

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.

No Time To Appear

Editor:

In the Courier-Journal (2-14-73) Clarence Amann seems to advocate a policy of surrender of our civil rights to tax education money. Would he later also condone elimination of tax exemptions for our churches? Such appeasement is easier on the nerves, true, and less demanding of one's zeal, but it amounts to a Munich type of peace with the secularists.

He seems to have succumbed also to the theory that Catholics can provide the moral leaven of good example in the public school system. Does he not realize that already 80 per cent of our Catholic children are in public schools? The leaven is rather provided much more effectively by those trained in their faith

in more detail as they meet with and associate with others in daily living — after their Catholic schooling.

His reasoning, if carried to its logical consequences, would advocate our attending Protestant churches so as to set good example; or perhaps, having all Protestants attend Catholic churches to that end.

Already the Catholic schools have provided thousands of graduates who are using their good influence and training in their teaching in public school classrooms. If Catholic schools are eliminated, where shall such teachers be trained, or how well shall they be trained? Surely, not in one or two teacher training sessions.

Mr. Amann must know that Catholic schools lay no claim to the complete moral and religious training of youth. Much of this must originate in the home. The school reinforces this training.

Have we noted a great improvement in Catholic education in those parishes where lacking a Catholic school, we have only CCD classes? Have adult education classes been a great success, been greatly attended?

Let's first examine the record on this, give this some thought, and then go out to fight for our civil rights, instead of suggesting the more comfortable retrenching of our forces.

Rev. Thomas M. Miller, C.S.B.
Aquinas Institute

Lill Proposes Pro-Life Aid

Editor:

The decision of the Supreme Court has dealt a serious blow to the right-to-life proponents. The decision has not, however, removed the issue from the national conscience or from the State conscience. The thrust of the Supreme Court ruling in New York is that the present New York "reform" legislation of 1970 is about as far as the Supreme Court will allow a state to go in limiting abortion on demand. New York, of course, permits elective abortions up to the 24th week of pregnancy.

There is an effort now being made in the light of the Supreme Court decision to eliminate abortion entirely from the Penal Law of New York so that abortion would be legal at the option of the mother and her physician. This effort at elimination of all protection for the unborn must be resisted by the legislature.

There still remain the children who are born into this world with physical and mental defects. There still persists the need for more readily available children through adoption agencies for married couples who want children but cannot produce them.

For some years legislation has been considered although not acted upon, which would provide aid to families who adopt a child with a physical or mental defect. To encourage such adoption and to secure the mutual benefits to the children and to the parents that is derived from adoption, I am introducing legislation which will provide for a double tax exemption for parents adopting children with physical or mental defects. This measure would provide for tax benefits to the adoptive parents who over the years would be required to incur additional medical bills and more-than-usual maintenance expenses.

There is no substitute for the love that must exist in order that adoption be meaningful. The tax-exemption provision is but a small aid to the parents demonstrating that love. It is a move on one of many fronts to combat the effect of the Supreme Court decision.

Raymond Lill
State Assemblyman
131st District

Program Aids Couples' Ties

Editor:

The following is the major portion of a homily delivered at Assumption parish in Fairport on January 21.

Two weeks ago today the Homily at each Mass was given by a couple who had made a Marriage Encounter. The reaction of all could not have been other than admiration for the dedication and visible joy of each of those couples. At the same time, the reaction of most must have been a bit of hesitancy.

Last weekend I went to Notre Dame Retreat House in Canandaigua to experience this move-



"HEY! NOW THAT I LIKE!"

ment. I went because I have trust in those who recommended it. I did not go with a skeptical mind, but surely with an enquiring mind. I wanted to know, is it valid? Is it another "way-out" experiment? Is it pentecostalism? Is it a sensitivity movement?

To my great satisfaction and delight, I learned that it is completely and basically Catholic. I am happy to endorse it completely.

Now, you all know that I am not on the liberal side of modern Catholicity. You know that in all my thoughts I try to think with the Church, and in all my actions I try to carry out what the Church — through the Pope and Bishop — directs. Therefore, I hope that my endorsement of the Marriage Encounter will cause all of you to be interested and many of you to actually make it soon. We have a wonderful parish here. I like to think it is the best in the diocese. And it will very definitely be that when every married couple in the parish has eventually made the Marriage Encounter.

The 44 hours involves an experience which no one can adequately describe or believe without being a part of it. I believe the best reason and the only one needed to persuade a couple to make the encounter is Trust in the person who recommends it. An impelling Trust which says to you, "If he thinks it is good, it must be, and we want it for ourselves." Another impelling motive might be a real feeling of need. Need to reach out to each other! Need for a real meeting of minds! Need for greater understanding and more perfect communication.

Our faith tells us that the great joy of Heaven will be complete and perfect communication between ourselves and God and those we love. We are told that the happiness of heaven can and should begin in this life.

After the body has been left behind, communication will be directly between God and souls. In this life, since we must communicate through the body, that communication can constantly be made more perfect. Emotions, fears, selfishness can interfere with the kind of communication that is deeply satisfactory, the kind that convinces one that he or she is loved and understood.

Father Leonard A. Kelly
Pastor, Assumption of Our Lady
Fairport

A Letter To High Court

Supreme Court of the United States
U.S. Supreme Court Building
1 First Street, N.E.

In light of the recent Supreme Court decision regarding abortion laws, we wish to articulate a vision counter to points in your 7-2 voting.

First, we are faced with the laws of nature and the embryological information regarding the fetus. From the earliest union of sperm and ovum, it has a unique and separate makeup. Given time and natural processes, the birth of human life will occur.

Secondly, you have chosen the stage when the child is developed enough to live outside the womb as a hallmark of legal human life. Independence from the womb is your criterion. Yet, our nine-month-old daughter's "independence" is only relative — separated from us, fatal dehydration would occur in 72 hours.

Human life, be it in the womb or out, is continually growing and developing in all forms of its potential. None of us gifted with life can say we commenced to be at 3 or 6, etc. duration of days or months — even years. Life is a continuum, and only in the polemics of the academic process, does one begin to make artificial separations.

Lastly, we believe there exists a universal truth that could guide one and all to respect this human life from its microscopic beginnings... namely, that ALL LIFE IS A GIFT, from the love of one Lord and Creator. Thus we ask simply and sincerely, is the legal justification of terminating human life in the earliest stages of its development our way of respecting and holding sacred mankind's great gift?

In Peace and Life,
Gregory Gehred, M.D.

Patricia Gehred, HW/M

Editor's note: This letter also was signed by 135 members of the Newman Community of the University of Rochester.

Accepting Challenge

Editor:

Please be assured of my complete support for any program to provide alternatives to abortion. Your suggestion to grant aid to families who adopt a child with a physical or mental defect (Courier-Journal 2-7-73) would certainly be a part of such a program, and I support it wholeheartedly. I will try very hard to get a bill drawn and to bring about the aid you request and get it introduced during this session of the Legislature.

Thomas R. Frey
Assemblyman, 132nd District
325 E. Main St.
Rochester, N.Y. 14604

FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday



Sunday's Readings: (R1) Gn. 9: 8-15. (R2) 1Pt. 3: 18-22. (R3) Mk. 1: 12-15.

The Lenten Season has a two-fold character: (1) it recalls baptism or prepares for it; and (2) it stresses a penitential spirit (Const. on Lit., No. 109). Both themes are present in the Readings for Sunday.

The first Reading tells of God's covenant with Noah after the flood. Did the ark save Noah or did the flood? St. Peter implied that it was the flood, even more than the ark. Had the waters not destroyed the sinners of Noah's day, the God-fearing might have become like the sinners. As it was, the waters destroyed the sinful and saved the God-fearing. One flood was used to wipe out another flood — the flood of sin — and thus save a few from sin. It was deliverance by destruction.

After the flood, as a sign that peace had been made with a sin-purged world, God set His bow in the clouds. The bow is a warrior's weapon, as much a part of his accoutrement as sword and shield. But God's bow in the cloud had no arrow. It was not aimed earthward; it was bent heavenward so that man might string it and draw it with all his might to send his prayers and his desires to the very throne of God. With both of its ends touching the earth,

the rainbow arches to the heavens to suggest that God's covenant connects heaven and earth and is the crown of human hope. Like a gateway without gates, the rainbow arch lies open beckoning man to enter into deep friendship with God.

St. Peter saw all this as the symbol of our own baptism. Our bow in the clouds now is the risen Christ, seated at God's right hand. His death and resurrection empower the waters poured out in baptism to destroy sin once again and to give life. St. Peter said as much when he wrote that "this baptism is no removal of physical stain." It is not just a physical cleansing — a Calgon bath. Rather it is a pledge to God that here and now by baptism one is made irreproachable, a person reborn, because of the fact of the Redemption.

After the baptism of Jesus, the Spirit, who had come upon Him at baptism, drove Him out toward the desert to be tested there by Satan.

After our baptism we too are tested. Satan, like a pirate, attacks only ships with rich cargoes. Baptism enriches us with the Life of God.

Neither innocence nor strength make a person unassailable to temptation. Temptation arises from without, as well as from within; hence the purest can be subject to it.

Baptism is a promise to live irreproachably. Walk with the wind and you hardly know it is blowing. Walk against it and you will feel its bite. Those who walk with the devil deny he exists. But those who are pledged to go against him are made painfully aware of his presence and his endeavor to thwart their every effort toward good. Yet to feel the force of his tempting is no proof of guilty compliance. Sin is not in the feeling, but in the consent.

The twin temptations of modern society are (1) a naive optimism which fails to admit the reality and the effects of sin in us and society; and (2) a crippling despair, which is spawned when man seeks to face the evil that is in himself and society. To steer clear of these extremes, it is necessary, Jesus proclaimed, to believe in the Gospel — in the good news that in and through Him every man can emerge victorious over temptation.

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