

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.

Recalls History Of Church

Editor:

My letter concerns the Courier-Journal issue of 2-28-73. Under the glib title: Holy Smoke! smolder a generation of memories and nostalgia. It surprised me that your staff did not bother to ferret out the innumerable stories behind the burning of the old St. Theodore's Church building. More than surprised, I guess I was disappointed.

Many of the founders of St. Theodore's Parish are still living and have a multitude of information on that old building. We were a family of nine, and each of us graduated from that very site. My oldest brother served the very first Mass in the church.

My two priest-brothers offered their first Masses in that building.

The building itself was put up by the "blood, sweat and tears" of the faithful. There was a "community" in every good sense of that much overworked word. We all pulled in the same direction in those days, in a common cause, toward a common goal. How refreshing it is to think of those times when the little church was the center of family and school life. It was the people of that era, with their deep and abiding faith, their "stick-to-it-iveness" that made the Church a vital and important force. Let's not polish off their hard work with that hackneyed phrase: Holy Smoke!

Mrs. Curtis Amesbury
2983 Chili Ave.
Rochester, N.Y. 14624

DICRA Support Clarified

Editor:

In the article about the diocesan Sisters' Council supporting Bishop Hogan's involvement in social issues (3/7/73), Sister Beatrice Curran's comments implied that the diocese made only an initial statement of support for the Draft Information Center of the Rochester Area (DICRA) but failed to provide any regular followup.

As the liaison appointed by the Priests' Council to work with DICRA, I would like to offer some clarification.

From the time that the diocese issued its statement of support for DICRA, I have actively participated on the Board of Directors of DICRA and have served as the contact person within the diocese for those seeking answers about the draft. Furthermore, the diocese has regularly contributed \$500 each six months since August, 1971, for a current total of \$2,000.

While there can always be more support for the work of justice and peace in the mission of the Church, particularly in terms of personnel and money, let us at least be clear that the diocese has followed up the commitment which it made to DICRA.

Rev. William Lum
Liaison Between the Diocese
of Rochester and DICRA

Salaries Cited Were Wrong

Editor:

Regarding the statement in "On the Right Side" (3/7/73) concerning the salaries of our two religious education coordinators at CEDAR, I wish to make a correction.

The two coordinators are making \$16,000, not \$18,000 to \$20,000 as reported. It should also be noted that the Sister employed on our staff pays her own room and board, and car rental. We feel that, since she works for no one particular parish, these expenses should be paid out of her own salary.

Rev. John J. Glogowski
President, Board of
Directors of CEDAR

Professionals Are Needed

Editor:

This letter is written in response to some comments made by Father Cuddy about CEDAR in a recent column.

1. Coordinators salaries — you seemed to feel these are too high — Miss Schmucker was paid \$9,500 for her services to CEDAR last year. She is a lay person who is using her specialized education and abilities to work in a religious situation rather than a secular one, where she could earn at least this much money and probably more. Does this type of a career stipulate that you are not supposed to earn a decent living — just because you're working for the Church? Who is supposed to fill in the gap left by declining vocations? I'm thankful her talents are working for the church.

Sister Ellen was paid \$6,500 last year by CEDAR. This for a 10-month, 16-hour-a-day job. Though she is a nun, she has to pay the same kind of living expenses as a lay person — room and board, car payments, gas, etc. Any money left is turned over to the nuns in her order.

Wednesday, March 21, 1973



"FIFTY-THREE PER CENT WILL FAVOR A FORMAL RELIGION; THIRTY PER CENT WILL FAVOR NO RELIGION; SEVEN PER CENT WILL BE UNDECIDED; AND TEN PER CENT—LIKE YOURSELF—WILL DIG THE OCCULT!"

2. The emphasis on "professionalism" in CCD. We need more, not less, professionalism in this area. You must realize that most CCD teachers are untrained in theology and teaching methods, when they start out. CCD teachers are shouldering the bulk of religious instruction of Catholic youth, since it is a small minority who can attend Catholic schools. The more skilled and knowledgeable these teachers are, the better. And this knowledge and skill comes primarily from the "professionals" at CEDAR at this point through teacher training programs.

One last point. Most people would agree that unless you reach the parents, any instruction in religion is like putting a finger in the dike. It is the home that molds the child and if Christianity is not practiced in the home, no amount of instruction is likely to have any lasting effect. How do you reach the parents? A starting point is through the programs set up for First Holy Communion, Confession and Confirmation. Parents are requested to attend some of these instructions and most do so. They come out of a sense of duty to their children, but they leave with a much richer understanding of the Sacraments.

These programs have been implemented in many parishes by Sister Ellen and Barbara Schmucker and, due to their skill and "professionalism", have been very successful. Parents are enthused, better informed and hopefully more interested in updating their knowledge of their religion in other areas.

Eileen Cichello
2714 Franklin St.
Weedsport, N.Y.

Matter Of Semantics

Editor:

Re: 245 Sign Bishop's Peace Statement (Courier-Journal, 2-28-73).

"All together, 245 priests and deacons signed the statement. Since there are approximately 450 priests in the diocese, support for the document was strong if not overwhelming."

"Strong and overwhelming" support for the peace statement is not demonstrated when 228 priests (245 minus deacons) of 450 sign. Rather this is barely a simple majority.

When one considers that the author of the statement is a dictator (absolute ruler) then it is more surprising that 49 per cent were courageous enough to decline signing the statement.

Edward J. Lynd
19 Tottenham Road
Rochester, N.Y. 14609

Editor's Note: We must apologize to reader Lynd for use of an ambiguous phrase. By "if not overwhelming" we meant to imply that the support was not overwhelming. Had we used "though not overwhelming" it would have been more connotive.

It is true, that any bishop is a "dictator" in certain areas but in this instance we feel it is an unfair characterization. The Bishop did not make signing of the statement mandatory. In fact he wrote the priests that if they did not wish to sign the statement "I respect that wish." This sentiment was reported in the Courier-Journal.

FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday



Sunday's Readings: (R1) Ex. 20: 1-17. (R2) 1 Cor. 1: 22-25. (R3) Jn. 2: 13-25.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke put the cleansing of the temple right at the end of the ministry of Jesus, where it probably belongs chronologically. John, however, chose to situate it right at the beginning. He wanted to relate it to the wedding feast at Cana and thus make the two incidents a sign of a new beginning.

At Cana, Jesus showed He was going to change things, in cleansing the temple. He showed how much. He literally cleaned house! He drove not only the merchants out of the temple precincts but even the animals there to be sacrificed. In the eyes of John this was a dramatic sign not only that Jesus was the Messiah but that He was going to purge the great Jewish religion with its Commandments (R1) and its temple sacrifices (R3).

The Commandments of God (R1) were being broken all over the land. Even having animals in the temple precincts was due to a feud between Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin. Animals for the temple sacrifices were usually kept in the valley of Kidron. When the merchants there allowed the Sanhedrin to set up their meeting place in the valley instead of in the temple area, Caiaphas in revenge allowed rival merchants to build stalls within the temple confines itself — making the House of God a marketplace.

Then, too, the Jews had come to worship God by substitution. They had carved idols for them-

selves. Religion had been reduced to offering animal sacrifices. It left the heart untouched. Of this David spoke when he sang: "You are not pleased with sacrifices . . . but a heart contrite and humbled, O God you will not spurn" (Ps. 51: 18-19).

Besides sacrifice, there was one tax every Jew over nineteen had to pay. It was the Temple Tax. It was necessary to pay this tax so that the temple sacrifices might be carried out day by day. The tax was one half-shekel, two days' wages. This tax had to be paid in temple currency.

For the Passover, Jewish pilgrims came from all over the ancient world. Their coins had imperial and pagan images on them and so were considered unclean for the Temple Tax. These coins had to be exchanged for acceptable ones. That was why there were money changers in the temple precincts. This would have been all right, but again a Commandment was being broken: "Thou shalt not steal." The exorbitant rates of exchange made the money changers no better than thieves. "You have turned My house into a den of thieves."

In the hindsight of history, John saw the risen Jesus as the new center of religion, the Messianic Temple. He had come to show men a way to God without any temple at all. He had come to offer up a sacrifice, outside the temple, that would take away the sins of the world. Naturally such a sacrifice, by crucifixion, would be, as Paul said, a stumbling-block to the Jews and an absurdity to the Gentiles (R2).

The first danger in a revealed religion is always hollow formalism. Some can fall into a go-through-the-motions mentality. The most sublime prayers in the world can be said like an auctioneer selling tobacco. This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Motive, intentionality, is more important in religion than the action itself. It is so wrong to substitute actions for self in our worshipping God.

A second danger is hypocrisy, conscious or not. Hypocrisy is worshipping God one way and living another. Some times you have heard, I am sure, the remark: "If he's a Catholic, then I never want to be one." To worship one way and live another destroyed the temple twice.

Lent is a good time to do some real soul-searching. We can blissfully fall into irreligious ways of acting unawares, as did the Jews.

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Welcomes Readers' Comments

If you feel moved to communicate your thoughts with the rest of diocese, use our LETTERS TO THE EDITOR space.

Some rules:

Typed double-spaced

Keep letters to 1 1/2 page maximum

Include name and address

Remember good taste embellishes every thought.

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