

LETTERS

Letters to the editor should be addressed to the editor, Courier-Journal, 35 Sola St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604. They should be no longer than 1 1/2 pages, typed double-spaced. Names and addresses should be included but may be omitted upon request. The paper reserves the right to edit all letters.

Abortion Wrong, So Is War

Editor:

This letter is in response to the "Recall to Greatness" supplement appearing in the Courier-Journal 4-21-71 and letters in that issue from Cardinal Cooke and Bishop Hogan.

The theme, "Reverence for Human Life," enunciated in Bishop Hogan's letter is a most appropriate one for us to reflect on and particularly at this time. It is a truly Christian cry to men of good faith whatever their creed.

Springing directly from such concern is an organization, "Birthright," described in Cardinal Cooke's letter. Its goal deserves repeating here, "the sole purpose for the existence of Birthright is to give practical loving help to any worried pregnant women or girls regardless of color or creed." This approach exemplifies the compassion with which we as a society should attempt to resolve the problems that legal, easily managed abortion, poses.

I am deeply troubled, however, that the church here, as

elsewhere, fails to consistently proscribe killing. Reverence for human life must apply not only to the unborn child but equally to the already born—be they children, adults or aged.

Is it a less hideous thing to kill in Vietnam than in a hospital in the United States? How can the Church fail to speak in strong and unmistakable language against the killing of civilians in Vietnam? This awful failure to stand against killing innocent human beings wherever and whenever found, speaks a tragic consequence. To the extent that we do not live so as to show reverence for human life for all men but rather by our action show a serious and continuing disregard for innocent human lives lost in connection with our military activity in Vietnam—then to that extent, our witness against abortion on demand is weakened.

God is not mocked nor is the truth. If we, a part of his people, fail to reverence human life with respect to another part of his people then we will fail in our efforts to oppose the evil of abortion among our own people.

A. E. Guidarelli, O.D.
Newark

Another View On Celibacy

Editor:

Msgr. Cirrincione's public letter on the issue of obligatory clerical celibacy (Courier-Journal, 4/21) was a welcome contrast to Father Andrew Greeley's column on the same subject. Monsignor is to be congratulated for advancing his arguments forcefully yet without impugning the motives of his opponents. I have given up hope that Father Greeley will ever do the same on any subject, but I was disappointed that Father Torrey's editorial could not extend to the proponents of optional celibacy the same presumption of sincerity that he was at pains to attribute to its opponents.

Both Msgr. Cirrincione and Father Greeley laid great stress on the claim that only a celibate clergy could have the total dedication required by the Church today. This argument is apparently based upon the presumption that a married man would be distracted from the demands of priestly work by the demands of his family. Admittedly there could be problems here, but there is no evidence to show that they would be any greater than those faced by many doctors and other professional men. Nor is it likely that the problems introduced by a married clergy would be any worse than the personality problems among the clergy which the bishops' psychological study attributed to their life style.

The claim that a married clergy would be an insupportable financial burden is valid only if we think exclusively in terms of our resent parochial clergy. A married clergy could be analogous to the religious clergy who support themselves by teaching and other activities while they assist in the parishes on weekends.

There are indeed many questions raised by the proposal of optional celibacy but, as your editorial stated, we can never be sure of the answers until we try it.

John J. Dealy
Winton Road N.
Rochester

No Contribution For Chest

Editor:

I have, for many years, supported the Community Chest campaign; I must, now in conscience, refuse to do so again, so long as Planned Parenthood-World Population, an organization that promotes abortion, receives a share of the Chest funds.

I know that the directors of the Chest would have us believe that we many designate to which charity our contributions will go, but I also know that if no one designated Planned Parenthood-World Population, that organization would still receive its share of the Chest receipts.

I may not be able to control how my tax money is used, but I certainly can control my personal donations. In this respect, I shall make my usual donation directly to my favorite charity, rather than to the Community Chest.

George A. Goodwin
Laredo Drive
Rochester

Wednesday, May 5, 1971

Beyond the Stained Glass



"BANKS DO IT! WHAT'S WRONG WITH GIVING A SET OF SILVERWARE, A POP-UP TOASTER OR AN ELECTRIC FRY PAN FOR JOINING THE CHURCH?"

Courier Q & A

Q. Many acts that used to be called immoral are done quite casually today by people who say all they have to do to be "decent" is to be true to the voice of their own conscience. Doesn't this lead to delusions: how can one be sure he is hearing conscience and not just his own selfishness?—E.G.M.

A. A man's conscience is more than just a voice telling him what is good and evil. It is also like a yardstick measuring his performance as being right or wrong in particular areas of morality. Like a yardstick, conscience must be straight, firm and marked off in accurate measures if it is to serve him honestly. A person, presumed to be sincere in wanting to do what God wants, has a right to follow his conscience—even when it is in honest error—until clear evidence is presented that he is acting in bad faith, is misinformed on law or authority, is harmful to another's rights and dignity. It is the work of the Church and society, as custodians of morality and public order, or the duty of one's friends, to help a person see that his conscience is not measuring action accurately.

Questions should be sent to Courier-Journal Q & A, 35 Sola St., Rochester 14604.

FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word for Sunday



During Eastertide, the Second Reading of the Sunday Masses is culled from the Book of Revelation—the book that tells the things that can be. And John wrote: "The sea was no longer" (R. II).

The sea, with its accompanying lakes and rivers, is the great divider. When St. John wrote the book of Revelation, he was in exile on the isle of Patmos. A tradition pictures the aged apostle going day after day to a cliff on the ocean rock and looking longingly over the restless Aegean Sea to the shores of Asia Minor. How he yearned to be helping the infant Church there—it so needed his faithful arm and loving heart—but the cruel sea prevented him. When he thought of a new heaven, therefore, there would be no sea in it—nothing to separate, nothing to divide, nothing to prevent!

And yet before Christianity, the seas and the trackless oceans were a blessing precisely because they kept nations apart. In this way the maddening passions of men were rendered comparatively harmless or circumscribed within the narrowest limits. The seas prevented wars of self-destruction.

But more—because the seas divided one nation from another, each nation was given the chance to develop its national character. Human nature, common to all men, was able to unfold its rich and colorful potential under the impact of different circumstances and experiences. Thus mankind blossomed into garden plots of peoples different in color, in personality, in national traits, in mental genius. Each nation alone was like a flower, beautiful in itself. But if all nations were brought together, what a bouquet that would be!

The theme song of the Cur-sillo Movement is De Colores—the Spanish for "Of Colors."

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As white light shot through a prism breaks up into the seven colors of the rainbow, so God by the seven seas divided up one mankind. Being thus divided, the one white light of human nature developed, as we have said, into the rich variety of colorful nations and nationalities by force of various circumstances and climate.

And God kept the nations apart until Christianity—the means to unite them—had secured itself in the West. So the Spirit sent Paul and Barnabas to open "the door of faith to the Gentiles" (RI). And they preached love—the bond of unity. "I give you a new commandment: Love one another. Such as my love has been for you, so must your love be for each other." (R III). Then came the compass and the chart. By these the seas were bridged, and the oceans were changed into the highways of nations. And the family of men—split into multitudinous nations and races, rich in different languages, customs and nationalities—could once again become one as in the beginning. Now, however, this gathering of nations (augured by the gift of tongues at Pentecost) would become not only a thing of great benefit because of what each nation could bring by way of its national genius, but also a thing of surpassing beauty because of the colorful varieties that had unfolded in each nation.

This is the new heaven and the new earth John spoke about: a heavenly earth where all nations, with all their differences, would be one; where all men are brothers, are one in love; and where love expresses itself in a variety of peoples and personalities.

De Colores and so must all love be,
Of every bright color,
To make my heart cry.

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