

Editorial

Shun Despair

In a recent weekly audience, Pope Paul VI called on the faithful not to give way to discouragement and pessimism despite all the disturbing "anti-social" behavior around the world.

The Holy Father made particular mention of kidnappings, strikes which hinder public service, coup d'etats, pornography and exhibitionism.

He said we need an antidote and then prescribed "a return to the healthy, rich, and fruitful patrimony of our Christian tradition. We must love this patrimony and live it, with its regenerative virtues, such as truth, honesty, freedom, order, civil solidarity, the spirit of service, courage, and sacrifice for the good of our respective countries."

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan also has touched on this theme. He has reminded us that we are "Easter people," that we have hope and joy inherent in our hearts if we but take the time to recognize it.

And when we feel there is nothing we can do about the calamitous events mentioned by Pope Paul, we are falling prey to the very anomalies the Holy Father is warning against. We must dig deeper to find the fortitude necessary to scatter the evil spirits of despair, pessimism and discouragement.

In addition to introspection, we can work to improve our external behavior. Too often, when we disagree with an idea we tend to slash away at the person who espouses it. We personify our criticism, which is neither effective nor charitable.

As a newspaper in the center of diocesan communications we perhaps hear and read a bit more than most of things reflective of the diocesan psyche. Frankly it is disturbing. We have heard or read libel, slander, gossip, petty vindictiveness, personal vilification, character assassination — and all in the guise of discussing issues affecting the family of God.

Admittedly the Church is in a time of flux. There is confusion. There is error. There is misunderstanding. All the more reason why we must all work together in an atmosphere of calm rationality and mutual respect. May we suggest that when criticism is necessary we begin it with a sign of peace rather than an accusatory finger.

True, we can't all agree on every issue but that in no way means there is not room for varying opinion in the house of the Lord.

And those given to shooting from the hip should ponder Proverbs: "He that troubleth his own house, shall inherit the winds."

Resettlement

Although our Page 1 story shows that diocesan individuals, parishes and the Catholic Family Center have already made strides in helping to settle Vietnamese refugees, the job is by no means complete.

According to Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, some 20,000 refugees have been resettled in our country through Catholic agencies. But Archbishop Bernardin also points out that there are still 40,000 persons registered with the U.S. Catholic Conference who have not been resettled and he adds that the conference is expected to take a major portion of another 20,000 persons due to arrive soon on these shores.

The archbishop has stated that the success of the program will be achieved "at the local level." While praising individual sponsorships, Archbishop Bernardin said, "Experience has shown that parish sponsorship provides, in most instances, the least amount of hardship on the sponsors, the greatest insurance against failure, and the widest possible opportunity for sharing in the Christian joy and satisfaction that comes from lending help when it is needed."

Several of our parishes have already gotten involved in resettling these homeless victims of the Indochina tragedy. We feel they deserve heartfelt gratitude for assuming this Christian responsibility.

The hope is that more will consider the opportunity.

Opinion

Wicked Must Be Instructed

Editor:

There were many Jewish priests including a High Priest, in the days of King Herod, but only an illiterate "holy man", John, the baptizer, dared to say to the king, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." And there were many bishops and priests in England in the days of Henry VIII, but only one bishop and one layman had the courage to tell the king, "You cannot take another wife as long as your lawful wife is living; and you cannot make yourself the head of the Church of England."

Recently a writer to the Courier-Journal proclaimed for all the Catholics of the Diocese of Rochester to see and know that he is both a Catholic and a Gay Activist. Only one priest and one layman wrote to the Courier to instruct the writer, and the public, that homosexuality is a grave sin, unnatural, an abnormality, one of the most disgusting of all sexual aberrations.

The Scripture reading for the feast of St. John Vianney, the model of all parish priests, is taken from the book of the prophet Ezekiel (3-17) and reads as follows: "Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel. . . . If I say to the wicked man, You shall surely die; and you do not warn him, or speak out to dissuade him from his wicked way that he may live: that wicked man shall die for his sin, but you shall be responsible for his death. If, on the other hand, you warn the wicked man, yet he has not turned from his evil and wicked conduct, then he shall die for his sin, but you shall save your soul."

There is a moral obligation on all, clergy and laity alike, to try to instruct and warn the sinner and, if possible, to turn him from sin.

Rev. G. Stuart Hogan
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Column Praised

Editor:

I wish to express a word of gratitude to your paper for the endless source of inspiration and encouragement you provide through the printing of Life, Liberty and Law by Nancy Murphy.

Her writings are filled with the most up-to-date information and are well-documented. She is truly a great leader of our time in helping us laymen to be aware of the important issues of our day as well as the future. She inspires one to light the candle of LIFE rather than curse the darkness. Her truths set us free from the powers of darkness. I am sad to learn she is no longer the editor of the Rochester Area Right to Life newsletter as it is a great loss to the organization. What our world needs now is more Nancy Murphys!

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Letters intended for publication must be addressed to Opinion, Courier-Journal, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604.

They should be no longer than 1 1/2 pages, typed double-spaced, with names and addresses. The paper reserves the right to edit all letters.



"I REMEMBER THIS NEIGHBORHOOD WHEN THE CHURCH DOORS WERE ALWAYS LEFT UNLOCKED!"

WORD FOR SUNDAY



Fr. Albert Shamon

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 18:15-20. (R1) Ez. 33:7-9. (R2) Rom. 13:8-10.

September is school month. The theme of Sunday's Readings is the responsibility to teach. "I have appointed (you) watchman for the House of Israel" (R1). To correct, to teach, to guide is loving one's neighbor (R2), is fulfilling Jesus' command to point out a brother's fault (R3).

On Sept. 14, Pope Paul VI will canonize Elizabeth Bayley Seton. It is ironical in these days, when Catholic Schools are being closed almost whimsically, that America's first saint to be canonized is the woman who founded the Catholic school system in the United States.

Her reason for opening such a school when other schools abounded was, "There are in the country mixed schools, in which ornamental accomplishments are the only subject of education. We have none, that I know, where this acquisition is connected with and made subservient to religious instruction . . ."

Today the Catholic school system in some dioceses appears to be in jeopardy. There are two basic reasons for this.

First, in the sick sixties, the religious aspect of Catholic education was played down for the sake of a mess of pottage — State Aid. The Catholic school was secularized, as have been many of our Catholic colleges — again for a few pieces of silver.

Secondly, the Catholic school crisis is another verification of the principle called "self-fulfilling prophecy." A small but articulate group have been talking and talking the Catholic school out of business. A bank run can be created (and destroy a fiscally sound bank) by just spreading the word that the bank is going to fail.

A three-point plan might revitalize the Catholic school system of our nation (a worthy bicentennial and renewal endeavor).

Point 1: The Catholic school must above all become Catholic! This must be its uniqueness. Catholic philosophy and faith must permeate the school community and every subject.

Since much of the faculty of the Catholic School is now lay, it is imperative that parish priests meet with school faculties regularly and visit classes weekly. The priest must help and encourage lay teachers to bring prayer back to the classroom and to teach religion academically and to inculcate a knowledge of and love for the Mass and time-tested devotions.

Point II: Because "Catholics are political pygmies," according to Virgil Blum, SJ, and because the wapsish Supreme Court has been discriminatory and prejudicial regarding Catholic education, we cannot hope for governmental aid in the immediate future, as is our constitutional right. Therefore, Catholics must begin thinking of endowing their schools.

I have established, for instance, a St. Mary's Church Educational Fund for our parish. We are asking our parishioners to bequeath \$1,000 (more or less according to one's capabilities) to this fund in their wills. Our first plateau is one hundred thousand dollars. We must go this route to secure the blessing of Catholic Education for the next generation.

Point III: CCD and Adult Education alone are not the answers. Communists concentrate on youth, not on adults. They simply liquidate non-conforming adults on the principle that you cannot unfry an egg.

Closing Catholic schools leaves a vacuum. The teaching Church has absolutized this form of education — but not exclusively. The question is not Adult Education or Catholic Schools, nor CCD or Catholic Schools, but Adult Education, CCD, and Catholic Schools — all three! A minority must never absolutize its own personal brand of ministries on God's people.



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