

Editorial

A Killer Is Loose

The January doldrums are upon us and this year the energy crisis will be accentuating the low mood. We all may have a tendency to coast, to slough off responsibilities, to wait listlessly for a better day.

One group of people, in particular, must shake off this mood and be extra alert. We are speaking about parents and we refer specifically to the rape-slayings that were front page news for so long.

Plagued by a paucity of good leads, police have been hampered in their investigation despite long, hard, and diligent work. There now is a tendency for the impact to be lessened among the populace.

Now, more than ever, we all must be extremely alert. Parents, teachers, all who come in contact with children must warn youngsters to be careful with strangers. The killer, (or killers, if the three slayings were not performed by the same man) is still on the loose and the possibility is strong that he will try again.

Tell your children to report any encounters with strangers, as innocent as they may seem. This may constitute an unhappy feeling of distrust but, considering the alternative, it is extremely necessary.

After each of the first two slayings, we all slacked off on our vigilance. We must not allow this to happen again. There may be a fourth slaying unless we all take extreme caution.

First of all, know the whereabouts of your children at all times. Remember that the killer seems to have frequented shopping plazas — but that does not mean that he will change his tactics. Keep your own eyes open to strangers, unusual occurrences, etc.

Second, caution your children to the point of nagging not to talk to strangers and not under any circumstances to wind up alone with anyone without the knowledge of parents or guardians.

And perhaps most important of all, keep your children alert to the dire threat. They, unfortunately, will be the ones most likely to confront this killer. To aid in his capture, they must report any and all encounters, even those that seem most common.

Any information must be passed on to police quickly.

The slayer is crafty. Needless to say his capture is imperative. It is of even greater importance that he not be allowed to strike again. A lack of vigilance will give him another opportunity.

Who'll Suffer Most?

The general secretary of the U.S. Catholic Conference has offered the government wise advice. Bishop James S. Rausch has warned against allowing the poor and the lower-income working class to become the chief victims of the energy crisis.

According to Religious News Service, he said that it would be "grossly unfair" if the poor's lack of political and economic power left them more vulnerable proportionately than the rest of the population.

In a letter to William E. Simon, administrator of the Federal Energy Office, Bishop Rausch observed that policies aimed at discouraging fuel consumption by allowing prices to rise or by raising taxes would be discriminatory unless they included compensation for the poor and lower-income families.

Amen.

But not only the government should be concerned about such discrimination. All Americans should realize that the poor will suffer the most from the shortage and thus we should examine our consciences on how we are using or abusing fuel resources.

There are many who may not have strong enough voices to receive recognition for unusual personal deprivation. For instance, in New York City over the New Year weekend a woman was stuck in a line of traffic at a gasoline station which fast was using up its supply. With her was her child who has leukemia who must receive daily treatment. Ahead of her, were some people indulging in animal-like hysteria over getting their share of the dwindling supply. Surely any would have stepped aside if they but knew the woman's plight. Perhaps a windshield sticker signifying emergency need would suffice.

Incidentally the woman got the gasoline before it ran out and her predicament was solved — for one more day.

Opinion

Pro-Life Drive Seen Lagging

Editor:

In his customary fashion, Father Stuart Hogan has stated through his recent letter to the editor what most assuredly needs to be said. I have consistently appreciated the wisdom and honesty of Father Hogan and am most grateful that your readers are afforded an opportunity to read his words of profound importance.

As one who has been actively involved in the anti-abortion movement for the past four years, I am in agreement with Father Hogan that our diocese is in great need of active, dynamic leadership in what is the most crucial moral question confronting our nation. Certainly, I do not consider what a very small group of lay people and clergy have done by way of involvement in Right to Life groups anywhere near adequate to offset the massive tide of anti-life influence in our nation. Father Robert Collins and the Rochester Right to Life Group have made a very noble, commendable effort to educate and to attempt to influence the public toward a Pro-Life view, yet, unquestionably, much, much more remains to be done. This is in no way a criticism of Father Collins, since I have no question as to his intense dedication to the pro-life cause. However, I am surprised that he doesn't agree with Father Hogan that there is obviously a very strong need for a total diocesan commitment to the pro-life movement.

Yearly conferences and annual "Respect Life" Sundays are hardly enough to counteract what is being done on a nationwide level by such well-supported groups as Planned Parenthood, Zero Population Growth, the Euthanasia Education Fund, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Department of Health, Education and Welfare to promote the anti-life, population control philosophy.

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Priest's Mass 'Right On!'

Editor:

In this day and age when so many of us are in too big a hurry to take the time to show our appreciation, I felt I must pause to express mine to a man who made Christmas so much more meaningful to me and my family.

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Courier-Journal



"I'M PLEASED YOU'VE BEEN DOING A TERRIFIC JOB WITH THE KIDS."

We were fortunate enough to attend the 7:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass celebrated by Father Robert Rice of St. Jerome's in East Rochester.

Let me digress a moment to describe how I see Father Rice. He's a young man in a big hurry to bring God's word to people. He's a deep-thinking person who is always searching for a meaningful way to get through to the people. I, for one, believe he does get through more times than he will ever know. One of his favorite expressions is, "You got to take them where they're at." And he does just that. He starts where they're at and brings them a long way. Father Rice innovated many new and significant ideas that evening, which appealed to young and old alike. His homily was preceded by a short play put on by the children and was beautifully performed with much meaning. Part of his homily reflected on the religious vs. commercial aspects of Christmas and of course, the meaning of Santa Claus to children. During his homily, Santa Claus entered St. Jerome's with a sack of candy canes for the youngsters. I know that some people found fault with this and I would like to say that I feel especially sorry for them as they missed the whole message.

For all the Christmases that Jesus and Santa have had to compete, here was a man who had the profound intelligence to bring them together as a team. I feel the children were more capable of accepting this than the competitive approach. I also would like to give the children credit for having more brains than any adults who would criticize this extremely beautiful Mass. After all, the children and Father Rice "took it where it's at." I felt extremely privileged to have attended that Mass for it was a lovely example of what religion really is, with all the beauty and love of Christmas.

To Father Rice I would like to say, Right On!

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Encounter 'Intense'

Editor:

Marriage Encounter is such an intense experience, I find it hard to write about, yet driven to share my feelings about it with everyone.

My husband and I were recent participants of this crash program of bringing couples closer to each other and through that, closer to God. It is a weekend that we will never forget and the outcome is something we will draw from every day, all through our lives together.

We began the weekend with a feeling of concern but with open minds. By the end of the weekend it is as if we had experienced being in a downpour and the water had risen higher and higher. The concern was not that we were drowning but that we were alive. It was like being born again into a new way of life, one of closeness and love for God, spouse and neighbor.

Love, friendship, compassion and giving are the core feelings of M.E. and these feelings flowed easily as we went through that concentrated 44 hours. The structure follows presentations and letter writing to your spouse.

Many times you keep asking yourself: is this real, am I feeling these things, am I alive or dead, what's happening to me? I can't be feeling or thinking these things. But, one knows one is.

It's like the feelings we had when we first took the vows of Matrimony, feelings that were lost as the years passed by.

Marriage Encounter is Catholic in structure. The Mass is part of the weekend and a Catholic priest and three Catholic "encountered" couples are the team leaders. However, on many weekends, the majority of couples participating are not Catholic.

M.E. began in Spain about 14 years ago under the direction of Father Gabriel Calvo. He saw his society becoming too "think" conscious, intellectualizing instead of just plain feeling. M.E. insists that feelings are neither right nor wrong. They just are.

M.E. is very contagious. In the Ithaca area alone, a little over a year ago, there were five encountered couples. Today there are over 120 members of the marriage encounter family.

No one is barred from M.E. On our weekend there were 25 couples ranging from those married only a few years, to those who had been married ten to twenty years, to those who were grandparents. And we grew to love them all.

The only way anyone can know about Marriage Encounter is to experience it. This letter can't tell it all, no matter how many words were printed. Give yourselves the chance. Attend a M.E. informational meeting in your area or call 607/564-9296.

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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.