

Help Your Pastor

Have you stepped forward lately, and offered to help your pastor?

Pastors are admittedly a distinct breed, but they are subject to frustrations even as you. Needless to state that their work most times is no more "successful" than the cooperation they receive from their parishioners.

Note, for example, the following lament which appeared in one of the bulletins from parishes of the diocese which are received at the Courier-Journal office:

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION—From the 400 booklets on 'CCD' and You' we recently distributed, we received back just nine replies. Of these, five offered to be helpers in one way or another, and four offered to be teachers. This is hardly an overwhelmingly response.

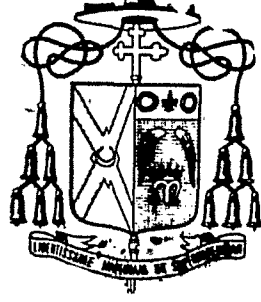
"The majority of those who offered to help are not parents with children in the religious program. Where are our parents? Parents are natural teachers. They do not need a Ph.D. degree to teach religion. Some technical training will be provided both in methods and in doctrine before and during the school year. Please, DON'T SIT BACK AND WAIT, DOING NOTHING! Please, GIVE US A CALL."

An isolated case? Hardly. Any pastor in the diocese would be gratified at your offer of help not only in the CCD program but in other parish activities. So we repeat: Don't sit back; get involved. You may be the chief beneficiary.

Double Standard

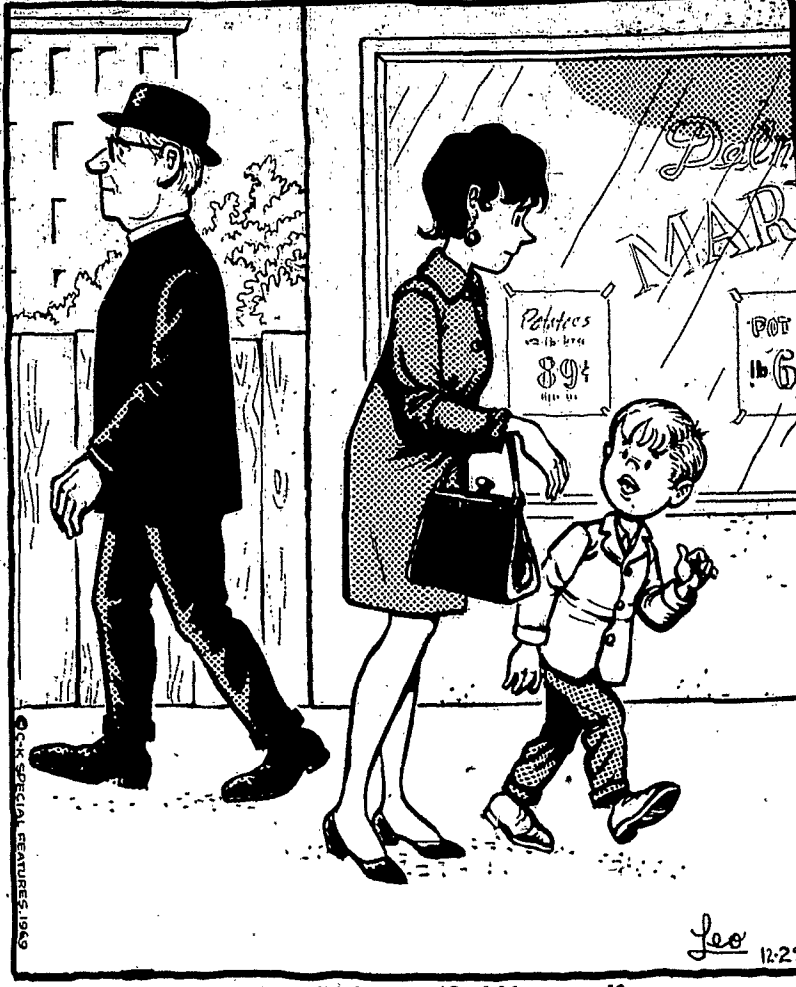
Movie-house managers facing constant public criticism over the films they schedule (as well they should) must think it a little ironic that the Monroe County Fair annually sponsors a couple of strip shows. Even if only those 18 and under are admitted inside the tent anyone can hear the barker's pitch. And children under 12 are admitted free.

Bishop Hogan's Appointments For September



- 2—Board of Consultors, 11 a.m.
- 7—WHEC—Jerry Lewis Muscular Dystrophy Telethon, 9 a.m.
- 8—Personnel Board Meeting, 10 a.m.
- 10—St. Bernard's Seminary Board Meeting, 11 a.m.
- 11—Mass of the Holy Spirit, Aquinas Institute Faculty and Students at Holy Rosary Church, 8:30 a.m.
- 12—Ordination to the Priesthood, Rev. Louis Fiorelli, St. Mary Church, Waterloo, 10 a.m.
- 13—Mass of Dedication, Holy Cross Church, Freeville, 11 a.m.
- 13—CFM Mass and Homily, Notre Dame Retreat House, 5 p.m.
- 15—Lawyer's Red Mass, St. Joseph Church, Rochester, 9 a.m.
- 16—Administrative Council Meeting, 2 p.m.
- 17—Mass of the Holy Spirit, Becket Hall, 5 p.m.
- 20—Catholic Central Union (Verein) of America, Mass, St. Joseph Church, Rochester, 11 a.m.
- 20—Dinner and Talk, Sheraton, 1 p.m.
- 20—Mercy Motherhouse—Mass and Homily to honor Mother M. Eride, 3 p.m.
- 22-23—Notre Dame Retreat House—Clergy Conference.
- 24—New York State Conference of Bishops—New York City.
- 25—Columbus Civic Center—Board Meeting, 11:30 a.m.
- 26—Carmelite Monastery—Mass and Homily in honor of St. Teresa of Avila, 9:30 a.m.
- 26—Sisters' Council (St. Joseph Business School), Rochester, 2 p.m.
- 27—Ecumenical Service, Sage Chapel, Cornell University, 11 a.m.; Adult Confirmation, St. Francis De Sales, Geneva, 3 p.m.
- 29—St. Ann's Home—Convent Chapel—Mass and Homily, 5:15 p.m.

CHURCH HUMOR



"Why did he say 'God bless you'? I didn't sneeze."

The Word for Sunday

Be Strong In Faith

By Father Albert Shamon



Sunday's readings answer one question: "What is Faith?" In the Gospel Christ illustrates what faith is by a parable-miracle. Some people brought Him a deaf-mute who had a speech impediment. Christ put His finger into the man's ear and, spitting, touched his tongue and said "Ephphatha!" (that is, "Be opened"). At once the man's ears were opened and he began to speak plainly.

The Church uses these gestures and words of Christ in baptism. For baptism is the sacrament of faith. "Believe and be baptized," said Christ. But an infant cannot make the act of faith. As others brought the deaf-mute to Christ, so parents and godparents make the act of faith for the infant. As at birth a child gets a mind and heart, so at rebirth at baptism, it gets the virtues of faith and charity — the powers to know and love God. Later, as the child's mind is developed by education, so the powers of faith and charity given at baptism are developed by acts of faith and charity.

The baptismal ceremony employs the gestures Christ used to cure the deaf-mute. These gestures dramatize that the power of faith given at baptism is an opening of the ears of the soul, the intellect, to God's word. By reason of this power, God's word will speak differently to him later in life, as music evokes different responses from a gifted musician and an untrained listener. Concomitantly, his tongue, too, is loosened so that he can pray to God, praise Him, and proclaim His word.

So faith first and foremost is a gift of God, opening the understanding, the ears of the soul, and loosening the tongue in prayer. However, the gift is not given to be buried. As the mind must develop, so faith must grow. Passively it grows by trust. Again bold Isaiah in the first reading emphasizes what this trust is. Israel is in captivity, a thousand miles from home — house and homeland have been destroyed, as have all the tribes save Juda. Yet Isaiah says to Israel, "Be strong, fear not!" Fear not your enemies, fear not your adversities, fear not your sins that dull the understanding and stop the praises of the mouth. Rather, be strong in faith. Be strong in faith in Him who can clear deaf

ears and make dumb tongues sing. For the God of Jacob keeps faith forever. So trust Him. Israel believed and a remnant was saved from Babylon.

Faith expresses itself not only passively in trust but actively in charity. And so St. James in the second reading warns, "Your faith must not allow favoritism." Faith puts value on persons, not on things. Yet favoritism, or snobbery, puts things before people. St. James talked especially of kowtowing to the rich, the well-advantaged.

However, there is more than one way to be a snob. It is not a question of whether or not we are snobs, but rather what kind of snobs we are. We can be snobs about education — "He comes from one of those small colleges." About family background — "You should see her family." About intellect — "He's a dud, not too much on the ball." About personality — "What a bore!" About sin — "How could she ever do such a thing?" One can be a snob all alone or else banded together in a group. Placard-carrying protesters are snobs saying, "I'm better than you." A snob is a snob when he is alone or in a group. Eggs are eggs whether you take them one by one or by the dozen.

How different was our Lord. He was available to everybody. To rich men like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea. To sinners like the Samaritan Woman and Zaccheus. He commended the poor widow with two mites. And, He healed the servant of the hated Roman. Is our faith strong enough to move us to God despite everything and to everyone despite ourselves?

Letters

Peace Symbol Connotes Evil

Editor:

In reference to the Peace Symbol (Courier-Journal Aug. 12): Some churches have this symbol exposed.

This peace symbol is similar to the abolishment of capital punishment and the liberalized abortion law. All serve no purpose, all encourage evil, all try to free the guilty and all assume freedom, resulting in a Christless humanism.

If this peace symbol had any representation of "the Pillar and Mainstay of Truth" God's works would flourish in justice and peace and not diminish in dissent and destruction.

Those who wear this peace symbol should be aware that many around them have penetrated their exclusive insularity. A suggestion—read St. Paul's two letters to Timothy.

What does this symbol signify to me? Pot, protest, pollution, permissiveness, premarital sex, polygamy, peaceniks, pornography, poison and Pelagianism, which are all fountain-heads of evil caused by pride.

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Peace Symbol A 'Christ' Sign

Editor:

As for your inquiry on the "peace symbol" (Courier-Journal, Aug. 12, 1970), I was shocked. In a world so torn by hatred and wars between Christians themselves as well as pagans, how can anyone condemn a symbol that has a universal acceptance of peace?

The American Legion has reason to denounce the symbol. After all their very existence is dependent on Americans being engaged in active combat. This is per their by-laws and constitution.

Just think if we lived in peace for 50 years it would no longer exist.

Furthermore, so what if the symbol looks like an inverted crucifix? Wasn't St. Peter crucified in this manner?

Take a real broad look at the symbol and you can see the likeness with Christ's cross. So the peace sign also is a "Christ" sign.

Why condemn it if it represents "nuclear disarmament?" Isn't our government and many other countries trying to attain just that?

Dedicated to peace through Christ.

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Apalachin

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