

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.

Old Traditions Preferred

Editor:

After much ado about the modern situation of the Church I can only say that it stems from the fact that the clergy ordained it and wants to see it function. The fact is known as far back as the early 40s, the young clergy wished for changes and that many endorsed it.

Let me state that we now have these changes and so what changes. They changed so fast and regrettably so that the faith-

ful were never given a voice or vote in making any of these changes. The faithful are requested today to voice their opinions, but when it was not in favor to ask them for changes in the liturgy, they were ignored. Latin is beautiful and meaningful. Why should I, who was reared in a Catholic grammar and high school, who learned Catholicism from the cradle, now strive to sing a melody foreign to my teachings — look upon long-haired priests, style-setting nuns and many other forms of modern day Catholicism. They can keep it all. I quit.

They can call it a Year of Renewal if they want. I'm looking

for the revival of old traditions and hymns and until all sides are heard and not just the noisy ones, who are now in direction of the Church will the faithful, the donors of the Church be heard. I've heard enough of the orators speak out every time one of the faithful speak out in the Courier. Let them be silent. They have been heard long enough. Give me the quiet of a low Mass, one that was Universal. Pax tecum."

Joseph Haszlawer
185 Knickerbocker Ave.,
Rochester, N.Y.

Who Are True Prophets?

Editor:

Jeanne Dixon, self-proclaimed and media-accepted Catholic prophetess (a pretension unfortunately unchallenged) has said that it does not matter what one's religion is.

Even a cursory knowledge of scripture and history would disprove this contention. Her use of crystal ball, cards, astrology and other superstitious nonsense does her further discredit. Our effort to be a priestly, royal, and prophetic people is jeopardized by error, and sins of superstition as well as by overt acts.

The prophetic role is and has always been one of moral exhortation and for a present-day prophet we could not do better than Pope Paul VI with his penetrating and God-given prerogative of shepherd of the Church. May I suggest the Courier reader will find the English language L'Osservatore Romano containing the pontiff's weekly discourses available for \$15 yearly. Address: L'Osservatore Romano, Vatican City.

For the true prophetesses, many of the women in Birthright, Women for the Unborn and Right to Life prayerfully and courageously defend human life often against bitter lies, physical and mental harassment, snide remarks and obstacles, even from members of the Church.

Louis J. Pasqua
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Geneva

Should Take Stronger Action

Editor:

At the recent meeting of American bishops in Washington, it was proposed that they provide funds for programs to foster reconciliation in the six Irish counties under British rule. The specific projects suggested were the reconstruction of 200 homes destroyed by mob violence in August 1971, and the filming of an encounter group trying to reach understanding.

While both activities are safe front controversy, they would have no more than cosmetic effect. Oppression is inevitable when a society has two clearly defined groups, one numerically weak and economically, politically and socially deprived, while the other controls all sources of power, including massive financial and military support from Great Britain. Reconciliation has not the ghost of a chance without rectification of this imbalance.

The bishops face a paradox — that reconciliation can only come out of partisanship. Sincere dedication to brotherhood involves responsibility to confront vested interests. An innocuous program will get only inconsequential results. Our bishops should make a deliberate effort to strengthen the minority through development of leaders. Since the flight of the earls from Ulster in 1607, Ireland has been systematically denuded of its leaders by one means or another.

Wednesday, January 3, 1973

Beyond the Stained Glass



"IF THIS THING CRASHES, I'LL REALLY BE DISAPPOINTED!"

Grants to poor youths from minority families to study at universities for decision making occupations can put accountants in the banks, engineers in the shipyards and factories, journalists in the mass media and business administrators in commerce where they will be able to defend the interests of their group against unfair behavior. A proportionate distribution in the power structure can make pluralism work because discrimination can no longer be practiced with impunity.

The outstanding feature of society in northeastern Ireland is its meagerness. What is needed is a society recognizing human dignity and allowing the individual to develop his full talents. The American bishops should use their resources to create an environment in which Christianity can flourish.

George M. Korb
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Rensselaer, N.Y.

3rd Way Advised

Editor:

Father Paul Cuddy's column of Dec. 6, in which he drew an analogy between the issues of slavery in 1857 and abortion in 1972 is very apt. However, the error is that at both moments in history, false dilemmas are posed which limit the choice to two evils and ignore a third choice which is good.

The anti-slavery people can be forgiven for not knowing that racism would deny political equality, economic justice and civil liberties to the freed slaves. We have no excuse.

The anti-abortionists are posing a false dilemma by limiting the choice to an abortion or the birth of an unwanted child, doomed to a life of neglect and all its consequences.

The anti-abortionists have the responsibility to sponsor and support financially a third way — the setting up of an organization that will guarantee the welfare of the unwanted child. We must guarantee the child a right to a decent life, not a mere neglected existence.

The need for this positive action is now, regardless of the question of the legality of abortion. Not until then, will we have the moral right to tell legislators to repeal the present abortion law.

Could not this be a Christian and humane task for Birthright or Human Development?

Walter O'Hagan
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'Read Book On Abortion'

Editor:

In the Courier-Journal, 12-6-72, Father Cuddy mentioned in his excellent column on abortion, K. D. Whitehead's book, "Respectable Killing—The New Abortion Imperative". Mr. Whitehead is executive vice president of the National Catholics United for the Faith and a member of the Maryland Human Life Committee. Preliminary indications are that a number of bishops, priests and Right-to-Life groups consider his book outstanding.

Edward B. Hanify, chairman of the Human Life Foundation, and Dr. William Marra, professor of Philosophy at Fordham University, believe it to be, along with the Wilkes' "Abortion Handbook", one of the finest books on the subject. It is very comprehensive and covers such areas as the so-called "Population Explosion"; the new morality; medical, social and legislative aspects, as well as the dissenting views of Father Charles Curran, Dr. Louis Lasagna, Planned Parenthood and many others. It has the imprimatur of Cardinal O'Boyle.

The Rochester Chapter of CUF has a number of these books available at \$3 per copy. We feel in view of the conditions existing today this book would be in the truest sense of the word a "meaningful" Christmas gift. Please address all requests to me. Thank you.

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Bouquets And A Question

Editor:

Bouquets to the Courier-Journal for a great Christmas issue. Starting on page three, I'd like to second Carmen Viglucci's wishes except I am wondering what the Trappists ever did to him. Why not send Agnew back to Greece? Skipping to page seven, if there is a better 1972 Christmas story than George Beahon's "The Leaper And The Gestapo," I haven't read it and I wish he'd do more of the same!

Finally, this mother of five has one more comment. Regarding Father G. Stuart Hogan's letter to the editor: "Father, if the average couple makes it to their 30th wedding anniversary, if the zero population concept is necessary, isn't that an awful lot of affection for even devout Catholics who recited God is all just, God is all merciful, way back in first grade?"

Mrs. Richard Rapp
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FR. ALBERT SHAMON Word For Sunday



Sunday's Readings: (R1) Is. 60: 1-6. (R2) Eph. 3: 2-3, 5-6. (R3) Mt. 2: 1-12.

Sunday is the feast of the Epiphany. Maybe a who's who for Epiphany is in order.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea. In the infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke, the one point on which both agree is that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. This little town lies about six miles south of Jerusalem. Bethlehem means "house of bread." It got its name because of the fertility of the surrounding countryside. In this town, David was born. Jews expected the Messiah to come from it.

Jesus' birth was during the last two or three years of the reign of King Herod. Herod reigned from 37 to 4 B.C. Marc Antony put him on the throne. A man of great energy and ability, Herod embellished Jerusalem, rebuilt its Temple, and won the surname "the Great." However, insanely

suspicious, he murdered many of his ten wives and not a few of his own children. Caesar Augustus joked in Rome that it was safer to be Herod's pig than his son. Caesar was punning, for the Greek word for pig is *hus* and for son, *huios*. The slaughter of the Holy Innocents was, entirely in keeping with the cruelty of Herod's character.

At Jesus' birth, astrologers came from the East. Sometimes they are called "the Magi." The Persian word "magi" confirms that these visitors were men skilled in things sacred, especially in the worship of astral deities. Hence for Jews they were the most pagan of pagans.

Elsewhere in the New Testament, the Magi are very unfavorably portrayed. Simon Magus (Acts 8) and Elymas (Acts 13) practiced magic. Since myrrh and incense are the usual components of charms, it is possible that Matthew here symbolically represents the members of this profession as laying down their instruments (incense and myrrh) and their profits (gold) at the feet of the Child and his mother.

The three gifts led to the surmise that there were three magi. It took 14 centuries of tradition to name them Kaspar (Moor), Balthasar, and Melchior — black, yellow, and white to express the universality of God's call.

From the gifts of the Magi came the custom of giving gifts at Christmas. And because the gifts were given to a child, Christmas has always been a children's feast.

What is the message of Epiphany?

St. Paul termed its message as God's secret plan, namely, that everybody is to share in the good news about Jesus (R2).

To make this message clear, God used a tele-star. Twice it appeared: once to tell the Magi to start out, and once to tell them they had arrived. All the in-between was faith.

Today three communications satellites, or tele-stars, circle the earth. They can bring the world together. They make us aware of peoples everywhere, of the enormous variety of cultures and subcultures. They also reveal that though peoples are different, they are basically one. Maybe this vision from the stars will touch our hearts to become more understanding, more universal-minded.

Tele-stars telecast in moments disasters, floods, the ravages of war. By exposing the miseries of the Third World, maybe they will prompt us to count our blessings.

The new technologies cannot save mankind. But they can serve mankind. They can let us see that redemption is needed everywhere, that men yearn for what Jesus has to give.

Truly, then, we shall be wise men.

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