

LETTERS

Letters to the editor should be addressed to the editor, Courier-Journal, Richford Building, 67 Chestnut 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.

'Weak Sister' Excuses Hit

Editor:

Concerning letter of the Rev. Pontier of Clifton, N.J. (Courier-Journal 9-22-71), do we really have to go to New Jersey for a reprint of the usual weak-sister excuses for avoiding responsibilities on the part of those who share in the blessings of this great nation but who will not contribute one whit towards its protection?

Much space in that issue was given over to Bishop Hogan's and Bishop Spears' letter to parishioners concerning Attica. It is utterly amazing to me to see how unrealistic and naive these church leaders really are, especially in endorsing the 28 points of change as demanded by the inmate revolutionaries and others. One has but to talk with guards, their families and other prison officials, yes, even read letters from other inmates to see that these insurrections

are caused by a handful of lunatic revolutionaries, aided by left-wing lawyers and permissive clergy who are entirely out of touch with reality.

The Catholic leaders may wonder why we are losing members. They need not wonder when a single issue of the Courier contains such letters as the two mentioned above, plus a photo and writeup of such notable left-of-center people as David Brinkley.

John T. Stiegerwald
Oak Ridge Rd.,
Auburn.

Fr. Cuddy Column Brings Reply

Editor:

I want to thank Father Cuddy for the complimentary remarks he made about me in the Courier-Journal, (9-22-71).

And because he was so kind in his comments, I am ready to admit that I was trying to irri-

tate him during his recent visit to Penn Yan. Of course, that is easy enough to do because Father Cuddy is so predictable. Present him with an idea he does not understand or agree with and he becomes irritated and indefatigably labels it false or foolish, as he did with my idea.

I remember well the conversation that provoked Father Cuddy so much. It began by my disagreeing with one of his past Courier articles. I said a person would be in a much more comfortable and reassuring position if, on the day of judgment, he is regarded by God as a Christian than as a Catholic. (For some reason Father Cuddy seems to think that being a Christian is a step down from being a Catholic). This opened up another topic of discussion.

I mentioned to him that I am convinced that we have a misconception about what happens to a man once he dies. We think of ourselves as passing on to Eternity and dwelling forever in God. This part is correct. Our misconception comes when we intersperse Eternity with time-consuming events. We think, e.g. that while we are in Heaven, beautified by the vision of God, we will be greeting our loved ones whom we left behind as they make their entrance into Heaven. And we will no sooner get comfortably settled down with the Beatific Vision when we will have to line up for Christ's second coming, then go through a resurrection of our body and then gather around for the general judgment.

But aren't these TEMPORAL happenings, able to occur only in the temporal order . . . in time. Why do we scatter them throughout Eternity?

Now, I believe these events



© Cartoonists of the Month

"We haven't set a wedding date yet. We want a week when there are no other office collections"

(reunion with loved ones we left on earth, Christ's second coming, the resurrection of our body, general judgment) will happen in some manner. But they must occur BEFORE we begin to share in God's Eternal life.

I do not think that this speculation should be dismissed so briskly as false or foolish as did our friend On The Right Side.

Father William J. Cosgrove.
St. Michael's Church
312 Liberty St.,
Penn Yan

P.S. Father Cuddy . . . I'm looking forward to your next visit. I've got a few ideas about man's bodily resurrection and general judgment I would like to discuss with you. Bring your tranquilizers.

FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday



Sunday's Readings: (R1) 2 Kings 5:14-17. (R2) 2 Tim. 2: 8-13. (R3) Luke 17:11-19

Albrecht Durer (1471-1524) was a great artist of Nuremberg in Germany. He came from a family that was large and poor. Albrecht struggled to become a painter. He and another friend made a pact: Albrecht would learn to paint and the other would work to earn a living for both. When Durer became successful, then his friend would have his turn at painting.

For years Durer painted and his friend worked. When success finally came, his friend's hands had been so hardened by manual labor that he could not hold an artist's brush. One day Durer noticed his friend's hands raised in prayer. He could paint them to show his gratitude. Durer did and thus was born the famous picture of "The Praying Hands." Durer's fame stemmed from a painting done in gratitude.

The second half of Luke's Gospel is doctrinal. It was written to teach. The cure of the ten lepers is the only miracle Luke narrates after chapter nine. He preserved it for a doctrinal reason: to teach that man should give thanks to God.

The First Reading, usually from the Old Testament, is generally related to the Third Reading, the Gospel. This relationship is obvious in this Sunday's Readings. Both tell the story of the cure of lepers. One is a proud, powerful general, Namaan; the other a poor, nameless beggar. Both suffer from the same disease. Both seek a cure from a Jewish man of God. Both are cured because of their trust. Both are best remembered because of their gratitude.

Namaan came prepared to give rich gifts for his cure. But the prophet, Elisha, who had cured him, would take nothing. The poor leper had nothing to offer but words and acts of gratitude. Jesus accepted these and praised the man.

The First and Second Reading show man in extraordinary suffering and getting extraordinary help. The Second Reading speaks of ordinary suffering that accompanies every worthwhile life. If Jesus helped those in greater trouble, how much more will He help those in lesser. However, trust in God is not so much the message of today's Reading as thanks to God — gratitude.

Chesterton has said, "Children thank Santa for the gifts they find in their stockings. Do we thank him for the two good legs that we find every day in our stockings?" Gratitude is the condiment of life.

Yet how ungrateful nine out of ten Christians are in respect to God! If things go well, they act as if they had a right to expect this. If things go awry, they begin to complain as though they were ill-used. If things get worse, they become miserable as though they had no cause to rejoice.

Sometimes God permits evil and sometimes He showers us with blessings. But at all times, He is seeking us. So no matter the adversity or the prosperity, the Christian stance should be a lifelong "thank you, God!"

"Give thanks to the Lord, acclaim his name!" (Is. 12:3).

Did you thank God today?

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