

Editorial

The Facts Suffice

Cardinal John Heenan, archbishop of Westminster, in a recent, powerful sermon charged that his country, Great Britain, is undergoing an "organized attack on life."

Avoiding the so-called divisive arguments on the subject, the cardinal, according to Religious News Service, used facts supplied by the register general, a top government official whose office records all births, deaths and marriages in the country.

The cardinal spoke at a Mass for Life. Paraphrasing would be diminishing. Here's what he said:

"The success of your campaign against abortion depends on your ability to make people see that abortion is a rejection of life. It is sometimes said by pro-abortionists that you use exaggerated language, and produce revolting but misleading pictures.

"Abortion, they say, is not murder . . . It is unfair to talk of an unborn baby being slaughtered when all that has happened is the disposal of a piece of jelly. So today we shall not call names, not exaggerate, not use any horror tactics. We shall quite simply and soberly look at the facts.

"The first and most up-to-date fact is that the birth rate has fallen to its lowest for 40 years and the death rate is rising. If the trend continues we shall soon be a disappearing race.

"We have been misled because the expectation of life is far higher than at the beginning of the century. People grow much older but they do not become immortal. Eventually they die.

"From now on we are likely to have a rising death rate. But we shall not be replacing the old people. We have been told so frequently that Britain faces disastrous overpopulation by the end of the century that it has become a patriotic duty not to have children.

"That has been the whole pattern of thought. Contraceptive pills for all — especially school girls because they cannot provide a home for a child, and abortion for those who forget to take the pill. All this, with free vasectomy for men, should make England safe from babies. This is not an exaggeration. In this country there is an organized attack on life itself.

"Before life begins it should be prevented. Before it develops it should be destroyed. Before it becomes a burden in old age it should be dispatched. That is our philosophy of life — which, as you can see, is really a philosophy of death.

"We are appalled by the deaths on the road. During the Vietnam war we were ready to demonstrate against the carnage. For some reason the attack on civilian life in the womb leaves most people unmoved.

"I do not want to shock you with abortion figures. It is enough to say that as a result of the new law an act which was once a crime is now committed by the government on behalf of mothers. In fact — if not in theory — any women can have the fruit of her womb removed if she finds it inconvenient.

"I do not believe that the men and women who passed this law (the 1967 Abortion Act) appreciated its effects. The great attack on life in this country is going to have sociological results which few can imagine. It is enough to say that tinkering with the cells of life is a dangerous occupation for any nation."

Well put. And, of course, applicable to the United States as well.

December 7

Wars never really decide the problems they are fought for. World War II stands as an historical example. The countless men who died and the myriad countless more who risked their lives to produce a safe world obviously were misused.

For since World War II there has been no peace.

Regardless, as Dec. 7 reproduces itself this week, we should all make painful note and offer gratitude to all those men and women who altered their lives in a mistaken hope some 30 years ago.

Opinion

Special Intention

Editor:

Mr. Cowan's letter in the Nov. 7 Courier-Journal asks "Where is the Rosary and Benediction?"

Dr. Tom Dooley, author of "Deliver Us From Evil," said on the Blue Army Television Program (prior to 1960) "America must awaken to its own sense of belief in God." We asked him (Dr. Dooley) "Is the message of Fatima important to (Vietnam) refugees?" He answered, "Yes, and this is the answer America must discover. We MUST awaken in people this idea . . . making them understand what Our Lady of Fatima said, what spirituality means. Education in this is what we need . . . this is the answer. This is what we've got to do." (Soul Sept.-Oct., 1973)

In two recent issues of the National Catholic Register, Father Daniel Lyons referred to Laos and Cambodia (11/18) and Viet Nam (11/25). He told of "refugees who had gladly left their ancestral lands and all their possessions rather than fall into Communist hands. The Diem (Viet Nam) column stated more than 100,000 Vietnamese gave their lives as martyrs for the Catholic faith in the past 300 years, and it was Diem's proudest boast that he was a descendant of Vietnamese martyrs."

In the Sept.-Oct. issue of Soul, the Vietnamese people beg pastors throughout America to join the South Vietnamese for one month in daily services from our new year (Jan. 1, 1974) until Tet (Feb. 1, 1974) when they will welcome the International Pilgrim Virgin in fervent hope for a miracle of peace. The month of February is a month of festivity in Viet Nam. A special Mass will be celebrated on the feast of Our Lady's Purification.

Can we ignore their plea? Or for that matter the plea of Our Blessed Mother any longer? Our pastor, Rev. Chester Klocek of St. Leo's in Hilton, will hold daily devotions of Benediction and the Rosary throughout the month of January, 1974, for this intention. Will yours? Will you ask him?

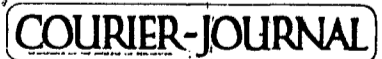
Surely America will be blessed through taking this action.

Rosary Society
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**Bible-in-Space
Petition Works**

Editor:

On behalf of the Catholic War Veterans of Monroe County, I would like to thank those



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responsible for a job well done. I am referring to the collecting of signatures to support the astronauts reading from the Bible on the Apollo 8 flight around the Moon, Dec. 24, 1968.

The reading by the astronauts on this historic flight was so highly criticized by Mrs. Madeline O'Hair (the Atheist Crusader) that a suit was filed in Federal Court in an attempt to make religious pronouncements from space illegal. This is the same woman who was instrumental in making it illegal to read the Bible or pray in public schools.

In my communication with NASA in Washington, D.C., regarding the effects of the collected signatures, I received the following reply from John P. Donnelly, Assistant Administrator for Public Affairs.

"In New Orleans on September 23, 1970, the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that it could find nothing unconstitutional with astronauts praying or reading from the Bible while traveling to the Moon, therefore they are now legally as well as spiritually free to express themselves."

I assume we can consider this case closed but it must be pointed out that we should always stay one step ahead of those who dedicate their lives trying to destroy anything that may associate itself with God.

Michael Terrigno
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A Christmas Remembrance

Editor:

I was thinking that I will be 78 on March 1. I also was thinking of the year 1928, one week before Christmas. I invited my brothers and sister with their families and my father and mother too. We did that every year at my house.

I did not know what gift I should give my husband. So I went to Judge Ford and looked at cars. There was a red new Ford sedan, so I bought it and I told the salesman to deliver the car at midnight on Christmas Eve. That was a surprise Christmas gift from me to my husband. He gave me a dinner ring. For me it was beautiful then and still it is.

Now I wish you and all a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. God bless you and your families with health, wealth and happiness.

Mrs. Anna Nicoletti
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Editor's Note: From time to time septuagenarian Mrs. Nicoletti provides for Courier-Journal readers a homey glimpse into life as it was and is.

Some Ideas For Liturgy

Editor:

Many changes have taken place in recent years on how our Mass should be celebrated. I do not know how these changes were brought about, however, I have a few I would like to suggest.

Could the "offering of the Sign of Peace" be delayed till the end of the Mass? It seems like the most appropriate time and could serve as an opportunity for a friendly conversation after Mass. Who knows, maybe we might get to know some of those people we only know as faces.

For many, it is awkward and sometimes very confusing to offer the sign of peace as we do. Some churches don't even do it and I am sure they must have their reasons.

If instead, we were asked to offer a Hail Mary or a prayer at this time of the Mass for the person in the parish who will die in the coming week, it would not only be as appropriate, but, the person we pray for may be ourself.

Robert J. Beiswenger
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Please Help At Christmas

Editor:

A diocesan newspaper has many functions, I'm sure. But the one that the Courier-Journal undertakes which is dearest to my heart is the annual Christmas Fund.

Some time back I was a social worker in another area. I know firsthand the misery that is generated by a lonely or impoverished Christmas. Often I wished I could do more to help than I was able to do singlehandedly.

The people in the diocese of Rochester are fortunate to have a diocesan paper that cares. And also congratulations to Catholic Charities for its many ongoing and worthwhile programs.

Please help the fund.

Laurie Keith
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Rochester, N.Y.

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.