

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.

More About Church Music

Editor:

In recent columns on church music, Father Cuddy makes some strong statements, and he may be both right and wrong. Perhaps overly opinionated would be a better expression.

He certainly is right about inept musicians. The majority of these are guitar players who know a half dozen chords and a dozen songs and a manner of playing which can best be described as banging on the guitar. It's not that they think they are so very good, but that the little bit they know makes them fit to play in church. The result quite often is not assistance at Mass, but a poor performance by the musicians. It might be appropriate if Father Cuddy

listed some good examples of inept music and musicianship as he did for the good works.

In spite of this ineptness, it should be noted that congregations comprising all ages attend folk/guitar Masses and participate in the singing. Perhaps it is the opportunity to participate in this manner that overcomes the less than best music accompaniment!

Father Cuddy seems somewhat biased and appears to think that only the old Catholic hymns are good. His blanket indictment of practically all the other songs is unjust. There are many songs from many sources that are fit for singing at Mass. Father Cuddy could not name a good song when asked. Yet at a gathering of people for a sing-along, a request for one of today's folk hymns was made. This must suggest something good about some of these songs.

Still, there is room for im-

provement. Perhaps the pastors should exert more influence on their folk musicians and demand better songs and more accompaniment. A workshop on folk/guitar Masses might also help the situation.

Albert R. Rehn
True Hickory Drive
Rochester

County Thanks Its Celebrators

Editor:

To all those who sesquicelibrated with us through participation in the Sesquicentennial Parade, we are sincerely grateful. Our thanks to all those who marched the three mile route, polished trucks, cars, instruments or shoes in readiness, planned and built floats, cleaned and pressed garments, made signs, cranked antique autos, made the many necessary preliminary preparations or otherwise exerted special care to make this parade the best one ever held in the county of Monroe.

We only wish that we could personally thank all those who marched, rode, drove, sang, played instruments, cooked hot dogs, clowned around, looked beautiful, looked dignified or applauded from the sidelines. Especially we commend the many town and village organizations, fire departments and auxiliaries, Boy Scouts and youth groups, historical organizations, bands, veterans, queens, ethnic groups, clubs and Channel 21 for their interest and hard work.

Thank you, Monroe County Family!

William C. Kelly,
Chairman, Monroe County
Sesquicentennial Committee

Rock Concert Criticized

Editor:

Friday evening, Aug. 27, at Mendon Ponds park, I witnessed my first rock concert. This musical feat was sponsored by the Teen League of Monroe County, a high school group.

Every parent of teen age youngsters should have been there for an education. One simply does not get the real picture from newspaper accounts.

Some of my fellow observers and I saw 15-year-old boys and girls drinking. There was a lot of drugs. Drunken and stoned out kids were lying unconscious on the ground unattended. Many couples were seen on the hillsides under blankets.

Not one policeman was visible in a crowd that numbered probably 2,000 or more. I always thought policemen were needed for any event where a large group of people gather.

May I suggest to all parents: Before you permit your child to attend a Rock Concert, please see one first for yourselves.

Nicholas Hober,
Co-chairman, Monroe County
Motorede Committee

(Motorede stands for Movement to Restore Decency)

A Note

Letters are the lifeblood of this page, and the Courier-Journal welcomes the opinions of its readers. Make sure they reach the Courier-Journal offices by the Thursday before publication.

Wednesday, September 8, 1971



"BUT SIR, THESE PICTURES ARE TOTALLY WITHOUT REDEEMING SOCIAL VALUE!"

Q & A

Q. — In the opening minutes of Mass, are the general confession the congregation makes and the prayer for forgiveness the priest speaks supposed to be a substitute for the Sacrament of Penance?

A. — The new penitential ceremony was explicitly designed as a public act of general sorrow for sins and admission of a sense of guilt. But it was not intended to be a substitute for going to Confession. Personal confession of serious sins is absolutely required for forgiveness. Regular use of the Sacrament of Penance for less-serious sins is still advised, for the grace involved, for the personal awakening of new resolutions, for a clearer awareness of habitual failings. The penitential rite at the beginning of Mass may have occasioned some decline in the number of people going to confession for nonmortal sins. They are not theologically wrong because that formal expression of sorrow at Mass although not a sacramental rite, could be adequate for the forgiveness of small faults and less serious habits.

Adam's Rib

As Adam once said to Eve: "Cain? Abel? What's wrong with Melvin?"

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

Is there a mystery about funeral costs?

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FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday



When Paul was blazing a trail from Jerusalem to Rome, he was not alone. One of his companions was the beloved and glorious physician, Luke. Luke had listened to Paul. He had read all Paul's letters. As a result Paul exercised a profound influence on Luke when he wrote his Gospel. In fact the theology of Paul determined the themes that Luke developed in his Gospel. Not without reason Paul has been called "the illuminator of Luke." One of the themes dear to Paul and preached untiringly by him was that "Christ came into the world to save sinners" (R2).

That was why Luke, more than the other evangelists, goes out of his way to show Christ's kindness to outcasts, Gentiles, and sinners. No one is beyond the reach of God's love. Thus it is Luke alone who gives the incident of the publican Zaccheus. Luke alone tells of the good thief on the cross. Luke alone records the parables of the Good Samaritan, the Lost Sheep, the Lost Coin, and perhaps the greatest short story in literature, the parable of the Prodigal Son. Luke learned well the lesson Paul taught about God's love for sinners. "This is proof of God's love for us, that Christ died for us when we were sinners" (Rom. 5:8).

Nowhere in his gospel does Luke bring out God's merciful love for sinners more vividly than in the treasured fifteenth chapter. This chapter of Luke's has been rightfully designated "the gospel in the Gospel," because it contains the essence of the good news Christ came to tell us. No Pharisee ever dreamed of God seeking out and searching for sinners. The Jews believed if a man crawled to God and begged for pity on bended knees, God might perchance forgive him. They saw God as a God of wrath whose anger only a Moses could assuage (R 1). They viewed God as a holy God who took joy not in the repentance of sinners but rather in the condemning and punishing of them.

What Christ brought was a new, totally incredible, picture of God the Father. Christ likened Him to a shepherd seeking a lost sheep, to a woman searching diligently for a precious lost coin, or to a father racing — an undignified thing for a Jew to do — to embrace a wayward son who deserved nothing but contempt.

What inspired these parables was the Scribes' and Pharisees' complaint, "This man (what scorn rings out in those two words) welcomes sinners and eats with them." Sinners were those who, like the tax-collectors and publicans, had given up their religious practices. No self-respecting person would consort with them. Jesus did more: He ate with them, which symbolized in the East intimate friendship.

It was this situation Jesus was trying to get his enemies to understand by the three parables. He was saying that these friends of Mine by coming to Me are showing themselves repentant. In Me, they see someone from God. Therefore, salvation is coming to them. Anyone who recognizes this is bound to be filled with joy. It simply demands a celebration.

What Jesus is telling us is that God wants to be friends with us, as Jesus was with sinners. In turn He wants us to exercise the same generosity toward others as He Himself did — so that, as fire lights fire, Christian love might enkindle in the hearts of sinners the love that saves.

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