

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.

More Defense For 'Superstar'

Editor:

In reply to recent critics of "Jesus Christ Superstar", may I point out one fact that seems to be totally ignored by those who find this opera offensive. The creators of this opera, Webber and Rice, were portraying Jesus through the eyes of Judas and not through the eyes of today's Christian. Webber and Rice stressed Christ as man and not as God and whether this was their intention or not, they were portraying Christ as most people perceived him at that time and this is where faith begins. First we come to the knowledge of Christ as man and only then can we progress to the knowledge of Christ as God.

I think that the one phrase in "Superstar" that really has meaning in today's world is the mocker who challenges Christ to walk on his swimming pool. Walking on water in some distant land does not grip you the way walking on a swimming pool in our contemporary language.

Anything that makes us think about Christ today is not bad—it can only be good!

Anne B. Christoff
Rochester

Alcoholism—Not Disease

Editor:

In the Courier-Journal (8-18-71) "Alcoholism . . . A Disease" etc., your article is based on what the N.C.E.A., R.C.E.A., Alcoholic Foundation, Information Center, Alcoholic Clinic, state and federal health departments and the American Medical Association have published.

I have been a member of Alcoholics Anonymous since its Rochester beginning in 1942 and I sincerely believe that Alcoholism is not a disease. It is a problem but not a medical problem. Approach to the problem should be psychological as suggested by A.A. with persuasion by attraction and example; not with gimmicks (antabuse) and fear (disease).

The only objection I have to the present state and national endeavor is that it is based on an untruthful premise. The problem often is mental rather than physical. There is no compulsion until after one takes a drink; then, one cannot stop without great difficulty. I think we are born with our characteristic. I don't think we can de-

velop the problem against our own will.

For your information, the only reason the A.M.A. got behind the movement terming it a disease was to compel the hospital insurance companies to permit five days' confinement per year for so-called addicts.

The movement, therefore, is strictly a reform movement just like the old days of the Keeley-Cure. I wish them success but I am doubtful of real progress on a plan based on deceit. That is the reason medical schools do not adopt courses in the problem; I agree with them.

Of course it is not all wasted—it is wonderful for the chronic drunk to have a nice hospital ward to enter for sobering up until he or she dies or tries a change in thinking like A.A. or even religion, if sincere.

The recent ABC-TV show on alcoholism was truly a farce offered only for self-publicity by those who permitted it. I have never hidden my connection with A.A. from anyone but I am not permitted to exploit it.

F. E. Dailey
Rochester

Attica Riot Well-Planned

Editor:

David J. Ambuske's letter (Courier-Journal 10-20-71) criticized the church for not speaking out sooner concerning the Attica tragedy; as if this would have prevented what had happened at Attica.

Mr. Ambuske then went on in typical liberal fashion to condemn the Vietnam conflict and the "just war" theory.

Many sources including Gov. Rockefeller himself realized that the Attica disturbance was not merely a spontaneous uprising but a well-planned riot thought out well in advance by leftist militant prisoners.

It is rather unfortunate then that Bishop Hogan and other concerned individuals did not see the source of the disturbance at Attica.

The prisoners who are the most brutalized are those not belonging to any "in" militant group. It is they that need protection and rehabilitation. The militant groups already are in control of the prisoners. Ask Bobby Seale.

Robert Bart
Ithaca

Tokenism 'Greatest Sin'

Editor:

An editorial (Courier-Journal 10-27-71) asks the question: What kind of society is unable to act as a mongoloid baby is left in a hospital sideroom to die of hunger in the midst of technological and nutritional plenty?

I submit that it is a society that enjoys a glow of pious religiosity by deploring the starving of an individual human being while it enthusiastically votes for conservative politicians who will save them tax dollars by voting against adequate foreign economic aid for the millions of people dying of malnutrition in underdeveloped countries, and against adequate aid for the poor in this country, including the victims of malnutrition.

It is an affluent society that supports conservative politicians who vote billions of dollars for the killing of human beings and the destruction of the lives of the survivors while

saying that the taxpayers cannot afford the sums needed for constructive purposes at home.

This inadequate "tokenism" is the greatest sin of our time since it gives us a false glow of self-deception to save our conscience, thus preventing the appropriation of the amount of money needed to alleviate the plight of our less fortunate brothers at home and abroad.

Walter O'Hagan
Sherman St.
Auburn

Christ Came For All Men

Editor:

In answer to Ann Christoff's letter (Courier-Journal, 10-27-71), I would like to say it's a good thing Christ put more value on teaching people than she does. As a CCD religion teacher of 8th grade, I would consider any knowledge of God given to a child worth a great deal. Just to leave out as you will, or refuse to teach the child because the parents are not the most knowledgeable in doctrine, is in the highest degree against all Christ's teaching. If this were true then the Church should call back the missionaries. Stop the work. Who has knowledge in a jungle!

Our future lies with our youth and our hope in Christ, who came for ALL MEN—even the "unbelievably ignorant Catholic parents" as Miss Christoff calls them. I say definitely work to change this. Yes, we will always have "A & P" Catholics, but was not Peter one? He left Christ and even denied him. Yet Christ so loved Peter he entrusted to him his Church and the Keys to the Kingdom.

Our greatest gift is Christ in the Eucharist. This should not be denied to a single Catholic. "You have been bought at a great price, glorify God and bear him in your body." 1 Corinthians 6:20.

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Rochester



FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday

Sunday's Readings: (R1) Mal. 3: 19-20. (R2) 2 Thes. 3: 7-12. (R3) Lk. 21: 5-19

As we near the end of the liturgical year, the Church turns our thoughts to the end of all things. Malachi speaks of a fiery day of judgment touching both good and bad, but differently, as the blazing sun melts snow but hardens mud. Paul in both his letters to the Thessalonians treats of the end of the world. The Gospel dwells on the same subject—the end of the Temple, which to a Jew was tantamount to the end of the world.

On the site where the Temple stood, Moslems have built the Mosque of Omar, sometimes called the Dome of the Rock. All that remains of the Temple area is part of the western wall. It is known as the Wailing Wall because, even to this day, Jews stand facing it and pray in wailing lament over the loss of Israel's glory.

To the Jew in our Lord's time, the destruction of Jerusalem's Temple was unthinkable.

Near the end of our Lord's life, after a discouraging day, some of the apostles tried to cheer Him up by pointing out the grandeur of the Temple. Our Lord prophesied, "These things you are contemplating . . . will all be torn down" (R3).

The apostles were not shocked, as we would suppose, because in their minds the end of the Temple was also the end of everything else; and the end of the world for them inaugurated the Messianic reign in which they would rule with the Messiah. Their questions "When will this be?" "What will be the sign?" referred to both the end of the Temple and the end of the world that enslaved them.

Luke in his usual tidy fashion

separates the two events. The lines from Luke chosen for Sunday's Gospel treat only the end of Jerusalem and its Temple. Our Lord uses apocalyptic language. He speaks of wars and insurrections, plagues and famines, persecutions and trials. But He warned that men who would interpret these events as signs that "the time is at hand" or "the end is near" are false prophets. All that these events herald is the end of Jerusalem and its Temple.

But for Christians this end was also a beginning. As woes and plagues were the prelude to the liberation of the Hebrews from Egyptian slavery, so these events signifying the end of Jerusalem and its Temple would also signal the liberation of the Church from Judaism, with all its exclusivism and formalism. For until the Temple and Jerusalem were destroyed, people both within and outside the Church thought Christianity and Judaism were one and the same.

Our Lord's concern was to keep His followers from looking for an easy and quick way out. Instead of seeking signs and escapes, He wanted them to prepare to be strong and to bear witness, even at the cost of their lives. To the Christians of Thessalonika, Paul echoed the same sentiments. He advised them to keep busy and not be busybodies.

Since the signs Christ enumerated as presaging the fall of Jerusalem and its Temple happen all the time, we are reminded of the ongoing nature of the coming of the Lord. He is always coming and always judging in various ways. In lieu of Doomsday enthusiasm, then, we ought to heed Paul's advice that we dare all things, working quietly, and Christ's request that we bear all things until the Lord comes.

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