

LETTERS

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

Sisters Express Gratitude

Editor:

Once again the Mission Sisters of St. Joseph have benefited from your generous support of the diocesan collection for Latin America, Selma and the Rural Apostolate. Knowing the increasing demands made today in every enterprise, we realize the true sacrificial character of this wonderful contribution.

With the years an ever deeper awareness of the needs of the people in these areas has broadened the scope of the ac-

tivities of our Sisters. Such an awareness could never pass into corrective and preventive measures if your interest and sacrifice were not present.

The kingdom of God knows no limitations: geographic, racial or socio-economic. The selflessness of our priests and sisters directly engaged in the work of human promotion is extensive and courageous, but without the supportive concern of those at home their efforts would end in frustration.

Therefore, I express to you not only my personal gratitude but that of the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester. May you experience in fullest measure the joy of those who have responded in a

significant and vital way to the building up of the Kingdom.

Mother Agnes Cecilia Troy
Sisters of St. Joseph

Too Much Self-Evaluation?

Editor:

I read in the (Courier-Journal 8-11-71), with some surprise, that one of the requests made at the recent Priests' Council meeting was for a six-month leave of absence every six years of service for the purpose of self-evaluation.

The trouble with some priests today is that they are constantly appraising themselves, their role, their actions and reactions, instead of forgetting themselves and following Christ's edicts and standards. Six months of further appraisal would make most priests even more introverted and self-centered than some already are.

The Priests' Council is an interesting phenomenon of our time. When men are left to suggest what they would like, there are always some who will make unrealistic suggestions, leaving the layman wondering if the council will produce priests as irrelevant as some nuns are today. Let it not be said of any priest "But I have this against you; that you have abandoned the love you had at first." Rev. 2:4.

Anne B. Christoff
Wellington Avenue
Rochester

There's Room For Everybody

Editor:

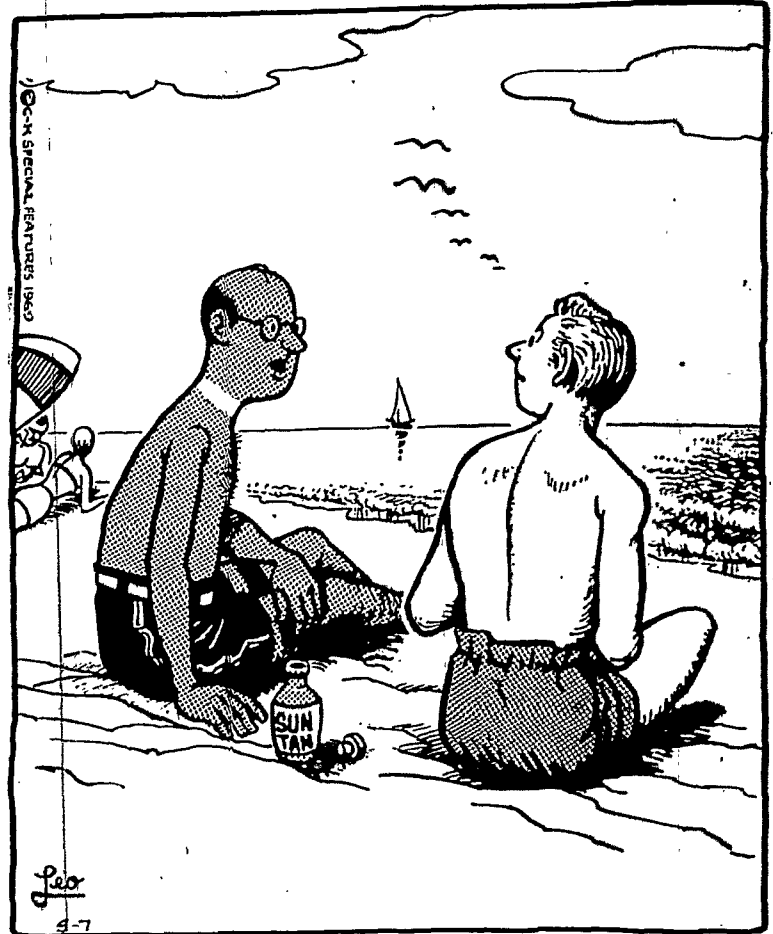
To all that have spoken strongly against folk music, may I say that Latin hymns are indeed beautiful; but I can remember stumbling through "O Salutaris Hostia" at Mass as a teen-ager, making meaningless sounds and later losing interest altogether.

Just as some people enjoy classical music, and others like jazz — so it is with church music. If folk music is more meaningful to young people (have you really listened to the words?) and inspires them to put into action their better impulses, why discourage it?

Let's be done with fault-finding and be large in the thought.

There's "room" for us all!

Amelia Spezio
Victor



"Yes, I'm a clergyman. But how did you guess?"

Q & A

Q. — Recently you carried an answer that a priest who resigns from the priesthood can be released from his promise of celibacy so that he may be married validly in the Church. Why can't the Pope bend the Sacrament of Matrimony the same way he is bending the Sacrament of Holy Orders? Then unhappy couples could be released from their marriage vows and start a new marriage with another partner.

A. — The marriage of Christians is a Sacrament as Holy Orders is. But marriage is by essence a lifetime union of man and woman. Its permanence, or indissolubility, is inseparably bound up with what marriage is because of the needs which the two people make of each other and the demands of the children to be born to them. Basing its rules on Sacred Scripture and contending that Almighty God made the law of marital permanence, (Christ said: "What God has joined together, let no man put asunder"), the Church holds that a valid, sacramental and consummated marriage can be dissolved only by death. On the other hand, clerical celibacy is a church discipline, not established by any eternal law of God.

Celibacy is not necessarily bound up with the powers and duties of Holy Orders. It is a rule considered useful and appropriate and symbolic. But married men were allowed in the clergy of the early Church and the Eastern Rite clergy are married today. So if a priest resigns from the active ministry he may request to be freed from the church law of celibacy. By granting him permission to marry the Pope has in no way revoked his priesthood, merely lifted the man-made law which bound him when he was an active cleric.

Adam's Rib

But you can't blame it all on the kids. A lot of teen-agers are in trouble because of the group they hang out with. Their parents.



FR. ALBERT SHAMON
**Word For
Sunday**

One of the books of Sacred Scriptures most quoted in the Liturgy is the book of Sirach. Like the book of Proverbs, it is in great part a collection of sayings, the fruit of Sirach's observation of everyday life. Sirach wrote his book around 180 B.C. to defend the religious and cultural heritage of Judaism against the challenge of Hellenism by demonstrating that true wisdom resides in Israel.

One of Sirach's sage sayings was, "My son, conduct your affairs with humility, and you will be loved more than a giver of gifts" (RI). No one likes proud people. When our Lord saw everybody at a banquet scrambling for the first places, He just could not keep quiet. To the guests, He said, "Don't exalt yourselves." And to His host, "Don't be trying to make an impression. Serve the needy and God will bless you" (RIII).

Proud people just rub other people the wrong way. How often we have heard the angry remark, "Well, who does he (more often "she") think he is? For it is a fact, some people think they are God Almighty or act as if they were. There is truth in jokes.

"Did you know Joe had an accident?"

"No, What happened?"

"Oh, he got hit by a motorboat while out walking."

Or, "Joe's been arguing about the cost of his cemetery plot."

"How come?"

"He feels it should be cheaper, because he plans to use it for only three days."

The proud man acts as though he were God. But he does not act like God. For God said, "Learn of me, I am meek and humble of heart." Like the host in the Gospel, He came to serve a heavenly banquet; but unlike the guests, He never lorded it over others, but mediated for all men with his Father (RII).

St. Augustine was once asked what he thought was the first, most basic virtue for the Christian. He answered, "Humility."

"And the second?"

Again he answered, "Humility."

"And the third?"

"Humility."

This is so, because humility is truth. It is a realization of just what we are in relation to God. He is all that is and we are all that is not. But humility is more than truth. To know is not virtue. Truth is only the half of humility; the other half is to accept the truth.

That is why the humble man is really attractive. He realizes that all he has is from God, that he really deserves nothing, that grace is precisely what it means, "a gift freely given." Therefore the stance of the humble man is that of a man of prayer, a man of worship; one who goes to Sunday Mass, not to get anything out of it, but just to say thanks to God together with everybody else.

In addition the humble man is gracious to others. He is not a fake, he does not deny his God-given talents. Nor does he use them overbearingly. He does not esteem himself superior to others. The humble man is not "pushy", always trying to grab the limelight, the places of honor at table.

The mirror reflects the image placed before it. So gratitude begets grace: the Lord reveals the mysteries of the kingdom to little ones; and graciousness evokes the response of love. And so is fulfilled the advice of Sirach, "Conduct your affairs with humility, and you will be loved more than a giver of gifts."

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