

'What Is the Size Of Your God?'

On the day of our baptism we were signed with the sign of Christ's Cross — a visible reminder that we who would share in His glory must be willing to be identified with His suffering. We were never offered a promise that our life during our pilgrimage to the Heavenly Jerusalem would be comfortable and unchallenged.

We were assured that the spectre of the suffering Lord would haunt us at every turn in the road, that He would be clothed in the garments of every style of human affliction — in the robes of the sick, the impoverished, the homeless, the imprisoned, the hungry and the thirsty. We were assured, too, that we were all members of one family—joined together in the One Body of Christ. St. Paul expressed this legacy and challenge of Christ to those who would be worthy to bear His name when he said:

**"If one of us suffers, all suffer together
If one of us is honored, all rejoice together."**

This Gospel message of our social responsibility has been the recurring theme of many papal documents referred to as the Social Encyclicals. As early as 1891, Leo XIII challenged the consciences of all men to remedy the inequities suffered by the laborer.



More recently, Pope Paul VI in a document known as the "Development of Peoples" challenged us to a renewed consciousness of the demands of the Gospel: "It is the Church's duty", he said, "to put herself at the service of all". Referring to this moment of history as critical he urged us to build a world where every man can live a fully human life, freed from servitude imposed on him by other men, a world where freedom is not an empty word and where the poor man, Lazarus, can sit at the same table with the rich man.

Nothing, then, in the Gospel message and in the Church's faithful presentation of its social content supports the attitude of all too many of us who prefer to have our worship separated from our work and our religion divorced from the presences of Christ that are beyond the altar and tabernacle. Faithful to her mission the Church will continue to offer us the haunting challenge of the single criterion of authenticity of our faith: "What is the size of your God?"

This new thrust to break the chain of the "hellish circle" of want that enslaves millions of our fellow Americans will not be a dramatic one-day burst of generosity, but rather a continuous financial and educational effort called the "Campaign for Human Development."

An annual collection will be taken up in every Catholic church in this country on the Sunday before Thanksgiving to provide a new source of funds for self-help projects by the poor.

The bishops expressed their anxiety to listen to and to work with the poor in developing these programs which give them a sense of their own personal dignity and responsibility and avoid the traditional domination and condescending attitude of the donor. One of every four dollars collected will remain within each diocese to effect constructive social change on the local scene.

Our diocesan Office of Human Concern will herewith be known as the Office of Human Development and will be responsible for the effective administration of the total program in every area of the diocese.

A second and very important goal of the Campaign is educational. This program is directed to all of us who may be called the "spiritually poor" — whose minds are starved for want of enlightenment about the harsh reality of the degrading poverty that exists in America and whose hearts are impoverished for want of compassion and sensitivity to the needs of our brothers.

In this season of Thanksgiving as we reflect upon God's unbounded generosity to us, may we open our minds and hearts to Christ Who has assured us that He is among us in His poor. Our stewardship of His gifts makes us the profitable servant only when we realize that our own dignity and destiny are inseparable from the dignity and destiny of all men.

In the sure hope of your generous response to God's poor and in their name, I am

Joseph L. Hogan

Courier-Journal

Letters to the Editor

Low-Income Housing Needed

Editor:

In your editorial, "An Intrinsic Evil" (Courier-Journal, Oct. 21, 1970), you say that collective lack of compassion can be rectified if each and every Catholic starts pushing for various moral perspectives including low income housing. You are so right!

Most suburban Catholics are opposed to low-income projects in their home communities for a variety of selfish reasons. Their pastors either don't see the morality involved or they are silent because it's prudent. Catholic politicians know that

proposing low-income housing is inviting defeat at the next election.

Unless you spell out the ethical and moral principles the Catholic teaching may not be publicized locally.

Please permit me to light a candle. The educational committee of the Northwest Housing Task Force will be happy to appear before any group or audience to explain the critical need of low-income housing in Monroe County and explore conceptions and misconceptions about poverty, integration, prejudice and racism.

Requests may be addressed to me.

Thomas G. Shea
215 Flower City Park
Rochester 14615

Who Misguided 'Coalition'

Editor:

Reflecting on "The Wrong Way" editorial (Courier-Journal, Oct. 11, 1970), it seems to me that this community might inquire who are the hidden white instigators behind the blacks who intruded at St. Thomas More Church two weeks ago.

The editorial implied that the unpleasant demonstration at Mass generated ill will toward the cause of the black Sunday Coalition because those who planned the gesture had no regard for the sensitivities of the congregation.

Why not say right out that it looked like a deliberate effort to embarrass the Diocese rather than the parish, for St. Thomas More's prosperity has been generously shared with inner-city causes for several years.

The demonstrators were allegedly troubled by the treatment they received; they weren't welcomed, people walk-out angrily, several parishioners shouted their displeasure at the sanctuary conduct. But who set them up to this caper and let them be hurt? I doubt that the Coalition itself meant to offend this parish: as non-Catholics they perhaps had no anticipation of what shock they would cause.

There were Catholic whites from at least two organizations present to cue the demonstrators and make them a front for their own frustration with the Church. The demonstrators and their goals should not be criticized as much as the restless militants who are using them.

Bernard Dolan
East Avenue
Rochester

Statement Clarified

Editor:

This letter is to clarify a statement in the Courier-Journal report, 11/4/70, of proceedings at the October 28, 1970 Educational Forum sponsored by RAEL.

During my presentation, I stated that some parents sent children to parochial school for questionable reasons e.g. Discipline, fear, or prejudice. In no way, was there any inference to the elementary parochial school using techniques of fear and prejudice in its teaching. Further, I indicated, that we were constrained from reaching all of the people of God, children and adult, due to the present disposition of our resources.

William T. Cannon
Center Drive
Rochester

The Word for Sunday

His Hour Of Glory

By Father Albert Shamon



Sunday is the feast of Christ the King. It might seem strange that the Gospel for this Sunday is taken from Christ's passion and not from His triumphal march into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

The basic reason is that Christ's kingdom is not of this world. Were it, He could have taken Jerusalem with the snap of His fingers. For at the time of the Passover, Pilate had only a few hundred troops in the Holy City. What would these have been able to do had Jesus ignited the smoldering fanatical Jewish hatred of Rome by declaring a political Messiahship? Instead, Jesus made it neon clear: "My kingdom is not of this world." It was not to be based on arms, force, or violence. His kingdom was to be a spiritual one, a reign of God over the hearts of men. His conquest, a conquest of love. "My child, give me your heart."

In the beginning of our Lord's public life, Satan took Him to a high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world. "All these will I give you," he lied, "if falling down you will adore me."

In anger, as on the day He drove out moneychangers from the Temple, Jesus banished the demon with a fierce "Begone, Satan." It was not by compromise that Jesus was going to get His kingdom, but by love—a love that would not flinch in the face of death, even death on a cross. Thus St. John's Gospel sees Christ's passion as His hour, the hour of glory.

Before Pilate Christ is King. His majesty shines through His trial. Pilate is bewildered, floundering — not Jesus, Pilate is the defendant — not Jesus. Pilate acts like a governor — Jesus like a king. So Jesus talks to Pilate about truth. For His kingdom is one of love and no one can love what he does not know. But to love aright, one must know the truth. So Christ talks of truth. That was why St. John called Him "a faithful witness" (Second Reading). There is no in-between with truth. Either you accept it or reject it. Pilate looked for half-measures. There can be no compromise with Christ. Either one is for Him or against Him. To be against Christ is to be under Satan. And Satan is no easy taskmaster.

We might say Satan reigned till Christ. How frightful has been His rule! The Daniel passage in the First Reading is

part of a vision Daniel had of the kingdoms of the ancient world, till the coming of Christ. The fact that they are likened to predatory beasts indicates how savage, bestial, inhumane they were. The winged lion is Babylon. The savage bear is Persia. The winged leopard is Greece. And the indescribable beast with iron teeth is Rome (Dan. 7:1-14). Then "I saw one come like a Son of Man." And what was the meaning of his coming? It signified that the day of these bestial, savage, and inhuman empires would end. They would be given to another, not a beast, but a human being, one whose rule would be humane.

Alexander the Great claimed to be divine; the Emperors of Rome apotheosized themselves. But these were only men, and worse than men — beasts! The Son of Man, however, though man, is more: he is really divine, for He comes not from earth, but from heaven. "I saw one like a Son of Man, coming on the clouds of heaven." To Him, God the Father, "the Ancient One," gave dominion, glory, and universal kingship; nations and peoples of every language; that is, a universal kingdom. And a kingdom that would know no end—"his kingship shall not be destroyed."

He who loves us started this kingdom by freeing us by His blood. We pray "thy kingdom come." How? As it began: by our sacrifices and never by compromise with evil. One day Christ will come to take everlasting possession of his kingdom. In that hope lies the strength and comfort needed for sacrifice.

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