

A Dire Threat

Even the World Series seems unable to work its annual Fall magic and make us at least half-forget the distress facing the world these tumultuous days.

It would be trite and a trifle insolent to suggest that the Series should make secondary the problems of poverty, racism and war. But it may be mind-saving if we could at least save a few peripheral thoughts for the deriding-do of such as Johnny Bench, Frank Robinson et al.

And it would have been soothing if for a couple of days we could have let our minds toy with the argument of whether Bernie Carbo was really out, or to talk lightly of the prodigious hitting of Boog Powell or the fielding artistry of Brooks Robinson.

Instead we in Rochester are directly confronted with the new maniacal fad of fringe groups—bombing public buildings; although our bombings included a private residence, carrying an even more dire threat, unless it was an error on the part of the bombers.

Whether the bombings are of an anti-draft nature or to call attention to the inequities of society, or merely to arouse a people to action when they might be otherwise sitting down to baseball on television is unclear.

It is for sure, however, that no society can countenance such wanton destruction. It also is evident that loudmouths of the right and left better halt hot-headed oratory and start some common-sense dialogue on what we have to do to save our country.

—Carmen Viglucci

Jails in Fun City

Prisoners in New York City's jails seem to have chosen an inappropriate time for rioting to seek public sympathy. While the nation is growing more uneasy about crime and insecurity, felons ought not to be heating up more public wrath.

But the 3,000 prison rioters were not trying to escape nor overturn the law. Rather they were attempting to say to society: "The bail system is unjust for the poor and justice is too slow here for everyone."

There was remarkable concern generated in the New York area for the rioting prisoners. It was a bad-conscience twinge, an admission that our civilized system of justice in large cities is so understaffed, so badly managed, so insensitive to human rights that it breeds in prisoners a deeper contempt for the community which holds them. One of the guard-hostages, asked why he sympathized with the inmates, answered: "I have to. I am a man myself."

The great danger of prisons where accused men who have no bail money may wait three to six months in detention before their trial begins, and more months before sentencing, is the loss of a sense of manhood. Social rejection turns into self-rejection.

In criticizing the court system which seems unable to clear its clogged criminal-court calendar, Mayor John Lindsay said that the rioting was "the result of grievances so intense that desperate men were driven to violence despite the presence of overwhelming force against them".

The grievances were not merely the tedious jail-wait for trial. Prisoners and authorities revealed the inhuman overcrowding and debasing life-conditions, the injustice that prisoners awaiting trial are usually treated exactly as men serving sentences, and finally, the mixing of those accused of "victim-less" crimes in the same inhumane storage-house with hardened thugs and perpetrators of violence.

The Black Panthers in their suit against the State of Connecticut have been saying almost exactly what the Manhattan prisoners expressed by their violence: Do men accused of crime have any rights? When bail for the poor is put beyond their financial means so that they must be locked up while a trial is being prepared, the lawbreaker who has a bank account or a bond-lawyer enjoys a benefit that helps him to walk away laughing at the law. What few accused criminals are so dangerous that prohibitive bails should be the rule?

Detention-prisoners awaiting trial are men who are presumed innocent, for the time being. They argue that it's a mockery of justice to be given first the punishment, then the trial. Before the court and jury have certified guilt, they contend, the law should guarantee that a man in detention may see his lawyer, communicate with his family, send and receive mail, have adequate food, medical attention, reading matter and exercise.

—Fr. Richard Tormey

Survey Raises Some Questions

Editor:

After careful reading of the results of your survey on abortion, and particularly the editorial (Courier-Journal Sept. 30) there are two hard questions that come to mind that I believe the Courier and the whole Catholic community must ask themselves before they take the very decisive step of voting on Nov. 3:

1—What kind of legislation do we really want? What does a "good law" on abortion call for? If we elect candidates to reform or repeal the present law what law will these men enact?

We have to ask ourselves: if not "24 weeks" at what point in the duration of a pregnancy may an abortion be performed? And for precisely what reasons? Or whose permission should be required—parents? the unwed father? a husband even if it is not his child? or perhaps a neutral party such as a civil judge?

I do not think that we as a Catholic bloc can simply vote to repeal law without offering some alternative good legislation.

Surely our Catholic community with its many able lawyers, physicians, social workers, etc., should be able to offer some more positive and hopeful words than No, Repeal, and Don't.

2—And supposing that we do elect a "repeal" Legislature, and they do, in fact, enact stringent and prohibitive abortion legislation, will the Catholic community then, with the same ardor and unity, face the plight of the woman with the unwanted pregnancy and work for the social change necessary for her welfare?

Will we fight in the Congress for the legislation to reform the welfare program and guarantee the minimum family income?

Will we demand high quality sex education in the public and parochial elementary schools?

Will we look again at our public attitude in regard to contraception?

Will we all, especially parents, deal with the unwed mother with compassion and concern?

Father Daniel Tormey
Chaplain, General Hospital
Rochester

Courier Survey Commended

Editor:

I wish to commend the Courier-Journal (Sept. 30, 1970) for the survey you took of all the candidates running for political office in November, on the abortion bill. The candidates had the opportunity of expressing their feelings and what they would do if elected.

Mrs. James McDonald
292 Merchants Rd.
Rochester.

Vote Urged For Warder

Editor:

We are registered Democrats and we class ourselves as liberals — FDR-Truman type. Nevertheless we intend to vote for Fred Warder for State Assemblyman from the 128th District.

In our opinion, Mr. Warder is a sincere, competent and responsive - to - his - constituents legislator.

Aside from that, readers of the C-J in the 128th District should remember that Mr. Warder had the courage and conviction to withstand the pressures of his own party and vote against the abortion reform bill.

We hope that Mr. Warder's fine record in the State Legislature will be rewarded by a record vote returning him to office.

Adolphe and Loe
Audiffret
Naples

Father Cuddy Column Defended

Editor:

I read Father Cuddy's column on the divine intercession of St. Anthony in returning lost valuables also, although I came up with an entirely different interpretation than the one mentioned in the Courier-Journal (Oct. 7).

I believe what Father Cuddy was trying to say was, "Oh, ye of little faith! How simply your trials and tribulations could be resolved if only you would humble yourselves to see that man is not all-powerful and all-knowing."

I would say a more appropriate title for "Your God is too small" might be "your human being is too small" to solve such enormous problems confronting our world today, and without a plea for divine intercession, (a practice outmoded in the 'God-less Sixties'), with our clergy as the leaders, there is little hope.

Mrs. Nina McPhilly
Foster Road
Corning

The Word for Sunday

Life is Giving,
Not Getting

By Father Albert Shamon



Of Christ, the author of Hebrews writes: "He was tempted in every way that we are, yet never sinned" (Second Reading). The fact He did not sin is no proof He was not tempted as severely as we are. His temptations were far greater than ours. In the First Reading, Second-Isaia gives us a glimpse of only some of His physical sufferings. The entire chapter (Isaia 53) is a graphic picture of Christ's passion. Our Lord knew the prophets. When He walked into Gethsemane, His insight into His sufferings made Him sweat blood. He called them "a bath of pain" (Gospel).

Think of temptation in terms of pain. We, mere men, can take just so much pain. When pain reaches a certain point, we faint and lose consciousness; we reach a limit. Consequently, there are degrees of pain about which we know practically nothing because we collapse long before it is experienced.

The case with temptation is similar. So often we capitulate long before Satan has unleashed his full fury. It was not so with Christ. He was tempted like us but never was a man tempted like Him. He bore the full brunt of Satan's onslaught. That was why the passion was so horrendous—it was the ultimate expression of Satan's frustrated rage.

Because of Jesus' experience, we have a high priest who can have mercy on us and help us in time of need. The best one to give advice and help one on a journey is a person who has travelled the road before. The best one to help someone through an illness is one who has gone through it before. The Son of Man can sympathize and help because He went through it all before.

All the prayers in Sunday's Mass are appeals for mercy — except the one in the Gospel. There, the sons of Zebedee asked for glory. How foolish! Before glory, pain and suffering must come. "When you come into your glory, can we

be your right hand men?" they asked Christ.

In response Jesus asked, "Can you be baptized in the same bath of pain as I? Can you suffer?" Then Jesus went on to explain how different from the standards of the world are the standards of the Kingdom.

The world judges greatness by the power one wields and by the control he can exercise over others. Stalin once scoffed about Pius XII, "How many battalions does he command?" The world's test is—How great is one's army? Or upon how many can one impose his will?

The standard of Christ's Kingdom is that of service. Greatness consists, not in reducing others to one's service, but in serving others. Not—what service can I get, but what service can I give. This is sound common sense, isn't it? Does not gargantuan General Motors seek to maintain its industrial empire on service? "Service is our habit," it proclaims.

What the world needs is "service-men"—dedicated to giving. And Christ set the example. He came to serve. As the price one must pay for learning is "to scorn delights and live laborious days," as the price for freedom is sacrifice, so Christ came "to give his life in ransom for the many." And we make fruitful His redemption by our living our lives for the many — giving service, no matter the cost, because the Master did.

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