

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.

Act Now On Abortion

The Supreme Court passed on its decision to prevent the States from interfering with a woman's right to control her own body and thereby do away with an unwanted pregnancy. What they actually have said is that our Constitution, which they must uphold and defend, does not make any reference to the unborn and therefore, it can not legislate for or against; but must honor the right of personal privacy accounted for in the Bill of Rights.

Some people think the battle to preserve life is now lost and

that our whole society is headed unchecked, toward a Hitler state where any unwanted faction is put to death without regard to its personal rights. Nobody forces a woman to keep her unwanted child but it's time for us to realize that with freedom comes responsibility and that if she subjected her body to the act that conceived him, she must sustain him till he can go it alone.

If we permit this present abortion law to remain on the books, we have certainly degenerated to the Nazi philosophy. The people of the world 60 years ago did not speak up till it got out of hand and only a world war could stop it. Even in our own country, to reverse the Dred Scott Decision declaring the Negro "not a

person", a civil war was necessary.

That little innocent can not fight for himself. I am calling on all uncommitted citizens who still have faith in the Constitution as our tool to preserve this democracy to do as our forefathers did — stand up and be counted. If it is wrong to kill, then it's wrong from the very beginning. Just because the unborn is minute, it does not render him unhuman.

Do something. Write letters to your representatives, to newspapers, to each other; make speeches in pulpits, in schools, to your family. Become educated and involved. Our failure to act to this point forced this decision to be pronounced. Now our constitution must be amended to define person and include the unborn. Let's not use abortion to solve all our other social problems. No matter how honorable the reasons, murder can not be the answer for a nation that wears lapel pins saying "Peace" and "Love".

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Money Policies Challenged

Editor:

Re: Xerox and Kodak are NCC Targets (Courier-Journal, 1/24/73). Few corporations of any significance are not guilty of the same practices with which the NCC charges the Giants. Their policy is by no means confined to apartheid black Africa; but is pursued with the same abandon in all the underdeveloped hinterlands of the free world.

Deplorable practices to be sure; but this case for "investments" is purely a matter of the pot calling the kettle black. Churches and religious institutions, concerned over business ethics, would do well to extend that concern into the vast area of their own involvement — the entire investment climate.

To illustrate: A recent article in the Times Union stated that "A person who got a share of Eastman Kodak in 1918 would have 647 shares today" — a clear profit of \$78,405 without turning a hand.

Evidently that amount does not include dividends.

And Kodak stock is not the exception; it is more the rule. One concrete example should serve the purpose of this letter: Namely to point out the true nature of "investments" — to challenge their compatibility with every tenet of Judaism and Christianity alike.

Accumulation of paper fortunes in the stock market is a by-product of inflation (overexpansion of the nation's money supply) — an evil instrument that permits the earned wages of the masses to be amassed unearned by "investors".

Inflation robs the poor to support the rich. Socialism robs the rich to support the poor. Both are an affront to a just God, and in violation of the Constitution of the United States, which He inspired (the church of Latter-day Saints believe this. The writer concurs). Both are anathema to freedom.

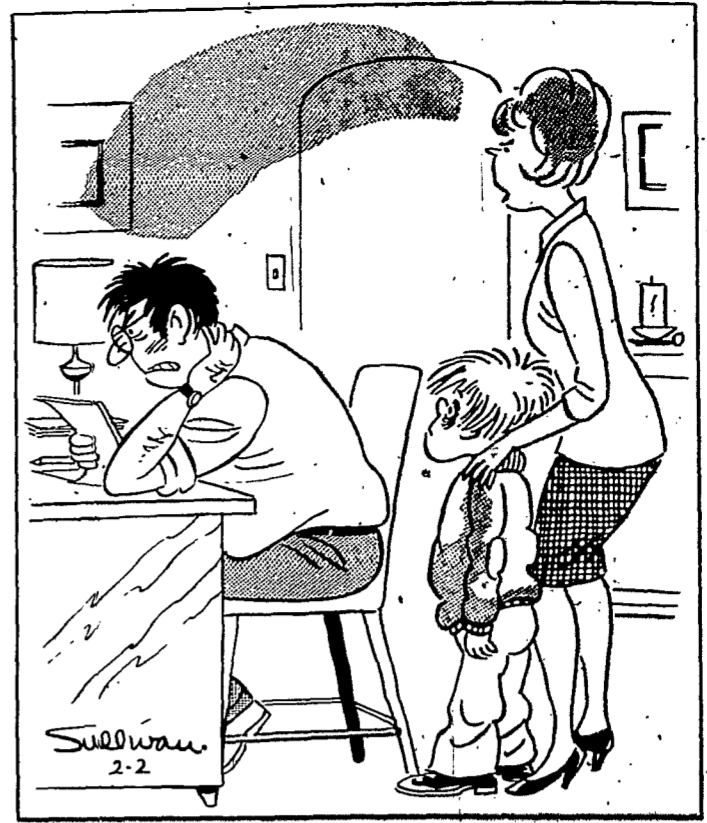
Ponder well what inflation and its fellow-travelling investments have done to the lower income brackets of our society; and don't forget for one moment that "ye did it to Me".

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What Is True Ecumenism?

Editor:

For Catholics, "ecumenism" means friendliness to other
Wednesday, February 7, 1973



"WE'RE WAITING, GEORGE." IF TIMMY IS SUPPOSED TO FORGIVE PHIL PASTORET FOR PUNCHING HIM IN THE EYE, WHY CAN'T YOU FORGIVE THE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE?"

churches. A friend is one who is kind and considerate. As Catholics, we recognize that God gives actual graces to those not of our faith that they may be able to do good and avoid evil. They also can receive sanctifying grace, by which they share in the Divine Nature, through baptism of water or desire. Ecumenism does not imply that the other churches are of apostolic origin, that they have Divine authority to preach or to confer the sacraments.

Ecumenism does not mean that we, together with the other churches, represent many Christian traditions, each capable of enriching the others and together forming the facets of the Gospel gem. The traditions of the other Christian churches are not of Apostolic origin. They were started by men who have always been regarded by the Church as formal heretics.

The Deposit of Faith, the sum total of the teachings of Christ and His apostles, was entrusted to the Apostolic Catholic Church by the Divine Teacher to be safeguarded and preserved without error as long as men live on this earth. The Church alone teaches the gospel message in its entirety.

Because the various traditions contain much that is error, it cannot truly be said that "each enriches the other". Religions which destroy belief in the Real Presence and deny the Eucharistic sacrifice, certainly have nothing to offer in return which is comparable. Certain churches have officially gone on record as favoring abortion. Bishop Spears of the Episcopal diocese took the trouble to make a special trip to Albany to testify in favor of the present abortion law. Are we to regard his actions as enriching our Christian heritage?

Unity is primary. Communion is primary. Nothing else matters. Our Lord prayed that all

might be one. There can be no true unity in the Church or in society unless men are united in truth. The bible is the inspired and infallible Word of God. It is a text book; not a teacher. It needs a teacher, a living voice, to interpret, explain and amplify its teachings. This office of teaching all mankind was entrusted by Christ to the infallible and indefectible Church which He founded. The mission of the Church is to unite all men through the gospel message. This is ecumenism in its highest form.

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A Question On Habits

Editor:

Reading the Courier-Journal of Jan. 17, I turned to page 11. There was a picture of the parish worship committee of St. Charles Borromeo Church. I couldn't believe my eyes.

As I understand it, the abandonment of habits and clerical dress has never been authorized by the Church.

The Vatican II decree on religious life said that the religious habit, an outward mark of consecration to God, should be simple, modest and poor, but at the same time becoming.

Pope Paul said on June 29, 1971, that the dress of religious men and women should be as the Council wishes, a sign of their consecration, and that it should be in some way different from the forms that are clearly secular. I believe this directive has been repeated three times, the last about six months ago.

If I am wrong, will someone please correct me?

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FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday



Sunday's Readings: (R1) Lv. 13: 1-2, 44-46, (R2) 1 Cor. 10: 31, 11: 1, (R3) Mk. 1: 40-45.

The Old Testament reading this Sunday gives a picture of the horror men in the ancient world had for leprosy. Leprosy was a living death. The leper literally buried himself — muffled his beard and cried out, "Unclean, unclean!" The disease separated him from his family and people. "He shall dwell apart, making his abode outside the camp."

Thus leprosy has always been a symbol of sin. Sin is death in life. Sin alienates a man from God and his fellow man. The Responsorial Psalm calls sin "trouble," "a fault," "guilt."

Both leprosy and sin were almost incurable afflictions. Then Jesus came! He broke through the discriminating attitude of Old Testament days and did what no man was permitted to do: He touched a leper! Then and there, the leprosy left the man. The miracle was a symbol of His power.

Later on, our Lord showed that He willed to exercise this same power over the leprosy of sin. To the paralytic He said, "Your sins are forgiven." To the apostles, "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them."

As the leper first came to Jesus seeking a cure, the only condition Jesus sets for the forgiveness of sins is that the sinner ask for it. The psalmist proclaimed this: "I confess my faults to the Lord, and you took away my sins."

However, stemming from

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Courier-Journal

World War II, an abusive practice has arisen in the Church.

For multitudinous reasons, usually invalid ones, general sacramental absolution for serious sins is sometimes being given without private confession. This abuse became so widespread that the Holy Father saw fit on June 16, 1972, to condemn this practice. Concerning general sacramental absolution for serious sins, he reaffirmed the traditional norms.

1. Private confession remains the only ordinary way to be reconciled to God and the Church.

2. In cases of imminent death (fire, shipwreck, war), when there is no time for individual confession, general absolution may be given.

But such absolution is not lawful, merely because of a great concourse of people as can, for instance, occur before a feast.

3. Penitents who have had serious sins forgiven by general absolution must go to confession privately before receiving absolution in this collective form a second time, unless a just cause prevents them.

This confession must be made within a year — for the "Easter Duty" precept strictly obliges every Catholic.

4. Those aware of being in serious sin are forbidden to postpone private confession until an occasion arises for general absolution.

5. Ample opportunities for private confession must be made for the faithful.

6. Priests should be careful not to discourage the faithful from frequent, or devotional, confession. On the contrary, priests should draw attention to its fruitfulness for Christian living.

7. Finally, the much-needed admonition: "It must be absolutely prevented that individual confession should be reserved for serious sins only, for this would deprive the faithful of the great benefit of confession and will injure the good name of those who approach the sacraments singly."

Here is no uncertain trumpet. The constant tradition of the Church is blared forth loud and clear. The only ordinary channel for the forgiveness of serious sins is private confession! The practice of going frequently to devotion, is to be commended, recommended and encouraged!

It is still true, confession is good for the soul. Private confession is the one certain cure for the leprosy of sin. "I acknowledged my sin and you filled me with the joy of salvation."