

Editorial

The Drive to Win

More attention is being paid lately to the national propensity for winning at all costs — and whether on the battlefield, in the business world, in the social structure, and even in the Church, the drive seems to have evolved from the athletic arena.

We have all seen some of the distasteful aspects of the world of sports, that erstwhile sphere intended for fun, recreation and respite. Riots in the stands, brutalization on the field, the court or the rink, pre-teens jeered by adult spectators and youngsters reduced to tears for failing at playing come easily to mind.

Scholastic and collegiate coaches whose main job should be teacher in the full meaning of that word have instead had to crucify themselves on the cross of winning, winning, winning. Their jobs too often depend on it.

Grantland Rice, a sensitive sportswriter from another era, once wrote, "It isn't whether you win or lose, but how you play the game." More aggressive "players" have eclipsed that thought with "nice-guys finish last" or "winning is the only thing."

Circumscribed to the arena, perhaps such thoughts would not be all that bad. They have, however, spilled over into real life and not only have become rules for conduct of business but also to bolster our societal vices. The well-to-do are glorified winners and the impoverished "born losers." That thought is, of course, not new but it is becoming predominant.

So on next Sunday, the day that the Lord has made, it might serve us all well to reflect on the Man who was at once the greatest loser and the greatest winner of all time: He taught that there can be virtue in losing for "the last shall be first and the first last." And on Good Friday He practiced what He had preached.

He showed that by losing to worldly standards we wind up winning. And 2,000 years ago he scored the only victory that counts and He did it not for Himself, but for all of us.

The Meat Boycott

"Adversity's sweet milk — philosophy." As is the case so often, Shakespeare's words seem to be written for today's circumstances.

For even in inflation, that economic aberration that has become a fact of life, there are worthwhile lessons if we care to see them. Most middle-class Americans have become accustomed to inflation because rising costs have always been accompanied by higher income — or vice versa. It is somewhat like the chicken or the egg.

So if new homes cost more, so what? They are within reach. When automobiles go up that's too bad but how can a person do without one, or two or three? Things really didn't change for most Americans, they were just equal on a higher plateau.

And what if the elderly, those on fixed income, or the buried-alive poor couldn't cope? Well, that was disturbing but we could always sit back on our Puritan ethics — the view is more soothing from there.

Then inflation hit a middle-class soft spot — the dinner table. The price of meat so soared that comfortable Americans began to feel the pinch and they did just what so many other classes of their fellow citizens have done: to protest conditions. They organized and protested.

For one brief week, householders had to turn on their imagination and resources to come up with nutritional meals for their loved ones. For many it was an experience almost forgotten, for others a brand new adventure. It was even fun — for a week. How about it for a month? For a year? For a lifetime?

If the pinch at the table shows many of our more affluent Americans that no one could really want to be poor, then it will be well worth the trial.

And for those who like a dash of irony with their bitters, the meat boycott came in the middle of Lent — a season previously intended for fast and abstinence to remind all of us to count our blessings, to shun the golden calf, to give up a few mundane pleasures and to reflect on the fact that not all are so fortunate.

Opinion

RACL Letter Questioned

Editor:

Sunday, March 11, the Democrat and Chronicle printed a letter from Sue Carrington, vice president of Rochester Association of Catholic Laymen. The last half of the letter contained some good points which would be difficult for anyone to object to, but the first half was disturbing to say the least.

Sue objects to "... tactics of employing lurid details of some abortions to arouse horror and revulsion." A recent issue of National Catholic Register pointed out, among other things, that one reason for anyone advocating abortion is out of simple ignorance of just what abortion involves. A short article written by a nurse in the February issue of U.S. Catholic points out one example which backs this point quite clearly. Because of this, unfortunate as it might be, employing such details is not only advisable but necessary. The details may be horrid, but they make the point clearly and if even one person is brought back to reality as a result, it is worth it.

Sue says, "This attitude tends to reduce a real and terrible choice to a one-dimensional act of horrendous selfishness and vicious bad faith." Also, "It makes absolute the right to life of the unborn." While it is true that not all act in bad faith, there are sufficient numbers, judging from many comments read over and over in letters to the editor and large numbers of articles, who are guilty of such bad faith, "self-righteous" as it might seem for me to say so. Furthermore, "God created our right to life and who gives us the right to take it away from an innocent unborn child? Therefore, the right to life of the unborn is absolute as far as Christians are concerned! All of us are guilty of errors, to be sure, but the pro-abortionists are trying to turn wrong into right! If we commit sin, we must admit our sins — not try to justify them!"

Sue's letter was most disturbing because it was printed in a secular paper and written by a supposed representative of the Rochester Catholic laity. Sue seems to think that all Catholic lay people must make time to involve themselves with her lay group and while this may be desirable, it is not very practical thinking on her part. The average Catholic layman is not so well organized that he can devote even a small amount of time to things that he should — that is not without neglecting his family. If Sue wishes her organization to be truly representative, she should work toward involving the diocese in a program whereby dues can be collected once,



"I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET MIZZ LANGSTON, MIZZ HOTCHKISS, SIZZ MARGARET MARY, MIZZ OTIS..."

twice, or three times yearly at the parish level. Periodically, questionnaires on the major issues should be distributed at each Mass in each parish. This would make massive participation as easy as possible for all lay members. Her organization would then be representative. Until then Sue can speak only for her small number of members. That's hardly worthwhile!

John C. Lentricchia
546 S. Goodman St.
Rochester, N.Y. 14607

Stamps Sought

Editor:

The use of canceled stamps for the mission work is so great, so powerful, and so effective that we appeal to all your readers to send us at any time any amount of cancelled stamps. This is a mighty mission work!

Bro. Julius Tkaczyk, OFM Cap.
St. Francis Seminary
Lafayette, N.J.

Editorial Is Praised

Editor:

Congratulations for the fine editorial (Courier-Journal 3-28-73) on the great Polish astronomer-physician - economist - canon lawyer-soldier — truly a man for all reasons — Mikolaj Kopernik, whose influence as a scientist is evident with Copernican celebrations 500 years after his death.

On behalf of thousands of Polish-Americans who thrilled at your comments, the Polish Union of America salutes the Courier-Journal.

Daniel J. Kij
President
Polish Union of America
Buffalo, N.Y.

Blue Cross Challenged

Editor:

In reading over my Blue Cross and Blue Shield contract, I was astounded to find that abortion was covered completely in the basic contract. Maternity coverage is minimal in the basic contract, and if one wants full coverage he must subscribe to a rider benefit. Why is abortion, then, covered completely in the basic contract we all pay for? I object to the fact that in paying for "health insurance" I pay for the killing of unborn children.

I wrote to Blue Cross and Blue Shield about this and received very unsatisfactory answers to my questions. The letter ended with the statement, "Benefits are determined by what is readily acceptable to the public." Using

my money to pay for abortion is not "ready acceptable" to me.

During this season of Lent a sacrifice of a few minutes of your time to write to Blue Cross and Blue Shield would show your love for the Creator and those "created in His image."

Blue Cross and Blue Shield through their policy have made it easier to choose death than life. Let us try to change that policy so it is easier to choose life. Maternity coverage, not abortion coverage.

Letters should be addressed: David W. Stewart, Managing Director, Blue Cross and Blue Shield, 41 Chestnut St. Rochester, 14604.

The spontaneous miscarriage of the baby is a health problem and I feel should continue to be covered by health insurance. This natural abortion is much different from "abortion on demand" which is a social problem and should not be covered in health insurance.

Bernadine Moles
Route 1
Shortsville 14548

Where Are Priorities?

Editor:

Increasingly during the past decade, events in our Church have made me feel more and more like "Alice in Wonderland." The current publication of the "Year of Renewal Survey" in the Democrat and Chronicle has just about convinced me that I am, indeed, Alice viewing the world through the wrong side of the looking glass.

Just how does one justify this expenditure of thousands of dollars for the hiring of a public relations firm, the conducting of the survey, the printing of the results in the secular press (especially when it is available in this paper), plus its complete publication in booklet form in the future? How is it justified in the face of the imminent closing of the CYO facilities, apparently because of financial difficulties? How is it justified in the face of continued cutbacks in our inner-city schools, again primarily for financial reasons?

Just what are our priorities?

Mrs. Virginia J. Ouweleen
69 Keswick Road
Rochester, N.Y. 14609

Opinions to the editor should be addressed: letter 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.

COURIER-JOURNAL

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan
President

Anthony J. Costello
General Manager

Carmen J. Viglucci
Editor

Rev. Louis J. Hohman
Episcopal Advisor

Vol. 87 No. 51 April 18, 1973

Published weekly by the Rochester Catholic Press Association. Subscription rates: Single copy 15¢; 1 year subscription in U.S. \$6.00; Canada and South America, \$8.50; other foreign countries, \$9.50. Offices, Richford Building, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604, (716) 454-7050. Second class postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.

Courier-Journal