

Editorial

Help for Oppressed In Our Own Nation

The support given annually by thoughtful Catholics for the support of missions within our own country is nothing new. This year, however, there is an innovation in the diocesan collection scheduled for March 3. The annual appeal for Negro and Indian Missions has been renamed The Joint Appeal for Black and Native American Missions. It is heartening to see the Caucasian word "Negro" replaced by the acceptable word "Black."

The collection will provide aid for the National Office for Black Catholics (NOBC) whose campaign is held in October elsewhere in the country.

The NOBC was founded in 1970 to enable black Catholics to assume a greater responsibility for, and participation in, the Church and to assist black Catholics and the Church in general in making an effective contribution to the needs of the total black community. It is endorsed and supported by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

It is obvious why diocesans, the overwhelming majority of whom are white, should be concerned about our black brothers. But aside from Christian and moral concern, some statistics should startle us into action.

There are 855,193 black Catholics in the United States but only 175 black priests, two black bishops (neither of whom heads a diocese), 35 black pastors (despite the fact there are 964 priests in black communities), 171 black Brothers, 30 black deacons, and of a total of 143,000 Sisters, only 900 are black.

Momentarily putting justice and love aside, at a time when the Church is suffering from inner tensions and attacks from the outside, it is obvious that we need the help of black Catholics, who ironically are begging for the responsibility that so many are forsaking.

Simply — by helping the NOBC we will be helping the Church. By helping the Church we will be helping ourselves.

The NOBC has stated that this year's collection will go toward the following:

- * A national office for the recruitment of vocations among black youth.

- * The development of Afro-American resources for liturgical use.

- * Theological and pastoral education programs for seminarians and priests, religious and lay personnel working in the black community.

- * Lay leadership development.

- * Educational services for Catholic schools in the black community.

The NOBC believes that black Catholics have a responsibility to build the Church in their own community, and to contribute to its human and social needs. NOBC also believes black Catholics have a responsibility to the Church itself on all levels of organization.

So money is needed.

Even more important, however, is that we also lend our brotherhood, care and concern to the plight of the black Catholic in the Church. Nothing less will do.

James Dulin, former president of the National Black Catholic Lay Caucus, last Summer offered some bitter criticism of the "white-oriented Church." He mentioned "racism" in the Church and he told black Catholics they will have to deal with problems of the oppressed people of God.

We feel that, given the help, black Catholics will eventually do that job and others for the good of the Church.

The March 3 collection will remain the same in another respect: it will still provide funds for the maintenance and care of Church missions for our native Americans — the Indians, probably the most overlooked minority in our country.

So think and then give. And then think again. So that good work can be vitalized by proper spirit.

Child Column 'Inspiring'

Editor:

For a lady who self-admittedly seemed to be in a literary slump two short weeks ago, Sarah Child has made a remarkable recovery with her contribution to the Feb. 13 issue. I found her treatment of "well-lived vs. well-read" thoughtful, inspiring and consoling.

(Mrs.) Marilyn Timmons
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Coverage Praised

Editor:

Regarding Pat Petraske's review of Father John McNulty's talk about homosexuality at a teachers workshop at Mercy High School last week — she is to be commended for an excellent and informative summary.

Too often we read of a person's style of delivery and learn little of what was said.

M.C. Murphy
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Reader 'Confused'

Editor:

I also am confused. How can the Catholic Church prohibit their parishioners from going to X-rated movies then extol the movie The Exorcist just because one of our Fathers had a hand in it?

The one scene with the young girl and how she uses the crucifix is blasphemous but it must be OK. I've only heard praises from the Catholic Courier, no ramifications.

Mrs. Carmela Loria
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Editor's Note: The Catholic Church has not extolled The Exorcist. The official Catholic film office has given it an A4 rating, morally unobjectionable for adults, with reservations. The Courier-Journal, in its review, said bluntly, "Children and immature adults should not be subjected to this movie." We do not think our review "praised" the movie.

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Audiovisual Aids Defended

Editor:

This is in regard to an article entitled "Shun Audiovisual Techniques at Mass, Priest Advises" (Courier-Journal 12-13-74).

I would like to respond to Father Hugo's question, "Do modern Catholics want a mechanical and synthetic liturgy, which in the end could be controlled by computer, to make the ancient Catholic worship relevant to the mass cult of the neoplastic age?"

I disagree with Father for any technological contribution can be abused or used for one's betterment in our society. If used properly, with moderation and balance, I see a great deal of good in using media in the liturgy. For real life experiences become a part of the liturgy of the day. I ask: Isn't the liturgy the focal point of our Christian community gathering together in faith to worship, a community of people who feel, hear, see, touch and taste, a community who because of progress in technology has become thus oriented? If we take away what has become a part of us — then I ask, what have we returned to — the "stoic"?

Sister Mary Vincenza, SSND
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Please Write For Life

Editor:

As all of your readers know by your 2/13/74 issue, the Senate Judiciary Committee will begin hearings on Pro-Life amendments, March 6.

This was abruptly brought about by the massive country wide Pro-Life marches last month. But now — "right now" is the crucial time. If no action is taken now by the public then no action will be taken by the Committee.

What has to be done is every person must write their congressman and both Senators and write and write and write. No matter how repetitious it seems that extra letter may be the one to start the ball rolling.

This issue far surpasses all others we have. So let us all join together in this common bond and save God's little ones.

And when the day comes when abortion is harnessed again and knowing the part we played our reward will be above our expectations.

So, please WRITE WRITE WRITE.

Richard and Theresa Hussar
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Alone But 'Not Lonely'

Editor:

I was happy to read in the Courier-Journal (1/30/74) that the Christian Broadcasting TV Network was named winner of the "Best Stations Award" for 1973.

"Go into the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation" Mark 16:15

Through the media of television and radio, I know that the gospel can reach all nations.

I am an elderly person and spend much of my days alone since my husband went to be with Jesus three years ago. Physically, I cannot do much in sharing the gospel, but I would like to do something, and that is to tell others about the Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) on FM Radio, WMIV, 95.1 which I listen to daily from 6 a.m. to — well it goes off at midnight, but my bedtime is early. This broadcasting includes joyous Christian music, a ministering of the Word of God and the Love of Jesus, and for me it has been a constant supply of spiritual nourishment. During my alone hours it has kept my spirits lifted and has been a source of company and fellowship too. Here are the other locations for Courier coverage:

WBIV, 107.7 Weathersfield — Buffalo and Western New York; WMIV, 95.1 Bristol — Rochester and the Genesee Valley; WEIV, 103.7 Ithaca — The Southern Tier; WOIV, 105.1 DeRuyter — Syracuse and Central New York; WJIV, 101.9 Cherry Valley — Entire Capitol District and the Mohawk Valley.

I hope others will find this radio station a source of company and growth in walking daily closer with God also. Someday I will join my husband whom I miss so much in heaven. But now I am getting to know Jesus and my loving heavenly Father better, and after all, I don't want to spend all eternity with someone I don't really know. And the more I know Him, the more I love Him.

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Opinions to the editor should be addressed: Letter to the Editor, Courier-Journal, Richard 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.