



"THIS TIME YOU BE THE DRAFT BOARD, AND I'LL BE FATHER DANIEL BERRIGAN!"

FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday



Christmas Readings: (R1) Is. 9:2-7. (R2) Titus 2:11-14. (R3) Lk. 2:1-14

Christmas celebrates the birthday of Christ. As one thinks of the significance of Christmas, the question springs to mind, "Does the world need Christ today?"

Does it? Good heavens, scan the headlines of any daily paper. "India, Pakistan in Full War." "Push out Israel, UN Plea." "Army Imposes Curfew in Santiago Province to End Street Violence." "Irish Blast Kills 16." "Reds Rout Cambodian Army." "Cardinal Conway Condemns Torture of Prisoners without Trial." "Anti-drug Campaign on Right Track." "Oswald Disputes Court in Prisoner Abuse." "10 Shopping Days 'Til Christmas."

Need Christ? Do we need peace? Are we at peace with ourselves? With others? Had man and his world accepted Christ those headlines would have read differently. "Prince of Peace," Isaiah called Him. "Peace on earth," angels sang at His birth. We need the Prince of Peace, because we need His peace on earth.

And what is peace? It is not simply the absence of war. It is not just a handshake in

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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.

A Challenge Issued

Editor:

A woman wrote a letter to the editor (Democrat and Chronicle Nov. 26), challenging Sen. Donovan's bill (Senate 20) to repeal the present abortion law. Her main point was that repealing the law would deny her the right to personal freedom which she has as a human being. I would agree with a person's right to personal freedom and integrity, but not at the expense of another human being's right — the unborn child's basic right to life.

The unborn child's conduct is neither immoral nor criminal. Even if the child knew fully what was happening, it would be impossible for him to control what all children naturally do—grow and develop. The child did not choose his existence, but it was chosen FOR him. When two people exercise the privilege of the creative act, where another human being is being conceived, they are responsible for that life. It is no longer a matter of convenience, comfort or expediency for the couple, for the BASIC right to life of the unborn takes precedence.

The conflict between a mother's rights and that of the unborn developed in the Raleigh-Filkin Paul Morgan Memorial Hospital vs Anderson case (1964), where the N.J. Supreme Court was asked to decide whether the rights of the child "in utero" were violated by his mother's refusal (on religious grounds) to submit to a blood transfusion necessary to preserve the lives of the mother and her unborn child. The court held: "We are satisfied that the unborn child is entitled to the law's protection and that an appropriate order should be given to insure the blood transfusion."

church. Peace is harmony, an agreement of different things. It is a demand, a duty. It is unity springing from love. In Eden, God and men were as one. But man sinned; and sin alienated man from himself, from God and his fellowmen. After sin, Adam and Eve felt the sting of the flesh and clothed themselves. They hid from God. Having discovered they could not, they turned on each other. And all creation turned on them. In consequence, only in sweat can man fulfill his role as breadwinner; to fulfill her role as mother, woman must suffer the pangs of labor. It was war on earth! Disunity, disharmony, discord!

Then the Prince of Peace was born. A peace-bringer, because in Himself God and man were as one! A peace-maker, because He announced the good news that the Father loves us: was not at war with us. A peace-giver, because He brought forgiveness of sin — a "Peace be to you." A Prince of Peace, because, as David's wars and victories had laid the foundation for Solomon's reign of peace, Christ's battles and victories over sin and Satan won for us a kingdom of peace, His Church. Peace, therefore, means being at one with God, with self, with His Church and with each other.

But why is there no peace today? Why the bellonic headlines? Because first there is no peace between God and man. What we fancy, what comes easiest, what everybody does—these, more often than not, constitute our rule of life. Not God's will, not Christ's example, not the teachings of the Church. We wish peace, we talk peace, but we do little to achieve it. Everybody talks of freedom, of following his own conscience. But who worries about whether or not his conscience follows the voice of the Church? Everybody wants to choose what he does, but who cares to see if it is right or wrong to do what he chooses?

Peace begets peace. Peace with God makes peace of heart. Peace of heart brings peace to the world. That was why angels sang, or prayed for, or wished men peace on earth on the first Christmas. For the Child born then was the Prince of Peace; because being one with God, he could make man one with God, which is the basis of all peace. "Glory to God—peace!"

Shalom alachem!

Laws which people make for themselves act as a mirror reflecting their moral and personal values. In the New Jersey's law, the personal freedom of the mother was subordinated to a more compelling state interest of protecting the basic right to life of the child. What a judgment on New York's laws when we sanction the killing of the most innocent and defenseless humans.

Jim Hewes
Beaufort Place
E. Rochester

Religious Garb As 'Witness'

Editor:

The Courier of Dec. 15 shows a picture of five Chapter members of the Mercy Sisters. Three of the Sisters are wearing lay dress. Regardless of the reasons which may be given for laying aside the religious garb, it is obvious that these Sisters are no longer appearing before the public as women who have dedicated their lives to God.

There is much talk these days about "witness", but I fear that much of it is lip service. Where sacrifice is required, "witness" is readily replaced by an appeal to personal freedom and to the choosing of one's own life style. It is much easier to pass among the crowd unnoticed than it is to have to wear a re-

ligious habit which tells the world that you are consecrated to the service of the Master. In fact, I fear that in some cases our religious are no longer serving the Master, as religious. They have become humanitarians, — case workers, teachers, do-gooders, — whose motives and discipline differ little from that of the average lay person.

The Catholic school system was built on the efforts of women who were willing to sacrifice personal desires for Heaven and that they might bring the truths of the Catholic religion to the children whom they taught. Today the Catholic school is in danger of collapse because in spite of all the fine talk about "witness", the spirit of Christ Crucified has been replaced by the desire to live as the people in the world live.

Our religious are giving less and less witness to Christ and more and more witness to their own personal desires as is evidenced by unwillingness to accept authority and sacrifice of personal freedom. A first step in returning all things to Christ would be a public witness to the habit that the Catholic sisterhoods are groups of women who are living for Christ and serving Him through SACRIFICE as He served them through His Cross.

Rev. G. Stuart Hogan
East Avenue
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Wednesday, December 22, 1971

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