

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 1½ pages, typed double-spaced. Names and addresses should be included. The paper reserves the right to edit all letters.

Open Letter To President

Following are excerpts from an open letter from the president of the New York State Federation of the Citizens for Educational Freedom to President Nixon:

Dear Mr. President,

The enclosed clipping on flood relief indicates that public but not Catholic Schools are to receive emergency aid.

Our Federation cannot remain silent on what appears to be a callous disregard for parents with children in nonpublic

schools in areas where flood disaster already has imposed a monumental cost in human misery, frustration and economic disaster.

After confirming the essential facts of the article with Authorities in the Disaster Center from the Office of Emergency Preparedness and the Office of Education, we were advised parents of the affected nonpublic school (12 schools in the two-county area have been damaged with preliminary cost estimate approximating \$450,000) have three alternatives:

1. To wait new legislation (PL 91-606 and PL 874 now preclude aid to private elemen-

tary and secondary schools),

2. To send their children to the public schools, which are eligible for reimbursement of damages as well as additional funds needed to absorb the children of nonpublic schools, or

3. To request loans which carry an interest rate of 5-½% with a forgiveness clause of \$2,500.

We submit that these options frustrate, however unintentionally, your repeated commitment to aid nonpublic schools; that they are needlessly punitive and clearly inappropriate to the present disaster needs; and that they serve only to further limit the choice of parents who would prefer to send their children to nonpublic schools while creating dissent and division in communities where above all unity and coordinated effort are essential in the difficult days ahead.

In appealing to you we have relied on strengthened convictions resulting from the report of the President's Panel on Nonpublic Education. In distinguishing between "what is a human being and what is being human", it affirmed that "until public schools offer wider alternatives, it is not only legal, but right that nonpublic options be available." Further, that "Nonpublic-school supporters . . . must continue to offer a varied educational experience, use their freedom wisely, merit their tax free status, and earn a just measure of public support." Noting the responsibility for public response through legislative action, the report continues, " . . . public interest requires the Federal Government to take major initiatives toward a solution of the financial crisis in nonpublic education."

Our concern is not limited to the plight of Catholic schools, nor for that matter to nonpublic schools in the two counties of New York State to which the enclosure refers. Our concern — one in which we are persuaded you share — is to prevent further narrowing, if not total erosion, of parental choice.

George A. Kuipers,
President
New York State
Federation of CEF

On Parish Councils

Editor:

Many who read and fully assent to Vatican II documents and to the potential of parish councils cannot arrive at Father Louis Hohman's view of parish councils (Courier-Journal, 7-26-72) as a new ball game, with emphasis on the outward thrust of Christianity, while maintaining the necessity of personal piety and deep spirituality.

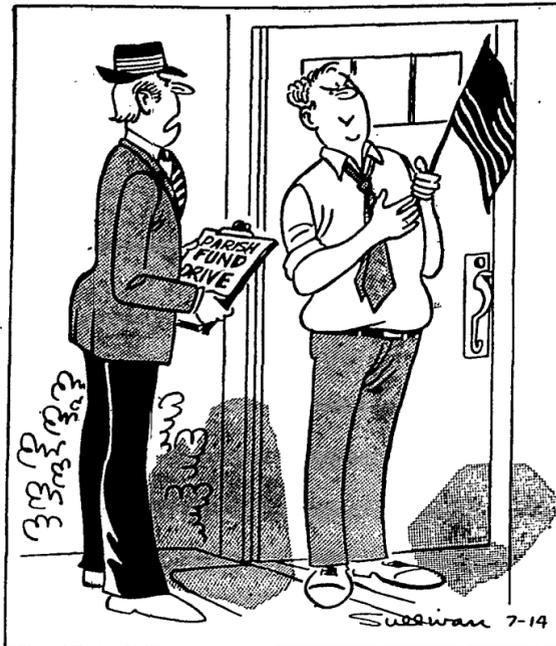
The pre-Vatican II existence of orphanages, hospitals, social service agencies, saints from St. Vincent de Paul to Mother Cabrini, and the printed word clearly show that the Church has continuously emphasized personal sanctification as the source for the thrust of Christianity. Has the church in the past failed to teach the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy and the Beatitudes?

Perhaps the Rochester Diocese did not use Religion — Doctrine and Practice (Copyright 1934) or similar high school texts to teach Catholic Action.

Through this text, Pope Pius XI teaches that Catholic Action "is the participation of the laity in the apostolate of the hier-

Parish councils must first, like the saints, respond to personal sanctification if they are to be fruitful in leading souls to God, rather than sterile funnels of secular humanism. Their personal

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"THAT ISN'T THE KIND OF PLEDGE I'M INTERESTED IN, MR. FLEMING, AND YOU KNOW IT!"

sanctification would be evident by their leadership in daily participation in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, in achieving obedience to all the Church teachings — receiving instruction and first Penance before First Holy Communion, kneeling and receiving Our Lord on the tongue, enlightening Sisters to the importance of obedience in giving visual communication through their religious garb, etc. — in changing our schools from education-centered to God-centered schools, whose children daily participate in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and grow in the spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, rather than in the ways and standards of the world.

Joseph J. Murray
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Church-State Separation?

Editor:

For some time, I have been reading about the separation of church and State. Confrontations have been in the Church from its earliest times, but in spite of human weaknesses, the Church does move on for God's glory and the good of souls. My opinion may be insignificant, but I would like to express it anyway.

I attended a public school in a small southern town, where there was no Catholic Church or private school. However, there was a Bible in each classroom, and we had a daily Bible verse — very much like those printed each day in our local evening paper, The Times-Union.

These last three years have been the most rewarding for me, as I have become involved and concerned about the Catholic schools. It is not my intention to criticize the public school system, or compare. There is something beautiful about a room full of children praying together.

Those of us who are happy to make the sacrifice of paying tuition for private schools, are still paying school taxes to support the public schools. I find myself wondering how high those taxes would go, if all of the private schools were closed. The governmental aid, if available, would be only a "drop in the bucket" compared to the expense of educating all children in public schools. It would be nice if we could designate which school our tax money was to be used for.

I cannot understand how any Church can be separated from anything. If one really lives his faith, it becomes a way of life, growing day by day. It isn't something to be brought out on Sunday, and put away the rest of the week. It's a beautiful gift that grows with use. If the mere fact that a person is Catholic makes federal aid unavailable, I think the time has come for a change. We are all Christians,

seeking the same goals. We must work together for the good of all mankind.

Mrs. Don Flowerday
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Sacred Heart Devotion

Editor:

October 20 will mark the third centenary of the first liturgical feast of the Sacred Heart. This very practical devotion which appeals to the intellect and sensibilities of the fervent Christian, as well as to the lukewarm and even the indifferent, had its beginnings through the inspiration of St. John Eudes.

Father Eudes, founder of the Congregation of Jesus and Mary (Eudists), conceived a Christ-centric approach in the presentation of religion in order to combat Jansenism which was widely held in the seventeenth century. He felt it necessary to call attention to the Divine-Human Person of Christ, with an appealing emphasis on the physical heart of Christ, the bodily organ which is regarded as the seat of human emotions, as still evidenced by song and expression.

Father Eudes carried his providential inspiration into action by composing an Office and Mass of the Sacred Heart in 1668-9, and the Mass was celebrated by Eudist communities Oct. 20, 1672.

A little more than a year later the first of Jesus' revelations, concerning His desire for devotion to His Sacred Heart, was given to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque.

The dynamic of the devotion to the Sacred Heart is a positive means of developing knowledge of the love of Jesus for the Father and for all mankind. If one intellectually accepts the truths expressed, the response must necessarily be one of faith in the divinity of Christ and a boundless trust in His love for all men. Such a response must be manifested by one's return of love to the God head, through Christ, and a deep-felt need to share in Christ's love for mankind. In practical terms, it is the day to day conscious relationship to God and concern for the spiritual and material welfare of all with whom one comes into direct or indirect contact.

I pray that the third centenary of the liturgical beginning of the Sacred Heart devotion may mark a resurgence of this dynamic approach to the reality of mankind's relationship to God and neighbor, and in its very relevant practical way, evoke a response which will hasten the spread of the Kingdom of God on earth.

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FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday



Sunday Readings: (R1) Kgs. 19: 9,11-13. (R2) Rom. 9: 1-5 (R3) Mt. 14: 22-23.

Elijah and Peter appeared in last Sunday's transfiguration story of Jesus. They reappear this Sunday. Both the dejected Elijah and the impulsive Peter discovered in storms something about God.

The Elijah incident followed upon his greatest success: the contest with the 500 priests of Baal on Mount Carmel. On that occasion, fire came down from heaven to vindicate Elijah's claim that he spoke for the true God of Israel. The people, in consequence, rose up and slew the prophets of Baal. The wicked queen, Jezebel, had not witnessed these happenings. But when she heard about them, she became enraged. She ordered the death of Elijah. Even saints panic. Elijah fled and hid in a cave on Mount Horeb. There, God spoke to him, but only after preparing Elijah by sending a hurricane, earthquake, and fire.

Elijah felt that earthquake and thunder were the expression of the nature of God. Elijah tried to win Israel to God by force. He magnified the strictness of God with a zeal that God would not own. In the silence of Horeb, however, Elijah discovered another side to God — His great gentleness, that there is a better way to win men. Where thunder-and-lightning oratory and earth-shaking miracles had failed, gentleness would succeed. So Elijah did not find the Lord in the wind, the earthquake nor the fire but "in a tiny whispering sound," as if to teach that God loves to work gently, softly, and unperceived.

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