

**Editorial**

**Cardinal Mindszenty**

Undoubtedly Pope Paul VI will be subject to criticism over his decision to seek Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty's resignation. And we are sure the Holy Father was mindful of that when he made his decision.

Those who respect the Hungarian primate's courage in the face of two diabolical systems of government — Nazism and Communism — will regret the development. However, they should consider some factors.

The cardinal, 81, is well past the mandatory retirement age of 75 for bishops. Because he no longer is allowed in his native land, he in fact is not able to fulfill the administrative duties and certainly not the required liaison functions between Rome and Budapest.

Here it should be underscored that his spiritual leadership is undiminished. To Hungarians in his native land and elsewhere, and to Mindszentyites around the world, his stature will be lessened not one iota.

The time, as it must to all men, had simply come for the great man of Hungary to step down.

It took courage on the part of the Holy Father to make this unpopular move but with the factors listed above as well as information at his disposal on the best ways to bring Christians behind the Iron Curtain into a more meaningful role in this shrinking world, the pontiff had no other course.

The Hungarian settlement in New Brunswick, New Jersey, which last Fall won the personal blessing of Cardinal Mindszenty for their new church, perhaps summed up the proper reaction.

While announcing that they "respectfully accepted" the decision they also stated that they "hope and pray that the result of the ecclesiastical diplomacy will be a free Church in a free Hungary."

"We will request the Holy Father that Cardinal Mindszenty be made a bishop of the 3 million Hungarians living outside of Hungary."

Our feeling is that he already is just that and that no one, including Pope Paul, would have it any other way.

**Sterilization Issue**

All on the same side of a certain issue — the Catholic Church, the American Civil Liberties Union, some fundamentalist sects, and women's liberation groups.

What issue is it that could serve to unify such groups who are in great disagreement on certain other problems? Compulsory sterilization. And we're sure to be hearing a lot more about this practice.

Already disjointed movements have begun around the country to use compulsory sterilization as a means of reducing the welfare rolls and also to protect the world from babies born to mental retardates.

One congressman has a bill which would force sterilization upon any woman on welfare who has two so-called illegitimate children.

Others, including some doctors, agree that those who are unable to care adequately for children should be sterilized.

Recently on the excellent CBS program "60 Minutes" another young woman told of how she was sterilized when she had an illegitimate child, but was told that "some day she would be able to have babies again." The sterilization was irreversible, however. She also was informed that she was retarded, a fact which did not seem plausible in her conversation on the television show.

Religions rightly see compulsory sterilization as destructive of human morals as well as an erasure of God-given rights. The ACLU rightly sees it as depriving individuals of their just rights and also as leading possibly to even more monstrous usurpation of rights by the government; women's liberation groups rightly see it in the same light and also feel such rights belong to the woman alone.

If these groups can work in concert perhaps one more overt act of disrespect for life, present and future, can be averted.

**Don't Condemn Other Views**

Editor:

Since human beings are not God, and therefore suffer from natural limitations of judgment, what right does any person, male or female, have to judge what is God-inspired and what is Satan's influence? Mrs. Puff, in her letter to the editor (1/30/74) insinuates that all women who seek equality within the Church and society are "part of Satan's plan to undermine us." Throughout history people have judged this rashly; and innocent people have, as a result, been murdered — "witches" burned at stakes (Joan of Arc), rebels nailed to crosses (Jesus Christ).

I believe as Mrs. Puff does that God has a plan for all of us but I also believe that each one of us is an instrument in the fulfillment of this plan, no matter who we are or what our life styles. Therefore we must listen to what each person has to say and weigh it against what others have to say. We must not condemn someone's views just because they do not agree with ours. God wants us to listen to and learn from each other because He can speak to us through anyone — children, leaders, followers, men, or WOMEN. Maybe the very ideas that you condemn, Mrs. Puff, are His ideas. It may be His plan that you are judging and condemning.

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**Too Much Space For 'Exorcist'**

Editor:

I am confused as to why the Courier-Journal (1/30/74) would devote so much space to an R rated movie. Is Father William O'Malley paying you for advertising The Exorcist?

Couldn't we have more Christian articles in the Courier and less of the secular. We get enough of that in the other newspapers.

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**Times Alter Customs**

Editor:

Reference: Mrs. Raymond Puff's letter, "Don't Refute God's Plan" (Courier-Journal 1/30/74).

**COURIER-JOURNAL**

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Courier-Journal



HE'S RIGHT, YOU KNOW! THERE ARE OTHER THINGS YOU CAN ADD UP ON YOUR POCKET COMPUTER BESIDES HIS FAULTS.

Mrs. Puff's statement that "the laws of God are as applicable today as they were 2,000 years ago" is absolutely true; however, she fails to realize that not everything contained in the writings of Paul is "God's Law." Paul's motivation in his letters is, first of all, disciplinary and not dogmatic. He is speaking to a particular situation in a particular time and place. Customs, mores, and values wereas different then as they will be in another 2,000 years and this cannot be ignored.

Mrs. Puff states that the passage "you wives submit yourselves to your husbands" (Col. 3, 18) is "proof of the laws of God in marriage." She apparently feels that this is as applicable to modern marriages as it was to marriages in the time of Paul. But, Mrs. Puff, what about Col. 3:22 which states "you slaves must always obey your earthly masters"? Is this also God's law? Does it mean that in our society today we could morally justify a return to slavery? I think not! In interpreting biblical passages for present day application we must not fail to take into account the whole complex of social, cultural, political, economic, and religious factors of the times in which they were written.

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**More Debate On Jesus Santa**

Editor:

I read Ms. Martin's letter (1/23/74) with much interest and felt that she raised some good points of view. Father Rice, as I pointed out in my letter, takes people where they're at. This was a Children's Mass and he took them where they're at, not where they're going to be a few years from now. If she were to read the preceding page of that issue of the Courier-Journal, she would see that the Vatican issued guidelines for children's Masses on which structure Father Rice's Mass was based.

To claim that allowing Santa to attend this Mass was a perpetration of fantasy is an allegation I would like to respond with some questions: Is Santa a lie we tell our children or are we expounding what he represents, which incidentally are the same things God represents: loving, giving charity for all mankind. Is the fantasy of Santa reserved only to parents and not to priests? She claims in her letter to believe in Santa, but elsewhere in the letter contradicts herself by referring to Santa as a fantasy. Are we willing to allow Santa only in our houses, but not in our Churches?

Which brings me to another point she raised. She lists her children as two believers, one

fence rider and one non-believer. Who taught these children to believe in Santa in the first place? For what reasons? How does she propose to toss the bathwater? She answered it herself when she said that "Soon enough they will come to realize their dependence and helplessness and grow in needs far beyond the capacity of 'Santa' to fill." She also points out that briefly, at least, Santa can zero in beyond their naughtiness, and beyond their wildest dreams to surprise and delight them. If she believes Santa important enough for these reasons to teach him to her children, then why is he not fit to mingle with God who also can zero in beyond their naughtiness, not briefly, but always. I believe that about God.

In East Rochester, Santa, in reverence of Christ's birth does turn up for the least of our brethren as evidenced by the many food baskets, toys and donations given to needy families on Christmas Eve through the cooperation of the Council of Churches and the East Rochester Fire Dept. — and a fat, old elf delivers them. Incidentally, he was enroute when he stopped at the Church.

To answer the question of who would consider Jesus in terms of competition? As I stated in my original letter, that's all I've heard preached for years, that the commercialization of Santa and Christmas has preempted Christ. I didn't make the competition. And it is a very sad fact that this competition does exist. That was what pleased me about our Christmas Eve Mass; the competition, not the baby was tossed with the bathwater.

Ms. Martin quotes, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God, the things that are God's." I feel that she hit on a grey area when she used this with regard to my letter. Things are not always black and white. Just as she claims to believe in Santa, yet refers to him as a fantasy, I realize her thoughts are grey where he is concerned, as are many peoples' except maybe children's. I truthfully don't believe in Santa, but I do believe in what he represents. That is why I cannot reject him and why he should not be taught to children as a candy-dispensing fat old elf only, but an extension of God, just as we are, to live in charity, love and kindness for all mankind.

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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.