasoning when taking action affecting the life of other citizens, it is reprehensible.

A situation concerning the Natatorium on South Avenue brings this into focus. The popular, indoor pool is used by more than 40,000 people annually but now it is threatened with destruction because of the proposed Washington Square Urban Renewal Project. There are plans for replacing the Natatorium with pools at the redesigned Schools 3 and 9.

This all sounds laudatory except for the absence of one vital component — discussion with and approval by the people most concerned, those who live in the neighborhood now and who use the Natatorium now. They want to keep the Natatorium and are dubious about new pool plans.

The Urban League joins in this skepticism, declaring that the plan for the new pools is feasible only if there is an established timetable and commitment that a pool will be installed.

Mayor Stephen May agrees, saying that a commitment will be required from any contractor that the Natatorium will remain until a suitable replacement is set up.

But more is involved here than even the swimming facility. The Urban League summed it up by saying, "The league is attuned to the frustration of the people . . . problems will not be alleviated until the community is consulted."

We must be our brother's keeper but the key word is brother, which implies on an equal level. It excludes paternalism.

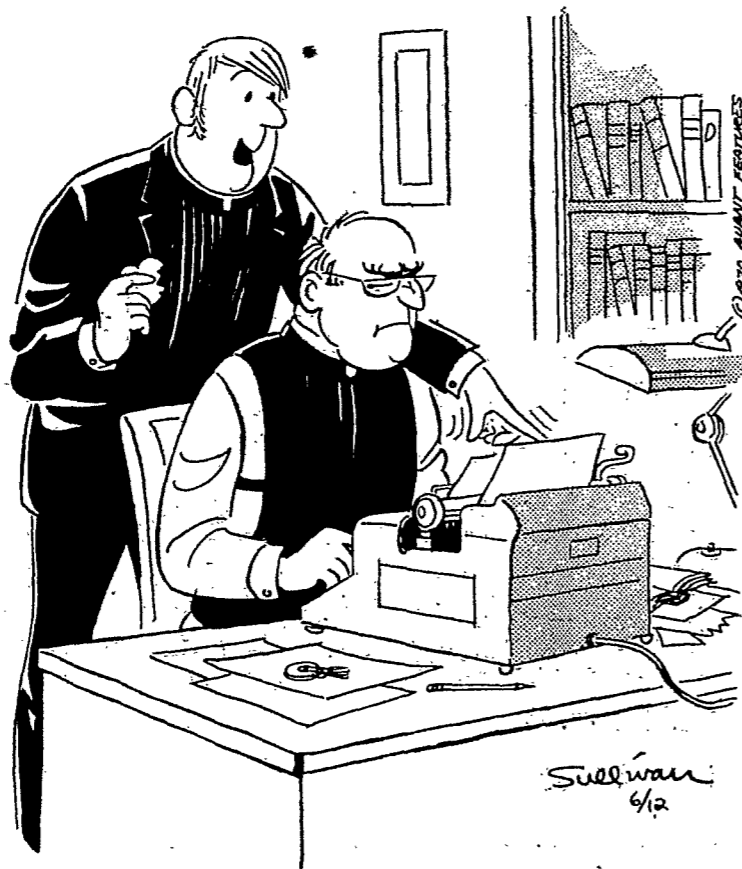
It is bad enough to be disadvantaged but it is aggravating at the least and humiliating at the most to have someone else tell you how they are going to manage your life for your own good.

Right to Vote

Because of circumstances and distances many Americans serving in our armed forces around the world run the risk of losing their vote.

A serviceman must fill out an application for a military ballot in order to be eligible to vote. So if you are in the service or have a serviceman in the family pick up an application at the State Division of Veterans' Affairs at 39 Main St. W., Rochester.

Don't let those who have perhaps worked the hardest for this right lose out on it.



"Wow! Knock out all that stuff about sin and you'll really be relevant!"

Letters to the Editor

Symbol a Sign Of Optimism

Editor:

I am writing in regard to the article (Courier-Journal, Aug. 12) on the peace symbol — "This Symbol . . . Peaceful or Satanic?"

It must be a fairly slow summer for American Legion Post 544, when its members have to waste their time and energy on such pettiness. As for the John Birch Society, it has finally hit bottom on its causes for concern.

I must agree with Rev. John Neuhaus that the charges Post 544 and the John Birch Society have brought forth are the result of an "imaginative persecution complex." It seems incredible that these groups claim that the symbol is "Communist inspired," and, of all things, in league with the devil. However, I suppose on any given day, any individual could find almost any implication in a given symbol.

Unfortunately, or fortunately, I am not "up" on shields, so I am not aware of what the Saracens used as a symbol when

they crossed into Spain. I think Mr. Gumär is digging; I hope he finds something worthwhile someday.

The first time I saw the peace symbol it very definitely was an encircled bomber, and its stated meaning was: "ban the bomb." That is not a bad idea.

This symbol is just that, a symbol. What it might have meant in the past is presently of no consequence. Those who bear it now will agree with me that what it represents is optimistic. It is the hope that one day there will be peace and love among all men, between all men and for all men.

Man, that's where it's at.

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Symbol Stands For Peace

Editor:

Concerning the Courier-Journal article on the Peace Symbol:

I think we should be interested in the individual who

The Word for Sunday Renewal Begins In the Heart

By Father Albert Shamon



Moses told the people, "Hear the statutes and decrees which I am teaching you to observe." "Hear," he said,

How's our listening quotient? Would we not rather talk than listen? We ask someone how he is and we greet his answers with "Uh huh, uh huh, uh huh"; then we rush on to the next question. Finally when we've gotten all that out of the way, we settle down to talking about ourselves. We console ourselves that we have listened, when all we've done is taken care of all possible interruptions so that we can have the stage.

We tune out what we don't like to hear, and we tune in on causes, ideas, heroes, latest books, "movies," and music. "It's sharp. It's in. It's going to solve all our problems." Oh, yes? That's the way people were even back in the days of Moses. When it comes to sound instruction, people turn off their hearing aids. So, Moses said, "Israel hear. Listen to what I am teaching that you may live."

In the second reading, St. James builds on Moses' admonition. James said, "If all you do is listen to God's word, you are deceiving yourselves." From Moses down to the last apostles, God has given man the instructions he needs to live the life that wins life eternal. To do so, James warns we cannot just put away the instructions like a bride putting away her silverware. You can't get nourishment by staring at a recipe. Or build a boat by staring at its instructions. Or pass an exam by staring at the questions.

"No," says James, "Act on the word." Put legs on your Christianity and get going. Worship can't take the place of service. But worship can degenerate into mere lip-service, mere formalities that get emptier and emptier as we say and do the same thing over and over again. Some Christians go to Mass, listen to a homily, and then they fold up their halos and go away happy and content that they have done their

Christian bit—let the other fellow beware.

Yet in the Gospel that is exactly what the Jews did. How poorly they had listened to Moses! He had given them the greatest religion of antiquity, and they in turn reduced it to lip-service. So Christ pointed out, as James did and as Moses had, that the greatest threat to revealed religion is formalism.

Formalism substitutes ritual acts, so easy to do, in place of purity of heart, so very, very difficult to get. Formalism substitutes man-made laws, like abortion and divorce, man's whims and wishes, for God's laws. Formalism substitutes lip-service, the talk that is cheap, for the worship of the heart that costs the denial of self.

Formalism cares about externals, but doesn't worry a bit about the internal. Formalism is concerned about what people think, not what God thinks. Formalism asks, "Does it look all right?" Not "Is it right?" Formalism never gets to the heart of the problem, because it never gets to the heart.

That is why Moses asked Israel to listen and why James added action to listening and Christ zeroed in on the soul of all action — the heart. It is precisely there — in the heart — that Vatican II has asked that the renewal of the Church begin. For "wicked designs come from the deep recesses of the heart."

might wear a peace symbol, and in what he feels it stands for. A sign or symbol separated from any personal interpretation is devoid of all meaning. Most people I have come in contact with believe it is an international symbol of their personal stance in favor of peace and unity in the face of domestic and international imperialism which seems so blatant in the world today.

We will have judged ourselves if we insist on discovering some evil in what a person honestly feels is good and right. I'm not at all surprised that the American Legion and the John Birch Society can find a "peace" symbol as some sort of Communist plot.

A Time To Listen

Editor:

Professing to be a little bit "on the right side" of center myself, I usually agree with Father Cuddy's views — and always respect them. But this time, it is only respect.

His arguments for reading and listening at the same time are surely specious. Of course, we should use as many senses as possible in acquiring knowledge (audio-visual aids). Of course medical students have to use their eyes and ears. Of course, God wants us to use all our powers to understand His Word. But all at once?

To say that listening only (without reading at the same time) is presuming "that the Spirit will blow God's message through the soul" is itself a presumption. Is the power of the Spirit so limited that He cannot bring His message into the soul through just one sense at a time?

I agree that "to listen and to read is better" than just to listen — but not necessarily at the same time. If that is true, then we should distribute printed copies of our homilies so the people can read what the priest is saying while he says it. The medical school should present its students with every professor's lecture in print, so they can see each word while he says it. And Philip should have caught up with the eunuch a little sooner — so he could have read from his scroll and listened to Philip reading from his at the same time.

I believe that it is the intent of our current Liturgy for every man to read when he is supposed to read, to respond when he should respond, to be silent when that is the thing to do and to listen when he is being spoken to — or read to. I may be wrong, and that is why I respect Father Cuddy's opinion.

I also feel that it is impolite for the auditor to show the lector only the uncomprehending top of his head and to distract him with the flipping of pages when he has invested the time, effort and goodwill to do his part by reading to his listeners. I think the auditors should do their part and listen.

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