

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 1/2 pages, typed double-spaced. Names and addresses should be included. The paper reserves the right to edit all letters.

Comment On 'Open Window'

Editor:

The reply of Father Hohman in *The Open Window* Courier-Journal 8/2/72 did not answer the questions submitted: 1. Why does not the Church accept voluntary vasectomy; 2. How long will she preclude a good alternative to the wholesale slaughter of innocence?

The Pope's encyclical, *Humanae Vitae* teaches "... each and every marriage act must remain open to the transmission of life. To use this divine gift, destroying, even if only partially, its meaning and purpose, is to contradict the nature of both man and woman" (Art. 13). "Equally to be excluded ... is di-

rect sterilization, whether perpetual or temporary." "To justify conjugal acts made intentionally infertile, one cannot invoke as valid reason the lesser evil ... even when the intention is to safeguard or promote individual, family or social well-being" (Art. 14).

This is the answer. Contraception and sterilization cannot be accepted as a means of avoiding abortion or of solving family or social problems. The end does not justify the means.

The Holy Father states that *Humanae Vitae* is authoritative teaching. He has not lessened its binding force. Theologians do not have teaching authority. They can merely offer opinions. *Humanae Vitae's* unambiguous, authoritative teaching provides the layman with an "informed conscience." No one

is allowed to follow his own individual conscience when he knows the authoritative teaching of the Holy Father on a moral question. He then has an "informed" conscience, which he must follow.

With reference to *Humanae Vitae*, and with pastoral concern, Pope Paul said, "We do not at all intend to hide the sometimes serious difficulties inherent in the life of Christian married persons; for them, as for everyone else, 'the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life'. But the hope of life must illuminate their way."

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Seminary Needs Books

Editor:

I and my family were so pleased at the announcement of the arrival of the Divine Word priest, Father Stanley Farier, SVD, to our city and to St. Lucy's pastorate.

We, who have been supporters of the Divine Word missionaries' effort among the blacks of America's southland, have in Father Farier a product of that sincere work. (Though Father is from the West Indies.)

One of the Divine Word pioneering efforts was a minor seminary for blacks at Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, of which Father Farier is an alumnus, and it has come to our attention that this seminary suffered greatly as a result of Hurricane Camille, which struck the South some time ago, and the seminary is still trying to recover from that tragedy.

The seminary's most recent appeal is for the donation of books to their library, which has yet to be returned to pre-hurricane condition.

The appeal is for "books of an adult nature and on a college-university level: theology, church history, literature, biography, history and good fiction." The address: Faculty Library, St. Augustine's Divine Word Seminary, Bay St. Louis, Miss. 39520
Dominick White
293 Youngs Ave.
Rochester 14606

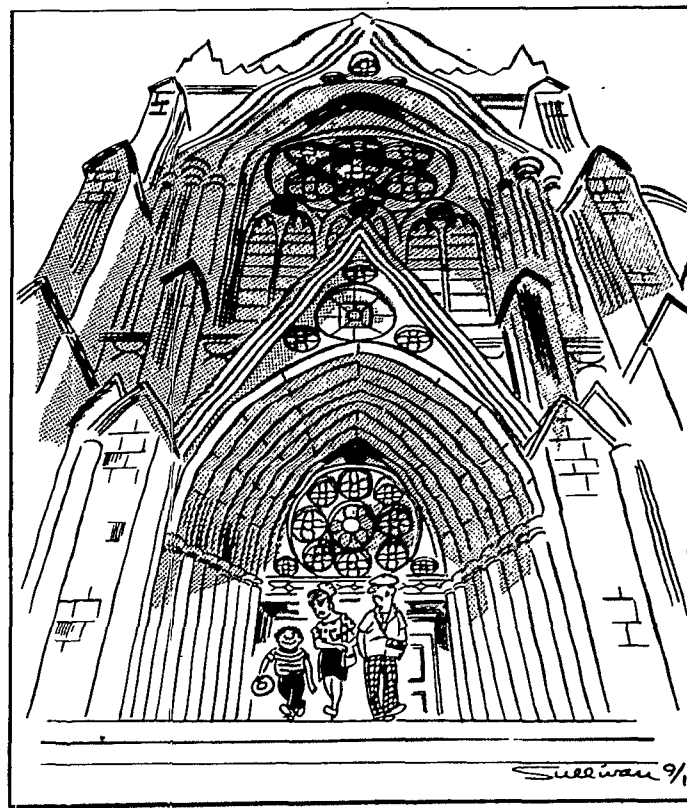
A Wise Man Is Childlike

Editor:

The U.S. Catholic Bishops have ruled against the receiving of Holy Communion in the hand and have asked obedience in this matter "for the good of the church." Consequently, the U.S. Bishops have not asked the Holy See for dispensation of the normal Church attitude and practice of receiving Our Lord on the tongue while kneeling. Under these circumstances, distributing or receiving Holy Communion in the hand is unquestionably very offensive to God — a mortal sin when not done in ignorance, and done deliberately.

In the wisdom of God's Light, man's brilliance and capabilities are recognized as imperfect knowledge which is not far from that of infants, and far below the intelligence of angels and devils. Our Lord warns us that we must grow to recognize ourselves as little children, and respond to God with the faith, love and willing obedience of a child. Our Lord teaches that a wise man is one who hears His words (through His Church, of which He is the Head) and acts on them. A wise man is childlike!

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"BEFORE WE WENT IN, WHAT DID I TELL YOU ABOUT THAT FRISBEE?"

FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday



Sunday Readings: (R1) Is. 22: 15, 19-23. (R2) Rom. 11: 33-36. (R3) Mt. 16: 13-20.

The best Old Testament witness to the type of office our Lord intended for St. Peter is the passage from Isaiah in Reading One. Shebna is being replaced as the King's viceroys. He was master of the King's palace — the key of the House of David. His powers embraced those of the King himself.

Oscar Cullmann of the Swiss Reform Church was written the best work on St. Peter to date. But Cullmann cannot accept the transmission of Peter's authority. He recognizes the primacy of Peter, but will not admit that this same power was given to anyone following him. Thus for Cullmann, as for so many other Christians, the Papacy is an insuperable hurdle.

Sunday's gospel has strong apologetic value for the primacy of Peter and its transmission. To get the full impact of the passage, we must get behind the mind of Matthew who wrote it. Matthew envisioned Jesus as a new Moses founding a new Israel. His gospel, coming from around the year 80 A.D., might be called an ecclesiological manual. He views our Lord in reference to the Church. From Chapter 16 to the end, Matthew takes the words of Christ and applies them to the Church in the year 80 A.D.

Peter's confession of the divinity of Jesus is found in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. But only in Matthew is Peter's confession of Jesus paralleled by Jesus' confession of Peter. "You are Rock."

The point worth noting is that in Matthew we have gathered elements which either are not in the other traditions or are found in them at different times in Peter's life.

For instance, in Matthew, Jesus supposedly gives Peter his name on this occasion, at the middle of his public life. In the John tradition Peter is given his name at the beginning of Jesus' public life.

In the Lucan tradition the primacy is conferred at the Last Supper. "I have prayed that your faith never fail ... strengthen your brothers" (Lk. 22:32).

Matthew was a bookkeeper. Like any bookkeeper, whose job is to keep orderly records, Matthew tended to lump the same things together. He puts all the parables together, all the controversies together, all the words of our Lord together. (for example, in the Sermon on the Mount). Can we not say that Matthew in today's gospel has brought together everything our Lord ever gave to St. Peter and set them forth in this expertly chiseled passage so that everything Jesus gave Peter would strike us right between the eyes?

But why would Matthew do this around 80 A.D., when Peter was already long dead? (Peter had died around 63 A.D.) Why would an evangelist, in the year 80, at the very beginning of that section in his gospel where he starts to apply the words of Jesus to the Church, why would he so highlight this scene — yes, why? Can it not be that Matthew realized that what was given to Peter was all meaningful to the Church in the year 80, precisely because there was someone at that time in the Church to whom the things given to Peter had also been transmitted? Can it not be that putting all the things Jesus had given Peter into one passage was a literary device on Matthew's part? A literary device to emphasize the importance of what was given Peter for the Church in the year 80? In other words, was this not Matthew's defense of the Papacy in the year 80?

In giving power to Peter and his lawful successors, Christ was providing for our needs. He who has the keys can open to us the kingdom of heaven.

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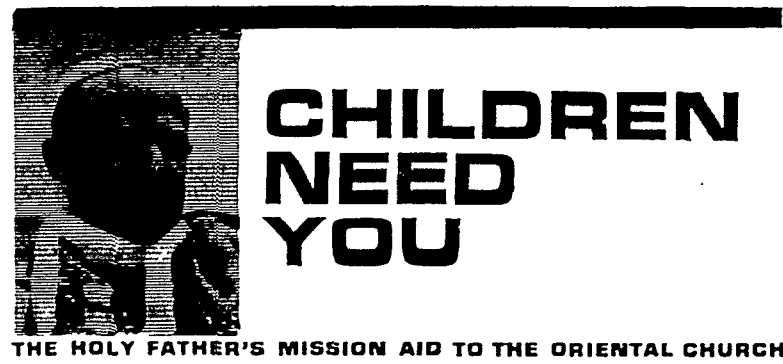
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