

Congratulations!

Diocesan generosity for the poor of this area and the nation deserves more congratulation than a straight news-notice that \$130,000 was given by the laity in a one-collection appeal some two months ago. Last week's listing of the separate parish contributions to the Human Development Fund proved the concern of even the smallest communities to help "break the hellish circle of poverty." A "Well Done" to all who gave.

Hoping to fund the poor of this diocese to help themselves, five regional task forces of well-informed laity, religious and priests are presently sifting proposals for distributing right here the \$32,000 which will remain in the diocese as seed money for new projects in helping the underprivileged. Representatives of the poor will share the planning.

Auxiliary Bishop Michael Dempsey of Chicago, national director of the campaign, summed up the spirit which must continue to guide these long-range efforts:—"Our goal must not be just the raising of money but the changing of hearts. . . . Our redemption as a nation lies in looking at the poor and seeing them; in listening to the poor and hearing them."

Built-in Advantages

Rochester is torn this week with controversy over the Board of Education's decision to conduct separate junior and senior high schools in September. The shuffling of 15,000 students into new groups, disrupting friendships, severing neighborhood ties, requiring long bus rides for many and obliterating sentimental traditions, is unpleasant news to students and parents.

The educational benefits promised from this new structuring will not quickly cool the emotions of the wounded. But they should be better publicized by school authorities and then studied and evaluated reasonably. All affected by the reorganization plan should honestly ask: Is better education worth the temporary hardships?

The separation of 7th and 8th graders from older students, allowing both groups to have the atmosphere, discipline and programs most appropriate to their age, seems highly desirable. It offers effective transition years from elementary levels to a senior world, with protection for the social, emotional and intellectual needs of those formative years.

The value of racial integration accomplished incidentally by the new mix of neighborhood groups who never knew each other before is needed in our community. The process of ending the consciousness of an "all-white society" is an education must in every city.

Another advantage to be desired in education is the efficient gathering of the best teachers and the best materials where they can be most effective. Teacher assignments where the complex of students best suits their specialties and ambitions, will benefit their students and improve teacher morale. —Father Richard Tormey

Horse Traders

Though both private school aid and abortion are of vital interest to Catholics the two issues cannot be equated.

So the next time you hear a state legislator or U.S. congressman say that he favors liberalized abortion but that he also is in favor of aid to private schools, realize he is practicing the old political art of horse-trading.

These issues are not for barter; they are separate entities and must be treated as such.

Things may be further complicated now with the proposed referendum on the Blaine Amendment drawing more adherents than a sticky lollipop attracts ants on a hot day. Gov. Rockefeller favors this course as do many legislators. To be blunt, part of the reason is that it is expedient to get this hot political potato out of their hands.

State Catholic leaders now feel that the momentum on school aid has shifted to the courts. The Textbook Law was declared constitutional but even more liberal laws, such as the Mandated Services Act, now involved in litigation may weaken Blaine even more.

The Supreme Court has scheduled a hearing on the Pennsylvania school aid law for the week of Feb. 22. Although it may be weeks after that before it makes a decision, the ruling will be a major milestone in the overall issue.

If the ruling is favorable for aid, then Blaine should be impotent. If the high court rules against aid, then the Blaine Amendment will be of vital importance again.

But to be remembered is that even if Blaine is stricken from the books it is no guarantee that aid will be forthcoming. The U.S. First Amendment will provide the testing grounds then.

So if you hear a legislator taking undue credit for voting to send Blaine to referendum, keep all these things in mind. —Carmen J. Viglucci

Courier-Journal

Letters to the Editor

Abortion Crime, Nurses Declare

Editor:

On Dec. 2, the Catholic bishops of New York addressed themselves to their faithful people to express condemnation of abortion.

As Catholics we recognize their role to announce the Gospel of Christ to all men. We express publicly with them that "abortion is an unspeakable crime." We adhere to God's law: "Thou shalt not kill," and are not swayed by the so-called liberty to legally slay unborn life.

In taking the Florence Nightingale Pledge, we commit ourselves to the protection of life — our very nursing education has instilled this concept to protect and sustain life. As women we are, physically and psychologically, prepared to give life, Not destroy it.

Marilyn K. Tehan, President
Auburn Council of
Catholic Nurses

Editor's Note: This letter included 128 other signatures.

New Postal Law Fights Smut

Editor:

We would like to encourage your readers to make use of a new postal law designed to curb mail-order houses dealing in smut.

The law, effective Feb. 1, permits any resident in the United States to file a simple application at any U.S. post office, thereby safeguarding himself and his family from receiving unwanted smut in the mail.

All firms selling sexually-oriented materials through the mails will be obliged to purchase from the U.S. Postal Service lists of persons who do not wish to receive such materials and to remove these persons' names from the firms' mailing lists. Failure to comply with the law carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison and \$5,000 in fines for the first offense and the maximum punishment doubles for any subsequent offense.

The U.S. Postal Service expects at least a million people

to register for the opportunity to be shielded from unsolicited sex advertising. A parent may register not only himself but also his children up to 19 years of age. On reaching 19, children must file their own applications. Registrations remain valid for five years, after which new forms must be filed.

If a person has been on the postal service master list for 30 days or more and receives unsolicited sexually oriented ads in the mail, he should note on the envelope the date he received the material, sign his name to the notation and take the material with the envelope to any post office for further official action against the smut peddler.

William H. Waldorf,
Grand Knight
Our Lady of the Genesee
Council
Knights of Columbus

Sees 'Real' Challenge

Editor:

As with the "sister of a teacher-sister" (Courier-Journal 1/20/71) I too attended some of the regular meetings of the Education Task Force and listened to many well intentioned Catholic parents, who apparently want to retain "maximum local control".

Thus, listening to these parents, the Task Force says "consolidate."

Does anyone really believe that parish schools will consolidate?

Does anyone really think many schools can survive financially beyond this year?

Isn't it time that Catholic parents "faced the facts" and became Christians?

Shouldn't we stop worrying about a "select few" and start thinking about the better development of thousands of others, who are relegated to the role of "2nd class"?

Couldn't our money and efforts be better used in helping to educate those less fortunate than we?

The real challenge to the modern Christian is not whether we continue our parish schools, but can we accept change and realize that there may be other things that need our attention more.

Conrad Scheg
Pittsford

Father Logan Article Lauded

Editor:

Father Patrick Logan has presented the case against U.S. involvement in Vietnam most effectively.

I am making copies of his article in the Courier-Journal (2-2-71). A copy will be sent to President Nixon, Messrs. Laird and Rogers also will receive copies.

John J. Cannon
29 William St.
Mumfords

(Editor's Note: The writer refers to one segment of a four-part series by Father Logan.)

The Word for Sunday

The Answer Upside Down

By Father Albert Shamon



Next Sunday is the Sunday of the beatitudes. Beatitude means blessedness; blessedness is happiness. The first Reading gives the beatitudes of the Old Testament; the Gospel, those of the New.

The Old Testament beatitude states who is blessed — "the man who trusts in the Lord, whose hope is the Lord." Then by a powerful contrast, Jeremiah describes what his blessedness is. The basic image he uses is based on the journey of Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land. The man who trusts in man is cursed, stunted, barren, prickly like the struggling shrubbery of the Sinai desert. But he who trusts in the Lord is "like a tree planted beside the waters" — the always flowing Jordan. The tree, therefore, does not depend on a chance shower, but upon a perennial supply. The heat comes but does not injure it; it still bears fruit. So the man who trusts, whose roots are in God, perseveres in the heat of adversity, persecution, suffering; even in the drought of desolation and aridity, he bears fruit worthy of a child of God.

The Gospel answers the question of who is most likely to trust in God and hope in Him. The poor or the rich? The hungry or the full? The weepers or the gay? The hated or the honored? The world has its answer and Christ has His. When Cornwallis surrendered at Yorktown, the British marched to surrender to the tune of "The World Turn'd Upside Down." Christ's answer was the very opposite of the obvious, the expected answer. His was the world's answer turned upside down.

The world concentrates on circumstances — riches and honors; Christ on character. The world extols position; Christ disposition. The world is blinded by show and outward appearance; Christ puts His finger on the vital internal attitude, the motive. The world concerns itself with the accidents; Christ with the essentials. The world blesses what a man has, Christ what a man is! Worldly happiness is transient, for it has "hap" in it — is based on chance and depends

on circumstances. The happiness of the beatitudes is blessed, for they bring present bliss and promise eternal.

What the beatitudes are really telling us is that we deceive ourselves by thinking there are shortcuts to the real good — there is no easy way out! Furthermore, the beatitudes fulminate the thunderous truth that generally the immediate is not the real good and the real good is not the immediate.

We all are faced with a fundamental choice in life. It is this, will we take the easy way out? Will we take the broad way that yields immediate profit and pleasure? Or will we take the narrow, high way that promises immediate toil and sometimes suffering? Will we pursue the moment's mirth and forfeit eternity? For one grape, destroy the vine? Will we take our way or Christ's way? The beatitudes say My way is not your way.

We can set our hearts on the things the world values. We can bend all our energies to obtain them. And we shall get them. But that will be all we shall get. "You have received your reward." On the contrary, we may set our heart and strive with all our energy to be loyal and true to God. And we'll run into all kinds of trouble. "The godly will suffer persecution." It may well be the way of the cross. But this way does not end in the gloom of the tomb, but in the glory of the resurrection. That is why the man is blessed who trusts in the Lord.

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