

**Editorial**

**A Flicker of Hope**

Although many who are concerned with the plight of God and man in countries behind the Iron Curtain have been critical of Pope Paul's efforts toward thawing East-West relationships, the wisdom of the pontiff's approach paid some dividends recently.

At the World Youth Festival in East Berlin earlier this month, Christian youth and religious thought for the first time were accorded some polity. The festival previously had always been caustically anti-religious.

This year the 200,000 youths from 140 countries heard Erich Honecker, East German Communist party chief, stress the openness of the festival "to all political and religious viewpoints." This was overstatement since religion was more tolerated than accepted.

Still there was indication of favorable change. For instance, an aggressive atheistic wing was denied program time and even bulletin-board space.

In the Marien Kirch, an historical evangelical church near the site of the convention, many of the delegates saw exhibits and descriptions of some of the things church groups are doing, such as programs to combat racism, donations of \$20 million to the Bread for the World program, establishment of a field hospital in Portuguese Mozambique.

Discussions were arranged, though not on the official agenda, on such subjects as "What Color Is God?" and "Is Individual Salvation Enough?" True, such topics are open to wide interpretation, yet the simple fact that God is mentioned, and not in a defamatory manner, at a Communist gathering is a breakthrough of some sort.

In addition, Bishop Albrecht Schoenheer, chairman of the Federation of Evangelic Churches in East Germany, spoke on the task and structure of such churches in that country. He told delegates who attended the session of the message of the Church "to proclaim the fact that God in Jesus Christ brings us saving grace and power."

Strange words for a Marxist Youth Festival, even if only on the perimeter.

Ewart E. Turner, Religious News Service correspondent, rightly reminds that East Germany is seeking membership in the United Nations and is interested in proper public relations at this time.

And, of course, no one can claim from such scant indication that East Germany may finally be seeing the light. Yet no one can deny that a new flicker of hope has been fanned when delegates to a Marxist Youth Festival are exposed to God and Church.

**This Is Culture?**

In a startling outburst of venom, the Danish minister of culture, one Niels Mathiesen, has seized upon Catholic Church criticism of a projected film to lambaste the Church for alleged wrongs throughout history.

The movie, "The Loves of Jesus Christ," has been subsidized to the extent of \$100,000 by the Danish government's Film Institute. The bishop of Copenhagen has called upon the government to withdraw financial support and Pope Paul VI has castigated the film as an "ignoble and blasphemous outrage."

The Catholic Church is not alone in its position. Four pastors of the French Reformed Church asked their government to ban shooting of the film on French territory "for the honor of God and of the French nation." The National French Cinema Center has complied.

The Young Christians, a Protestant group, staged a huge protest rally in Copenhagen and pledged to sabotage the filming.

But in the face of such well-rounded criticism, Mr. Mathiesen says he is unable to take The Catholic position seriously, and cites his dissatisfaction with the Church in relation to Franco, Latin America, military juntas, and adds that the Catholic Church "has stupified and repressed the people."

My, my! All because of one planned film. Mr. Shakespeare would wonder aloud, "The lady doth protest too much, me thinks."

Or perhaps the bard's remark about the odorous state of certain things in the state of Denmark would be even more appropriate.

**Opinion**

**Communion Should Be First**

**Editor:**

"Letters to the Editor" gives a good cross-section view of the people's thinking and should be continued.

But some of the views indicate that we have an element in our Church who would like to impose rigid rules governing other people's lives — rules against which, in some cases, the writers themselves would rebel if imposed upon them.

For example: we hear "contemporary" nuns condemned.

In defense of "contemporary" nuns, how impressive was an incident in our company cafeteria. (For those who don't know it, nuns openly wear some piece of jewelry in the shape of a cross and thus can usually be detected by an observant eye.)

Two weeks ago, the blood-mobile came to Castle Co. At lunch, I sat near the table at which the Red Cross volunteers were eating — all of whom were wearing pin stripe uniforms. When they finished lunch, the woman who lives across the street stopped to chat with me. I asked if the gray-haired volunteer who had been sitting at the end of her table was a nun. She smiled and said yes, then asked what I thought of it. I told her that all the nuns who do the things they encourage modern women to do should be complimented for actually going into the community and leading the way.

But the hardest thing to understand is the harsh criticism of Bishop Hogan.

As the confidante of 15 nieces and nephews I have been listening to complaints for 25 years that they are always in the "doghouse" with a parent, a teacher, an older brother, sister, etc.

The Bishop has never questioned the infallibility of the Church nor of the Pope. But when the Bishop of Rochester disagrees with the Bishop of Rome on the advisability of teaching children first that God loves them and wants to be near them, I, for one, feel he is right in not burning into children's minds that even God sends them to the "doghouse" first (confessional) before expressing His love and nearness in the Eucharist.

It is bad enough when parents with "doghouse mentality" write about imposing their wishes on their own children, but the situation is compounded when a priest uses vehement language to argue that if one child can be a



**Bishop Joseph L. Hogan**  
President

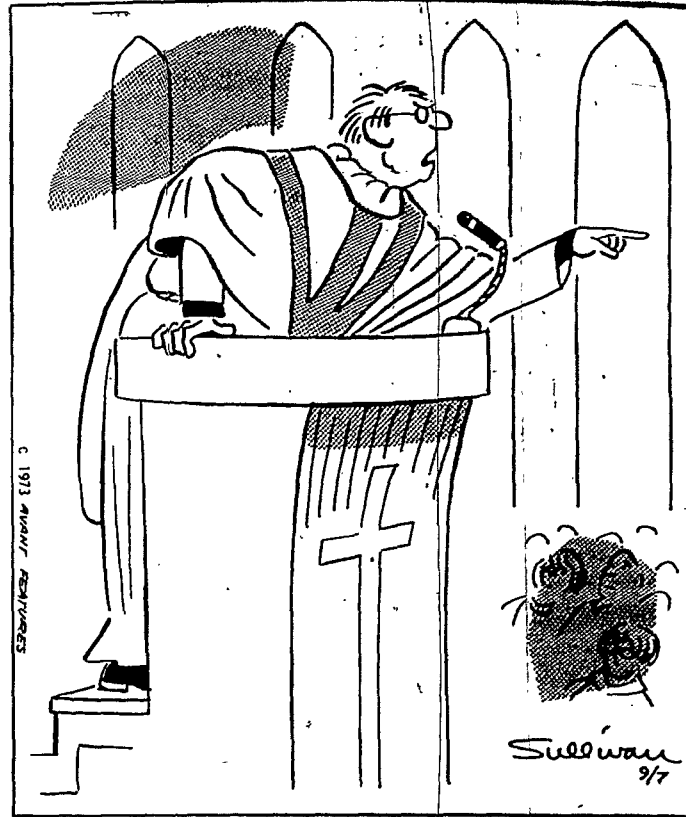
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"...AND WHAT ABOUT YOU? DO YOU HAVE AN ELECTROMAGNET HIDDEN IN YOUR SOAP BOX DERBY CAR OF LIFE...?"

violin virtuoso at 11 and another needs psychiatric help for wild actions. (that were revolting to this reader) it then stands to reason that all children need Penance before reception of the Eucharist!

These two examples aren't even compatible with each other, much less with the average child.

**Kay Benn**  
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**Latin in Mass Has Support**

**Editor:**

I agree with Pope Paul VI in regard to returning to traditional chants in the Mass.

It seems like going to a Protestant church now. As Catholics who were brought up with Latin in our Mass, I and my husband say we should continue to keep the Latin.

My husband has asked me to insist on having a whole Latin Mass, if he should die first. We are 66, and would like to hear Latin in the Mass again.

**Mrs. J. H. Sobus**  
39 Bradford St.  
Auburn, N.Y.

**Some Questions On Abortion**

**Editor:**

I feel the abortion question is not so much "when does the soul enter the fetus?" but "when does the fetus become human and therefore able to be murdered?"

In pondering this, something I learned in biology came to mind. Specifically, that each species has a different number of chromosomes, that the sperm has one half and the ovum one half, and when the sperm and ovum combine, the number of chromosomes total the exact number necessary to create a new member of the species.

Therefore, at conception the human has the exact number of chromosomes and every other material necessary to start a new human life.

Isn't conception really the moment new life begins? Isn't it both alive and the beginning of a new human being? Didn't God say, "Thou shalt not kill"? Isn't to take a life away "to kill"?

Why all this wrestling with conscience? Isn't the evidence really in favor of the new life — the newly forming baby? Do we look at a child or adolescent and say, "You're not considered a human being yet, because you

don't look quite like me — I'm an adult and human but you are not"? Why do we try to make moral divisions in the development of the new baby? Hasn't evolution affected our ideas about all this?

What we all need to do is take another look at the issue of evolution. One booklet explaining the other side of this question is "The Evolution Hoax Exposed." It can be purchased for one dollar from Tan Books and Publishers, PO Box 424, Rockford, Ill. 61105.

God is so loving and so good. How could we ever risk offending Him? He only asks that we listen to His voice and do His will. Surely He deserves to be heard in this matter.

**Joyce Czymmek**  
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**Write Letters To Horton**

**Editor:**

On Aug. 24, 1973 we presented petitions for a "human life" amendment to Rep. Frank Horton. He clearly indicated that he was very responsive to personal letters, and that one letter could mean more than 45,000 signatures on a petition. Earlier that same day he had received several pro-abortion letters. His statement seemed to be a challenge to the pro-life supporters.

I sincerely and strongly urge everyone interested in this issue to immediately write Mr. Horton to support a "human life" amendment to the United States Constitution. The 1970 abortion law and its ramifications occurred as a result of our failure to act.

Please do not pass up this clear and urgent opportunity to convince our legislators of our strong commitment in this area, and help save an estimated 2 million lives annually. His address is:

407 Cannon House Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Thank you.

**Rochester Area Right to Life Committee**  
**William P. Polito, Chairman**

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.