

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.

War—Some People Like It

Editor:

Re "No War is Popular" (Courier-Journal Letters, Nov. 22)

May I suggest to the writer that war is extremely popular in several quarters? I believe that it is popular with egocentric, ambitious, proud, economic empire-building interests and individuals as well as with corrupt self-oriented persons who care little or nothing about the ordinary citizens of any nation.

May I suggest that the people of Vietnam might weather fairly well the imposition of an ideology, distasteful as the thought of Communist takeover might be. Agreed that Communism is certainly more than an attitude, but this particular country is historically well equipped to accommodate this event.

What I suggest is: What they can neither tolerate nor survive are defoliated forests and fields, burned villages and cratered roads, dead and deformed citizens who cannot work. A citizenry can hardly cope with or modify a difficult political situation if its people and lands are devastated.

May I ask who has profited from this undeclared war? What sort of desire has been satisfied by the sufferings of all our people? War must provide some sort of satisfaction to some people, or it wouldn't occur — certainly it would not continue.

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How About Referendum?

Editor:

I consider myself one of the "silent majority" (the neglected

faithful) of the Catholic Church. Having read the English translation of Fr. Philipps' letter in the Courier Nov. 29, I would like to say something for the Latin Mass. For too long now, we have stood by and watched the liberal elements in and out of our Church turn what was holy and sacred to us all into one great grey mass. Fr. Philipps says, "the devotees of Latin and ancient music should gather in the music halls to enjoy their arts, not in the assembly of the faithful." I suggest a more Christian attitude and say let those who want the "modern Mass" be allowed to have it, but why take away from us who believe in the sanctity of the Latin Mass and all that was true for centuries, the right to observe and participate in the Latin Mass? A few weeks ago, I had the privilege to attend a Latin Mass at Sacred Heart in Auburn. I dare say this parish has never seen as many people at Mass before, nor were they ever more reverent.

Ever since Vatican II, the Bishops have embarked on a modernization of the Church to make it relevant and bring more youth into the fold. According to Mr. William F. Buckley, not only has this failed, but it has worked in reverse to a tune of 23% drop off in the attendance at Mass.

A few years ago, the Bishops of this country received quite a surprise to find that the laity voted for the retention of Holy Days of Obligation when given a referendum. I suggest that since the liberals have had their way and it has proven (by attendance) to be faulty, that maybe it is time for our Bishops to listen to their "silent majority" through another referendum.

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No Jewish Leprechauns

Editor:

Why is it that Irish-Americans show so little of the generosity and dedication in backing the persecuted Catholics in the six occupied counties of Ireland compared to the zeal of the Jews for Israel?

I think the explanation may lie with the leprechauns. There are, of course, no Jewish leprechauns to play tricks on the Zionists. They are purely Irish.

In the revolt against God, Lucifer and his demons fought on the side of evil while Michael the Archangel and his host of angels championed good. There were, however, angels who took no side. They preferred to sit the war out. After the triumph of those who served the Lord, Satan was consigned to hell while Michael and his followers were rewarded with paradise.

God resolved the problem of the apathetic angels by settling them in Ireland. Unconcerned as they were about big moral issues, they spend their time on petty mischief such as causing milk to sour, but no one with a drop of Irish blood doubts their powers.

Now, it seems, they have decided to play pranks in America. They have infected Irish-Americans with their own moral indifference.

When a collection is taken to aid the victims of the violence caused by British misrule, those dominated by the leprechauns suggest that the money will probably go for guns or whiskey. When world public opinion needs to be aroused at flagrant cases of discrimination, these people, like the leprechauns, are on the fence, passive observers of evil.

There is yet hope, for it is good Catholic doctrine that God gives us the grace to overcome all temptations, even that of the

Wednesday, December 13, 1972



"SO WHAT IF PEOPLE DON'T BELIEVE YOU! CHEER UP — IT'S NOT THE END OF THE WORLD!"

leprechauns. Let Irish-Americans examine their consciences for sins of omission and then give of their time and money to help those who suffer persecu-

tion for justice sake in Ireland's six unhappy counties.

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FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday



Sunday's Readings: (R1) Is. 61:1-2, 10-11. (R2) 1 Thes. 5:16-24. (R3) Jn. 1:6-8, 19-28.

One of the three great figures of Advent is John the Baptist. He was the bridge between the old and the new.

The old religion of Judaism was breaking up. In summertime when leaves are green, the oneness of color is a sign of life. But in autumntime, when leaves become a riot of colors, it is not a sign of life but rather a sign that the hand of death has touched them. So it was with Judasim. The multiplicity of sects at the time of John was not a sign of life but of its death.

There were the Pharisees, who had made a religion of rites and ritual. The Sadducees reduced religion to reason: they rejected anything that could not be proved in a cold, dry, scientific manner. The Essenes were dreamers. And the Herodians, worst of all, equated religion and politics.

No wonder John came out of the desert and not the city. He came straight from God and spoke for God — that is what a prophet is. He urged, "Make straight the way of the Lord."

The sun rises every morning and stays with us all day. But to enjoy his blessings one must open the draperies and raise the shades. To receive any blessing, one must be disposed or fit to receive it. If we take a blind man to an art gallery, what good is it? The pictures are there, but he has no sight. Or a deaf man to a concert? The music has no way to reach his heart.

But what if we, in our wilfulness, will not see? Will not listen? What then?

St. Paul says there are three avenues to make straight the way for the Lord to us: "Rejoice always, never cease praying, render constant thanks" (R2). What a wonderful Advent program — to work on joy for one week, then on prayer, and then on gratitude!

First rejoice always. If it be Christian to alleviate the outward miseries of mankind, then the cultivation of a cheerful spirit is even a more imperative duty. Money diminishes external miseries, but a cheerful spirit heals the griefs that gnaw the heart. Saints are rare: but joyful Christians are rarer.

After saying, "Rejoice always," Paul adds, "never cease praying." For prayer is the source of joy. St. Francis deSales, in listing the remedies for sadness puts prayer at the top of the list.

Finally, when joy and prayer are wedded, their first child is gratitude.

At the end of the American Revolutionary War, George III of England declared a day of thanksgiving.

His chaplain objected, "Why such a day? Is it because you lost the brightest jewels in your crown — the thirteen colonies?"

"No, not for that," answered the king.

"Then why?" insisted the chaplain. "For what shall we give thanks?"

"Thank God," said George vehemently. "Thank God, because matters are not worse."

We have so much to thank God for, to pray for — yes, to rejoice always for.

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