

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.

Biblical Quote Fits Today

Editor:

Quote from the Holy Bible: Luke 23, vs. 26 to 31:

At Calvary, "Large numbers of people followed Him (Jesus) and of women too, who mourned and lamented for Him. But Jesus

turned to them and said, "Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, weep rather for yourselves and for your children. For the days will surely come when people will say, Happy are those who are barren, the wombs that have never borne, the breasts that have never suckled! Then they will begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us, to the hills, Cover us. For if men use the green wood like this, what will happen when it is dry?"

I ask, is not Jesus referring to our struggle to preserve human life today? "Weep not for me but for yourselves and your children for the day will come when people will say, Blessed are the wombs that have never borne, whose breasts have never nursed, for what will happen when the earth is empty?"

Pray God forgive us for we know not what we do.

Rosemary Austin
Painted Post, N.Y.



FR. ALBERT SHAMON Word For Sunday

Sunday Readings: (R1) Acts 2: 14, 22-28. (R2) 1 Pt. 1: 17-21. (R3) Lk. 24: 13-35.

The body of the risen Jesus belonged to a new order of existence. It appeared and disappeared. Something about it baffled immediate recognition. Yet when Jesus willed it, His identity became evident.

On the road to Emmaus, He appeared to two disciples and was taken for a stranger. Some think that the two disciples were husband and wife—Cleopas and Mary. Walking into the setting sun, the two were engaged in an animated discussion. Perhaps it was about what some women had told about an empty tomb and of angels saying that Jesus had risen. It just could not be, they were probably saying. And yet — they clung to fast-dwindling hopes by just talking about the whole affair. It was then that He, who comes to all who desire Him, appeared to these two whose hearts were so set on Him.

At first they did not recognize Him. There was so much they did not recognize. Even from the scripture on which they had been raised, they drew a blank. (Sunday after Sunday, we too hear the scriptures. Yet what do we see? How little we understand.) They were sad as a result.

And there is so much sadness in the world today precisely because its hearing and vision and understanding of the things of God are so poor. The Church is the "body" of Jesus. Yet the world sees only a human institution. The scriptures are His words. Yet the world sees only religious literature like the books of the Veda or the Koran. The sacraments are His actions. Yet

to the world, just more empty rites and ritual.

The disciples, like all Christians, needed a homily. So the stranger proceeded to explain the scriptures. "Couldn't they see that God's pattern and plan in scripture had always been victory through suffering?" Each year Israel celebrated the Exodus experience: slavery, then redemption; gall, then glory. Naturally, Israel's messianic leader ought to have been expected to follow the same pattern.

After His homily, our Lord celebrated the Eucharist. In the breaking of the bread, the disciples recognized the Lord. They raced back to Jerusalem. Before they could tell their happening, the Eleven greeted them with "The Lord has been raised! It is true!" And as the clincher, they said, "He has appeared to Simon."

To underline how truly Simon took Jesus' place after the resurrection, the first reading is Simon's sermon on the resurrection. Like Jesus, Peter also used the Old Testament to explain the central fact of the New Testament, namely, the resurrection. As St. Augustine put it, "The Old Testament is revealed in the new, and the New Testament is concealed in the old."

In the second reading the vicar of Christ again reminds us that the blood of Jesus is the priceless pledge of our own liberation. His last bit of advice to us is that action is more important than words. "The Father will judge us by actions. Since this is so, conduct yourselves reverently during your sojourn in a strange land" (R2).

No one in the New Testament is more conscious than St. Peter that by far the best apologetic for, and commendation of Christianity, is a Christian life. A man who says he is a Catholic and does not live like one does the greatest possible harm to the Church and to the cause of Christ. In Scotland a young preacher was speaking at a street corner to a group of young men who had no use for the Church. An elder passed by and one of the young men said, "That man is the founder of our Atheists' Club."

The preacher asked, "How can that be? That man is one of the leading elders in the Church."

"Precisely," announced the youth. "If a man who lives as he does, is one of the leading members in the Church, we want nothing to do with the Church."

In the Acts, Christianity is called "The Way," for from the beginning Christianity was regarded as a way of life. It is not just a belief in the resurrection. It is a way of life lived in the light of the resurrection.

Book Tells Of Pentecostals

Editor:

I suppose many people who have not heard of the Pentecostal Movement, or had not heard of it until Bishop Hogan wrote his four articles about it in the Courier, would like to know more about it.

There is a book, "Catholic Pentecostals", by Kevin and Dorothy Ranaghan, that would enlighten many of us. It can be bought at Scrantom's or Trant's. Jesus will take over from there.

Sandra Behnke
North Avenue
Hilton

Patrice Munsel Praised

Editor:

On behalf of Notre Dame High School, I wish to thank you for the excellent publicity you gave us on our recent musical benefit, featuring Patrice Munsel.

The concert was an outstanding success — both the matinee and evening performances were sold out — and everyone has been enthusiastic about Miss Munsel's performance.

I would recommend her most highly to any Catholic organization in the diocese planning a musical event. Both she and her conductor, Susan Roman, were most gracious and cooperative, besides giving a most delightful performance.

John D. Frawley
West Water Street
Elmira

CCD Teacher Defends Course

Editor:

Rev. G. Stuart Hogan (Courier-Journal 3-29-72) states, "It is not the purpose of Catechetics to present the children with options but to teach them the Catholic faith, to convince them of the truth of that faith..." Father Hogan implies further in his letter that presenting children with the choice or option may represent my personal view.

The textbook used in the ninth grade CCD class where I teach is "Focus on Life" by Wilkins and Bettin. The book has the Imprimatur of Bishop Arthur J. O'Neill of Rockford. Page 39 of the text states, in part, "You have whatever choice you want! That's the nature of faith. As you have heard many times before, you don't have to believe anything. But not believing in

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anything seems kind of foolish, doesn't it?"

The teachers' manual states, in part, on p. M185, "After helping your students see that they don't have to believe, you can help them understand that to believe is reasonable."

Further, on p. 199, the manual states, "If you can show them that they are invited to believe (rather than ordered to) ... you may develop in them a mature response to what their own faith is developing into."

Further, "A New Catechism," published by Herder and Herder, states on p. 353, "The Church recognizes that faith is a free act and hence that force or pressure may never be used to bring men to believe."

I am not a theologian, nor do I pretend to be one. Perhaps my use of the term "option" was imprecise, but I did qualify my meaning by using the terms "to force children to believe."

Father Hogan states further that "to reject the Catholic faith is to reject Christ and eternal happiness." "A New Catechism," on p. 353, states, concerning non-Catholics, "But if they are sincere believers, they belong to a great extent to Christ's work and Church."

I realize that Father Hogan's statement was made in relation to teaching children Catholicism. Nevertheless, in view of the teaching of the "New Catechism," I would hesitate to tell a person who sincerely rejects Catholicism that he has rejected eternal happiness.

So far as the parents, priests, and bishops investigating the CCD programs are concerned, I think every CCD teacher would welcome any and all of them to the classroom. Father Hogan is quite right in saying that children are being taken out of CCD classes, at least in the experience of the program at our school. However, I don't think this is due to what is being taught. I think it is simply the parents' apathy which is reflected in other areas such as attendance at Mass, the rosary, and confessions. I do not believe that the content of the CCD courses is at fault.

Thomas D. Sharkey
Diedre Drive
Rochester

Shouldn't Have Ignored Hair

Editor:

I was very surprised that no one from the Pastoral Office or the Courier-Journal saw fit to express any public objection to

the showing of "Hair" in Rochester, especially during Holy Week.

I think that the following statement of Bishop Joseph A. McNicholas, auxiliary of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, should serve as an example of responsible leadership.

Anthony Acciari
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East Rochester, N.Y.

Editor's Note: Reader Acciari attached a statement by Bishop McNicholas calling "public attention to the shocking immorality so often glorified today in the entertainment media ... also to express our concern to all citizens of the community about the blatant ridicule of the Catholic faith that is a major theme of 'Hair'."

"We object to 'Hair' primarily on the grounds of religious bigotry. We would raise the same objections to any play that ridiculed the beliefs of any religion."

Tax Necessary To Fight Atheism

Editor:

In regard to the article "Priest Ignores 'War' Tax" (Courier-Journal 4-5-71) I would like to ask where South Vietnam is invading North Vietnam and since when is it a sin to defend your homeland.

For his information, over one million Catholics fled North Vietnam to South Vietnam to escape communism and atheism. If the North conquers the South what will happen to these and the other religious denominations in South Vietnam? Their choice can be death or atheism and communism and slavery.

I was under the impression Roman Catholic priests were supposed to spread Christianity not atheism as he (Father McKenna) proposes to do by turning more of the free world over to the avowed enemy of the Church.

When the massacre begins in the South I hope he can still feel his conscience clear to say his daily Mass.

If he feels the Church is opposed to wars ask him why Pope Urban II called for the Crusades and then called them holy and promised eternal salvation for the European combatants killed in this noble endeavor.

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