

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.

'What Is Happiness?'

Editor:

Man has always placed happiness among those conditions he seeks the most. History records for us the centuries of voices in search of this 'bit of heaven'. Yet history also acknowledges the blunders of men who seek this state of being.

Through the centuries we ask ourselves the same question: "Why am I not happy?" Perhaps man is not asking the right question of himself. Perhaps he

should be asking the question: "What is happiness?"

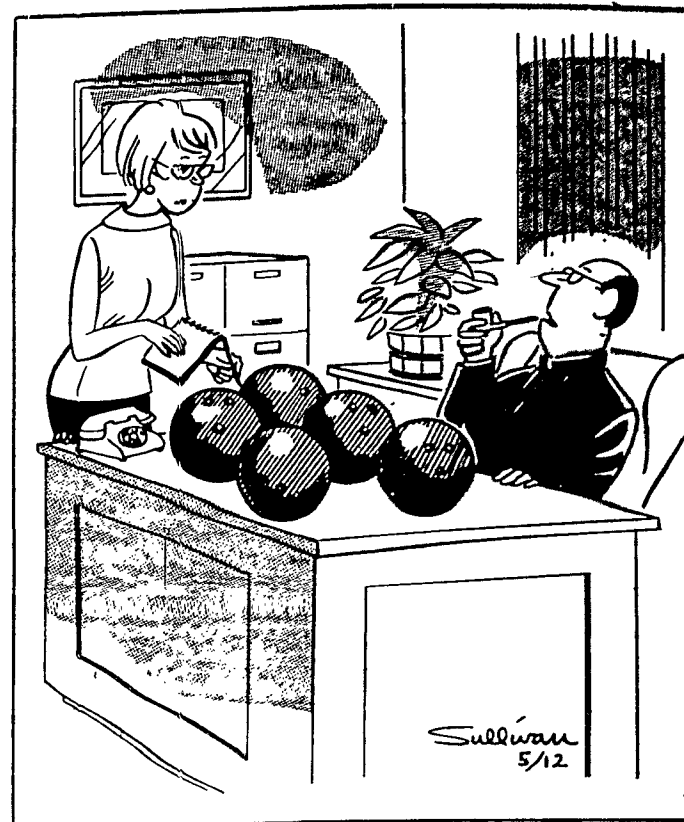
Happiness comes with freedom, and freedom comes only when man humbles himself, that is, when man dies to his selfish pride. Happiness comes with peace and peace comes with that calm within a man's spirit, and that comes only from the order of Divine Grace. Happiness comes with joy, true joy, that can come only with the fire of Divine Love, and that fire is the Holy Spirit of God.

Happiness is not something. He is Someone! He who is the true essence of happiness. Man, who is made in His likeness must

be a man who gives of the essence. This is a man of fellowship, a man socially concerned. The man of happiness is the man filled and tempered with an anxious love, maintaining "His" presence in every area of contemporary life.

Contemporary society is calling out to tell us what we already know, that is, that the world is full of unhappiness. Men protest because of unhappiness and the conditions that are a result of that unhappiness. Perhaps men should protest against the cause instead of just the symptoms. Man needs to return to the silence of his spirit so that he can hear the Voice of happiness. It is then that men can act, because then men have heard the Voice of happiness. Camus seems to contain the concept so well when he writes: "To protest against a world of unhappiness you must first create happiness."

Matthew R. Paratore,
Becket Hall Seminary



"CALL THE TEAM CAPTAIN. TELL HIM I TOOK CARE OF THE BLESSING, AND GOOD LUCK IN THE TOURNAMENT!"

FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday

Sunday Readings: (R1) Acts 2: 1-11 (R2) 1 Cor. 12: 3-7, 12-13. (R3) Jn. 20: 19-23.

One of the ten labors of Hercules was to clean the Augean stables in a single day. King Augeas had thousands of cattle and their stalls had not been cleaned for thirty years. Hercules diverted the course of two rivers and made them flow through the stables in a great flood that washed them clean in no time.

For centuries filthy sin had piled mountain high in the world and corrupted the hearts of men. A great washing was needed. Our Lord, like a Hercules, unleashed the Holy Spirit. Like a mighty wind and a fervent fire He came to cleanse the world and the stables of men's hearts.

His coming was sudden. The Holy Spirit never works at a slow pace. He is swift as a strong driving wind. It is Satan who creeps like a serpent.

When Christ came to earth, He split time in two. When the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples of Christ, He marked the end of an epoch and the beginning of a new era. The old gave way to the new. The temple of Jerusalem yielded to the Mystical Body of Christ. The synagogue became the Church. The bud of Judaism had blossomed into Christ and the blossom had burst into the fruits of Pentecost. Dead men became alive. Tombs became temples. Sight discovered insight. The dead bones of Scripture took on the

new life of spirit and truth. From then on, the Holy Spirit has been sent forth into human history.

Men are slow to understand the influence of God in human affairs. F.D. Roosevelt once said: "In politics, nothing happens by accident. If it happens, you can bet it was planned that way." Can we say less of God and history? Shall we have plans and God have none? Is international finance, communism, science, chance, imagination, nature the explanation of everything that happens in the world? Is it of the Church?

The Acts of the Apostles gives a resounding no. The Spirit of God runs the world and the Church, believe it or not. That was what Pentecost was partially all about — the wind, the fire. The wind filled the house, to emblemize the Spirit's filling the Church. The cloud of fire — for Jews, long the symbol of divinity — with flames drooping, flapping, bellying, and tugging like pennants in the wind burst, like a skybomb on the fourth of July, into a hundred sparks of flaming tongues which rested on each person, to symbolize the diversity of operation of the one Spirit — "different gifts but the same Spirit" (R2).

Remember the story of the conversion of Saul. The Damascus experience halted him in full career. It also blinded him. In his blindness, Saul, like a good Jew, prayed. And prayer brought Ananias. And Ananias brought the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit changed, transformed, cleansed the heart of Saul. The predatory wolf became a lamb. He who had persecuted the Church became her greatest apostle.

Like a mighty wind the Spirit is blowing through the Church today. That is why so many empty rites and rituals have been swept away. Like a fervent fire the Spirit, too, is burning again in the hearts of men. That is why there is a focus more on what goes on within a man than on what goes on outside of him. God wants more than lip service. God wants more than externalism. He wants the heart — the heart with pure motives, the heart that is guileless, the sincere heart, the loving heart. Hearts that will speak in tongues of language that does not divide but unite, that does not wound but heal, that does not condemn but condones, that does not boast, but confesses sins; that does not enkindle hate but love. To each person the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good" (R2).

The Spirit has been sent to create anew the world and worldlings!

Parish School Alternative

Editor:

I have heard so much about the closing of the parochial school system that I feel I must express a reaction to the tone.

I have attended Catholic schools from grade school through graduate school, have taught in the public high school system, and am now a coordinator of religious education.

I would say that the parochial school has a good solid operating principle — that we provide for our children an atmosphere of religious belief and practice to educate them in a faith firmly founded in God.

The public school has a good operating principle — that children, no matter what their religious background, learn together, and broaden their outlook by exposure to each other's diverse background.

The drawback of the parochial school system seems to be the lack of exposure to diversity (though this is perhaps too simplistic) and that of the public schools, their lack of a total faith environment — which silently says to the students (or at least CAN say) that God, whether He exists or not, is not a necessary part of our everyday experience.

Because of the recent interpretations of the Constitution, there is a cry of "separation of Church and state" which means no funds and perhaps the collapse of the parochial school system.

I detect a note of panic (to put it mildly) among some of those who have supported the parochial school system for so long. I ask: "Is the parochial school system, as we have known it, the only way to provide a system which gives support to our highest values? Could not God, Who has given us the inspiration to come up with this answer, also give us a second inspiration which might even better answer our needs?"

I have in mind an ecumenical school system, the best of both — an atmosphere of belief in God, and the diversity of children from many faith backgrounds, taught in their particular faith, on a once-a-day basis, by someone of their religious persuasion, with an expected moral fibre that would better insure the continuance of our democratic system.

Ann E. Aman
Woodman Park

Editorial Disputed

Editor:

Your (Courier-Journal 4-26-72) editorial "Abortion, Vietnam War Separate Issues" prompts me to write as a means of questioning some of the author's conclusions and defending the man-in-the-street with his "weird sense of logic."

That abortion and Vietnam are separate issues is obvious. The moral principle common to both is the killing of the innocent. Your editorial begins, "A weird sense of logic is used by some people who criticize Church opposition to abortion on demand." Very few are criticizing the Church for her opposition to abortion — she would be failing in her mission if she did not do so. She is faulted for her lack of opposition to the Vietnam War. In abortion she repudiates killing of the innocent in a clear voice; in Vietnam she passively consents to it.

The Church speaks of the "sanctity of life" but loses her credibility when she reserves her moral indignation and condemnation for abortion only. She seems to be engaged in a fruitless academic exercise, debating the principles of proportionality and double effect, while thousands of innocent non-combatants are broken and dying every day in this cruel war of unprecedented savagery.

The failure of the Church in her witness against all killing of the innocent makes one wonder about the validity of moral education in the classical tradition.

Mrs. Sidney J. Wilkin
St. Paul St.,

Should End Parish Schools

Editor:

My grandparents, parents, myself and oldest children have gone the parochial school route. Despite this I believe that the time has come to phase out the elementary parochial school system. Considering that the Church is almost 2,000 years old the rise and fall of parochial education actually is a small part of that history.

Christ told the Apostles to spread His word. He did not tell them to start an elaborate school system to do this. Likewise He said, "Render to Caesar the things of Caesars." History, math, geography, school budgets, etc., are Caesar's. Our bishops, priests and nuns must return to the basics of devoting their time to spreading the word of God.

With regard to inner city schools, the responsibility of

their education rests with ALL, Catholics, Protestants, Jews, atheists, etc. by way of general taxation.

To use 80 percent of a parish resources to educate 30 percent of its children is no longer logical today. Elementary parochial schools have served their purpose. The era of the teaching nun, the main stay of parochial education, is almost at an end. If a parish wishes to continue with its school it should be allowed to do so but using its own resources.

More emphasis and improved CCD programs should be adopted in all parishes.

Bernard H. Florack
Brookview Drive

Missioner Gets Thanks

Editor:

In March my wife and I attended a family mission here at St. Patrick's Church in Elmira. It was the most inspiring mission that I have ever attended.

The priest who had the mission was the Rev. Joseph Bernier, SSS, from the Bronx. He is of French descent, born in Canada and later his family moved to New England.

He is a priest who can get through to the young as well as the old. Oh boy, did he have a sense of humor! I can remember Father Bernier Now, saying that some of the youth in the Bronx would go to confession and say, "Dig me, Father, for I have goofed."

Wouldn't it be wonderful if Father Bernier could give a family mission in every church of the diocese? I am sure it would be a mission not to be forgotten.

Father Rogers told me that the attendance was the largest of any mission held at St. Patrick's since World War II.

My wife and I would like to thank Father Egan, Father Rogers for inviting Father Bernier and for four inspiring nights we will never forget.

Joseph F. Murphy
Hoffman St.
Elmira

More Letters
Are On
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COURIER-JOURNAL

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Vol. 85, No. 1 May 17, 1972

Published weekly by the Rochester Catholic Press Association. Subscription rate: Single copy 15¢. Yearly subscription in U.S. \$8.00. Canada and South America \$9.00. Other foreign countries \$9.00. Offices: Richford Building, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604. (716) 547-7000. Second class postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.

