

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.

Give 'Folk' A Chance

Editor:

With regard to Father Cuddy's column (Courier-Journal, 7-28-71) referring to the downfall of Church music, our group would like to offer some positive reflections concerning the contributions of the Folk Mass for the edification of the faithful.

We realize that the Gregorian Chant, hymns, and Latin Masses have taken years to develop into some of the musical masterpieces that were (and still are) an enriching spiritual inspiration to the people of God. We do not consider ourselves just "kids who can twang a guitar" because we, as a group, realize that the music we are performing and the musicians themselves are not perfect, but just as the pilgrim church, we are in the process of development.

We do not agree with a "campfire type" of music at the Sacred Liturgies. We hope we are in accord with the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Paragraph 112) because we feel that folk music is "intimately linked with liturgical action, winningly expresses prayerfulness, promotes solidarity, and enriches sacred rites with heightened solemnity."

Our observation has been that when we have performed at the liturgy, the whole body of the faithful has been able to contribute to that active participation which is rightly theirs.

Karen Spencer, for the
St. Francis Xavier Folk Group
Rochester

Isn't Hymn Song of Praise?

Editor:

It was really an "eye-opener" to read Father Cuddy's article (Courier-Journal 8/11/71). I could not help but be awakened by the "blindness" with which it was written since his own arguments are the exact reasons for the different usage of words.

From "hymn" to "song" — if the definition of a hymn is "a song of praise," why not call it that? In his perfect examples of such fellowship groups as Lions Club and Rotary, does he not realize that the "songs" of today are twofold, just as Christ's great commandments were: the first, of praise, love of God and the second, of love of neighbor, of which we need many reminders. Hence the "songs of praise of God" and "the love of neighbor" are both a necessity.

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Courier-Journal

Adam's Rib

"And here are Adam and Eve living together in Paradise. You can tell it's Paradise. Not once does Eve ask Adam to take out the garbage."

—From Robert Orben's Encyclopedia of One-Liner Comedy.

As for "chalice" to "cup" — his examples of comparison to "a cup of hot soup, of coffee, a cup which cheers" were beautiful. How great it would be if we recalled the spiritual nourishment of Christ's Body and Blood throughout our daily use of a "cup". I doubt that the word "chalice" ever appears in our everyday living.

Then — "gospel" to "good news". The "good news" of our daily living combined with the "good news" of Christ — what better way to remember His example? Rejoicing over a new baby — did not the angels bring "good tidings" at the birth of Jesus? Good news over "a tippling husband coming home sober" — how about Christ's good news of the prodigal son? As for "apple pie", the times of rejoicing over Christ's providing food are countless times of his "Good News". Therefore Christ's mes-

sage should be "good news" to us even as, no, more so, than that which we receive day by day.

Lastly, from "Catholic" to "Christian", I feel we are still very much in use of both these words, however, in the past and even now, too often "Catholic" seemed an elite title possessed by many who fulfilled their Sunday obligation, contributed to the church and kept the Ten Commandments. Our aspirations now of being a Christian Catholic include these but even more, like the man who told Christ he had done all of these things — what more is there to do and Christ answered "sell what you have and give to the poor". That is the Christian aspect and it was first charged upon us by Christ.

Eileen Fitzpatrick
Dunbar Road
Hilton

FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday



"I come to gather nations of every language" (R1). There you have the divine plan: salvation, to everyone. Isaiah's listing of Tarshish, Put and Lud, Mosoch, Tubal and Javan — vague names of distant nations — symbolizes well all the world. God's glory will come to them. Even priests and Levites will be chosen from the Gentiles.

The Gospel repeats the same theme of universality of salvation. "People will come from the east and west, from the north and the south, and will take their place at the feast in the Kingdom of God" (R111).

Yet how often we indulge in irrelevant questions, like the someone in the Gospel. "Lord, are they few in number who are to be saved?" The man, of course, was not talking about himself for he was a Jew. Therefore he would be saved, no doubt about it. It was about the number of Gentiles, he was worrying.

Our Lord shocked him with the answer. "Don't be so sure of yourself. Some who are first will be last. Instead, stop worrying about silly questions and start worrying about yourself. You try to come in the narrow door." The phrase "try to come in" would be better translated as "try to squeeze through." Salvation is a real struggle — like that of a prisoner of war trying to squeeze through the bars of his cell to freedom. Therefore God, like the good father who disciplines his son for his own good, permits the struggle, the crosses of life. "Whom the Lord loves, He disciplines" (R11).

There was once an amateur naturalist watching an Emperor moth slowly make its laborious way from the chrysalis stage. Day by day, it strove and squirmed, struggling to emerge from its cocoon. The moth was striving with all its might to be born.

The opening of the cocoon, however, was so narrow and the

struggle so laborious that the young amateur naturalist decided to give the Emperor moth some outside help. He took his penknife and slightly enlarged the opening of the cocoon so that the moth could easily emerge.

The naturalist had felt sorry for the moth. He wanted to make things easier for it as some parents want to do for their children. In fact to eliminate all struggle in life seems the endeavor of modern man. He would take discipline out of education, promise a Utopian society with no evil in it, preach a Christianity without a cross.

You know what happened to the Emperor moth after the naturalist had ended its struggle? It emerged into a new world with wings that were not sufficiently developed. It could not fly nor battle its own way in its environment because its wings did not go through the long hard process necessary to develop large and strong wings. Frail and feeble, it fell to the ground and died. Too much kindness had been an enemy to the moth.

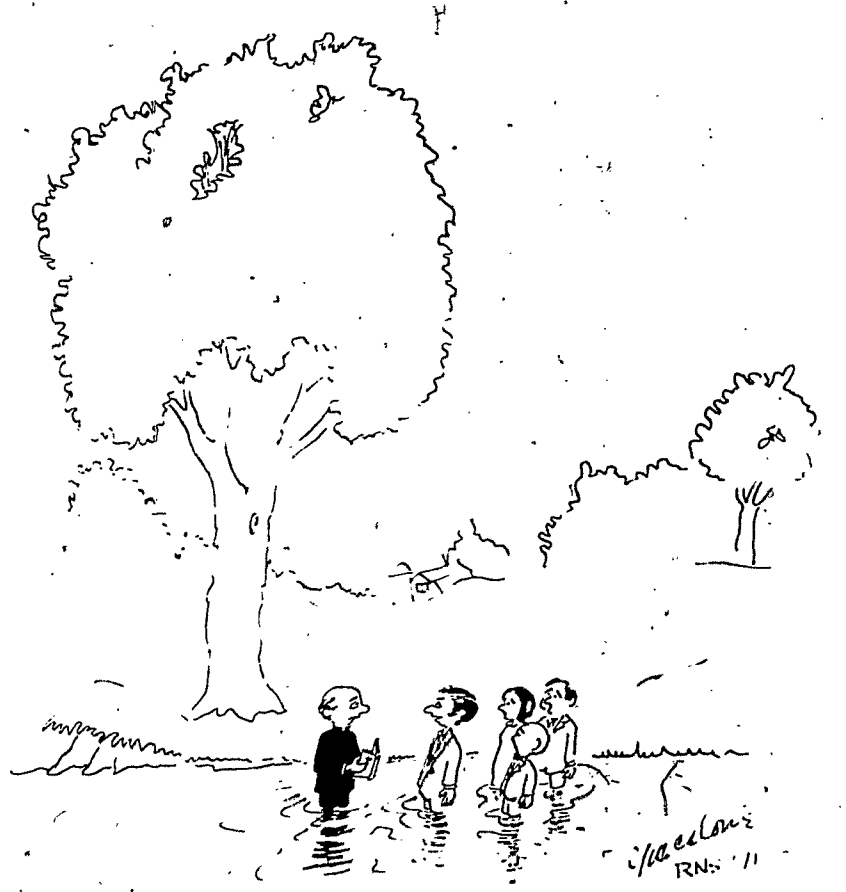
Struggle is nature's way to strength. It is God's way, too, for He is the author of nature. Struggle puts iron in the blood, color in the cheeks, light in the eyes, confidence in the soul. All some can see in life is the struggle: in Vietnam, the war; in Christianity, the cross; in pregnancy, the pain. Too, too few see the purpose of the struggle, the outcome. That the important thing in life is the striving. This was the theme of Tennyson's inspiring poem "Ulysses." No matter the achievement, man must always struggle onward and upward.

"How dull it is to pause, to make an end,

To rust unburnished, not to shine in use! . . .

To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

Wednesday, August 11, 1971



"BUT IF OUR SINS ARE WASHED AWAY, WON'T THAT POLLUTE THE RIVER?"

Q & A

Q.—Please comment on self-communion — when the communicant takes the Host from the priest's hand and puts it into his own mouth. What is the history of this and why have the U.S. Bishops refused to permit it as the Canadian Bishops have?

A.—Up to about 800 it was common practice in the Church for communicants to take the Host to the mouth in their own hands, and to hold the chalice too while drinking from it. By 1200 both communion-by-hand and drinking the Precious Blood had ceased to be the common practice, probably out of increased reverence for the Sacrament. Current efforts to have self-communion restored make these claims: Christ's words, "Take and eat" are fulfilled this way; it's more adult to feed oneself than to be fed. Arguments made when the U.S. Bishops voted against the practice are: fear that administration of the Eucharist will get too casual; fear that particles of the Hosts will be dropped and lost; fear of injuring the sensibilities of many people who would call it irreverence. Self-communion is allowed in theory by the Vatican but national groups of Bishops have to set their own rules.

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