

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.

'Superstar' Full of Errors

Editor:

In reference to Father Ehmman's article on Jesus Christ Superstar (Courier-Journal 10-6-71) I certainly agree with his criticisms. However I find it very difficult to come to his conclusion that "with all its limitations it is surely not against us."

My main objection is that the album is being used in Catholic Schools and CCD classes. The question is why? Why choose in the first place material so full of acknowledged error? Several so-called justifications are given by educators. First — it emphasizes Christ's humanity. True it does — by denying his divinity. Second is that children are bored by "old fashion" scripture but Superstar really "turns them on". I'm sure I speak for many Catholic parents, when I say that I pre-

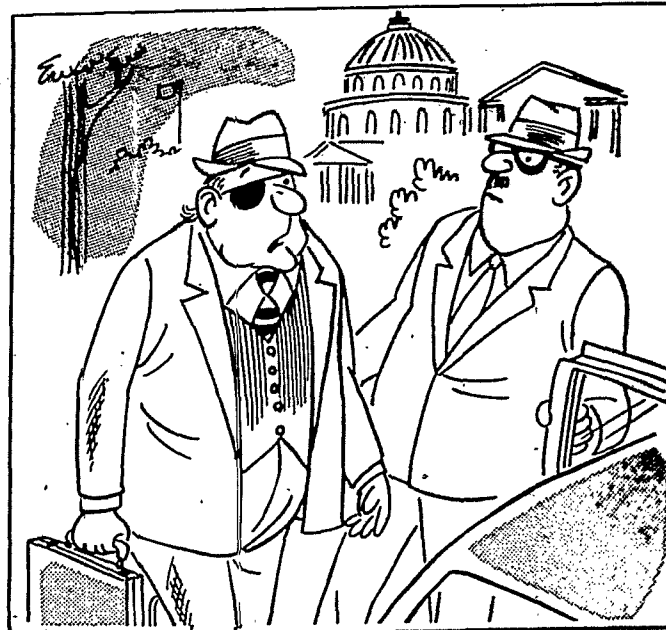
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fer boredom for my children than "heresy", however entertaining it might be. Third, kids don't pull it apart, they take it as a whole or perhaps they won't notice the fallacies or innuendoes. The distortions are so subtle that it changes images in the mind without so much as an argument.

But I think Andrew Lloyd Webber, one of the composers of "Superstar", summed it all up when he said, "I personally don't think Jesus is God. We tried to put over what we think might have happened. Christ as a liberal reformer was a huge success. Slowly the thing got out of control and people began to worship Christ and not the cause" (Hi Time Awake 3-12-71).

It's no accident that the loudest voice in Jesus Christ Superstar is that of Judas.

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East Rochester



"THE COUNTRY'S GOING MAD! TODAY SOMEONE IN AN AID-TO-EDUCATION CONTINGENT HIT ME WITH A SPITBALL!"

service' to the Bishop, scoff at the chancery office and laugh at the CCD office.

Their theology degree gives them the know-all and for practical purposes, our professional men know nothing.

Please give us the leadership and Vatican II can be implemented in the too many deprived parishes.

Mrs. Louis Quadrini
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Hilton

should know, then it must follow as the night the day that an effective communications system does not exist between the "vast majority of U.S. Catholics and the bishops".

The second editorial, that of 10-13-71 "Synod . . . an Ideal Time for Action" confirmed and did not correct the illogic of the first. It began by observing that the Pope in his opening address to the synodal delegates warned them to "resist outside pressures". Such "pressures" could only mean the expression of viewpoints that would be either utterly heretical or completely Catholic. The collegiate bishops could easily anathematize the one and accept the other. Yet by refusing to communicate with these "pressure" groups, so as to develop a truly catholic (small "c") conception of the priesthood and of social justice, the bishops chained their individual judgments and collective decisions to half truths. This "Synod" can go down in history not as "an ideal time for action" but as a proven instance of the failure of Church leaders to communicate needed truths for our times.

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FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday



Sunday's Readings: (R1) Wis. 11:23-12:2. (R2) 2 Thess. 1:11-2:2. (R3) Luke 19:10.

God loves everything he has made, especially man. For the universe is as a grain of dust that tips the scales or as the morning dewdrop. But man is made to His image and likeness. On him, He has mercy. For his sins, He has forgiveness (R1).

Zaccheus "got wind" that Jesus of Nazareth was somebody like that. He had reports that Jesus received outcasts and sinners. The work of salvation was begun in his soul by the words people said about Jesus. It is strange that Zaccheus had never seen Jesus — Jericho is so close to Jerusalem and Jesus was so famous. But that is normal for many intelligent people; they are so busy making money their ignorance of Jesus is astonishing. Regardless, Zaccheus wanted to see what kind of man this man was who received even sinners. Some urge more powerful than curiosity must have prompted Zaccheus to risk rushing out into a crowd. Perhaps his nagging conscience was getting him; maybe it was his self-imposed loneliness. At any rate, his riches were not at all enough to give rest to his heart. So courage or desperation drove Zaccheus out to see Jesus, no matter the risk.

Jews scorned and condemned tax-collectors — savagely hated them. In this despised profession Zaccheus had reached the heights; of the tax-collectors, he was the chief. How hated he must have been! How rich, too! Jericho was a tax-collector's paradise. Through it ran an east-west arterial highway. Its world-

famous balsam and dates were exported throughout the Roman Empire. Zaccheus was rich, oh so rich! But money isn't everything. His heart was empty. So he risked the crowd to see Jesus. For the crowd this was the chance of a lifetime, to vent their spleen on the tax-collector. They bumped Zaccheus, elbowed him, kicked him, but worst of all, they kept blocking him from seeing Jesus. "He was trying to see Jesus . . . but was unable to because of the crowd" (R3).

Zaccheus, however, could never have gotten to where he was had he not been a resourceful man. The plucky little man broke free from the crowd, sprinted ahead of it, and clambered up a sycamore tree. He would see Jesus, no matter the obstacles! And because he tried to see Jesus, Jesus saw him.

The two talked, then ate together. The crowd passed judgement: "He has gone to a sinner's house as a guest." But Zaccheus was changed. Fellowship with Jesus broke the hold riches had on him and led him to make restitution of anything wrongfully taken. To the crowds, Jesus said in effect, "Banish your rash judgments. This man is a true son of Abraham. I have come to search out and to save precisely those who had lost their way like him."

How many are concerned today, only about seeing things — a football game, a world series, a movie, a play. Compare the packed stadiums each Saturday with the churches on Sunday. To see things is all right provided there is also the desire of Zaccheus — to see Jesus. So great was Zaccheus' desire that he let no obstacle stand in his way. Certainly he was short. Most assuredly, the hostile crowd did all they could to hinder his seeing Jesus. Then too a rich man climbing a tree would certainly get laughed at. But Zaccheus wanted to see Jesus!

How do we go to prayer? To Sunday Mass? Is it with the desire of Zaccheus? Is this not why we often hear the complaint, "I don't get anything out of prayers? Or out of Mass?" We go not because we want to see Jesus, but because we feel we have to. What a shame for a beggar to refuse to go to a rich man, the wounded to the physician, the hungry to the Bread of Life.

Little Zaccheus, nicknamed "Shorty," can teach all of us a lesson. He wanted to see Jesus; but really, it was Jesus who wanted to see Zaccheus — to transform him and make him fully a man!

Where Are The Leaders?

Editor:

In answer to your editorial (Courier-Journal 10-6-71) my question would be: Where are the leaders?

Thank God, there are some beautiful men among the clergy. This helps us to keep the faith.

But what about the ones who follow the principle, "Don't do as I do, do as I say." They are the culprits. They polarize the followers. These men give lip

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RETURN

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