

Editorial

Women's Days

Not perfect, but very pleasing. Developments regarding women in the past few weeks could be so described.

Of course, foremost was the canonization of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton. Our first American saint is a woman.

Even more significant in this year of the woman, however, is the importance the Vatican put on the feminine aspect of the canonization. For the first time, a woman assisted Pope Paul at Mass. Four other women took important roles in the ceremony. And the whole affair was brightened by a papal quip — this is "Vatican Woman's Day."

Obviously the pontiff is paying sincere and satisfying attention to this International Women's Year. Just two weeks before he had pointed to the Blessed Mother as a model for feminists across the world and across the centuries.

So progress, not only material but emotional and psychological, is being made on many fronts.

For example, Bishop Leo T. Maher of San Diego, fresh from his encounter with the National Organization of Women over abortion, issued a 1,200 word pastoral letter, stressing Church roles for women.

The more, Bishop Maher said, "we enable women to take the place and fulfill the mission given them" by the Old and New Testaments, "the more we will be helping to promote and liberate them in the secular community."

He said the apostolic experience would not have been what it is without the experience of holy women. "Their presence," he said, "is not something apart from the apostolic witness but at its very heart."

All in all, despite the general turmoil facing all of us, man, woman and child, there has been good news of late regarding recognition and respect for women in the Church.

Iron Curtain

In what was described as "one of the more dramatic personal encounters of recent times" by the religious newsletter *Newsprint*, Father Robert F. Drinan, the priest-congressman from Massachusetts, visited the rebellious Russian nuclear physicist Andrei Sakharov.

Father Drinan got to Moscow as a legislator, having been denied admittance as a churchman, according to *Newsprint*. The fact alone delineates the absence of religious tolerance in the Soviet Union.

Newsprint says that Rep. Drinan reported that Sakharov spoke with vigorous conviction of the "immense" role Christians can play in helping Jews in the Soviet Union. Sakharov also spoke of the plight of Christian dissenters in that country.

He urged that religious leaders in the West avoid the official religious leaders in the Soviet Union, referring to them as "collaborators." He suggests contact with religious dissenters as a more worthwhile approach to exposing the problem. He said that at least 300 of the latter are imprisoned.

Detente may be necessary for the long-range interests of peace but we must never forget that a primary concern should be the continued intolerance existing behind the Iron Curtain. Because the United States is more public about its sins, we often stand vulnerable to international criticism, on our racism problems, as an obvious example.

At the same time the world's other super-power, the Soviet Union, eschews the limelight and hides its faults while enjoying the criticism directed at us for our intolerances.

To whatever extent it is possible under the umbrella of detente, our government should insist that the Soviet Union end its religious persecutions and open its doors, both entrances and exits, to Jews, Christians and other religionists.

And we, as individuals should become more aware of the plight of those behind the Iron Curtain. Detente is not solving their problems.

Opinion

Pertinent Question

Editor:

If a woman can be a saint why can she not be a priest?

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Post-Christian Era Now?

Editor:

In the past 10 years, we have witnessed the gradual slide into a post-Christian era in American history. In my opinion, this epoch has evolved through a combination of deliberate anti-Catholic forces and the passive acceptance of these forces on the part of both Catholic leadership and lay people.

The Supreme Court decision on abortion, the economic stranglehold the government maintains on Catholic education, and the God-less humanistic philosophy of moral relativism taught in public schools are only a few examples of anti-Catholic forces.

At the local level, we have newspapers which maintain an amoral perspective, Catholic agencies which receive only a small share of United Givers funds, and even a porno theater located within a block of the Cathedral.

Hopefully, the recent vote to close obstetrics at St. Mary's (since they fail to offer comprehensive OB devices of abortion and sterilization) will perhaps awaken Catholics to the realization that we are well on the road to persecution.

We can no longer accommodate the distorted "pluralistic" cop-out exhibited by a small group of clergy afflicted with some sort of identity crisis and insecure Catholic laymen who choose to blow with the secular breezes for other worldly goals.

Cicero claimed that crucifixion is the worst form of death. Christ chose to be crucified for us. Can we, as Christians, choose not to live and defend our faith in return?

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In Defense of ERA

Editor:

While seconding Mrs. Timmons' advice (9-10-75) that voters investigate the implications of

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Bishop Joseph L. Hogan
President

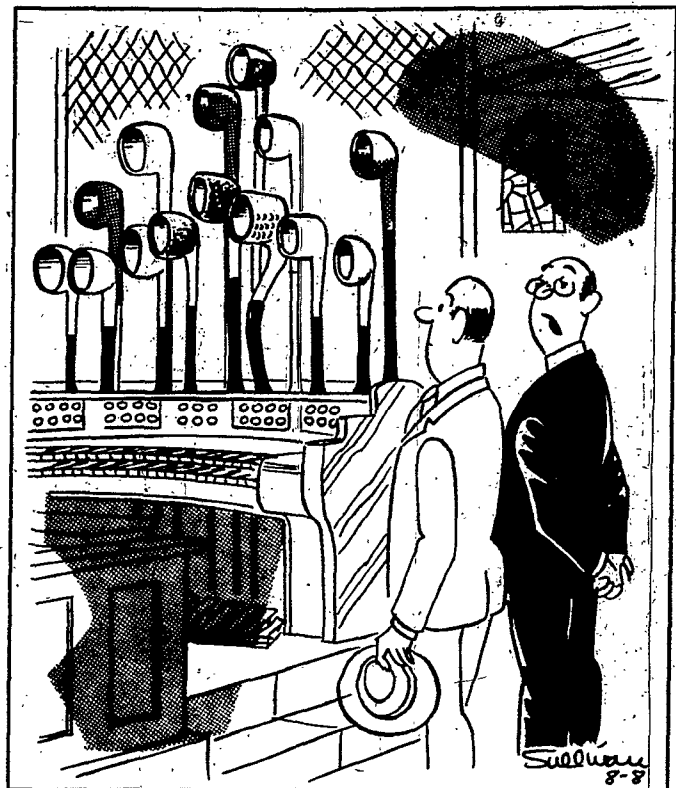
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"I GUESS I SHOULD'VE ASKED THAT COMPANY HOW LONG THEY'VE BEEN MAKING PIPE ORGANS!"

the ERA, I do not share her fears. Rather, I am alarmed that such unsubstantiated predictions present an erroneous picture of the outcome of the passage of the amendment. The N.Y. State ERA was framed with the same intent as the federal ERA. Since the courts will rely on the proceedings of the legislative body proposing the amendment, the following information is taken from the majority report of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, the "legislative intent" that is behind the amendment.

1.) "The constitutional right of privacy established by the Supreme Court (*Griswold v. Conn.*, 1965) . . . would likewise permit a separation of sexes with respect to such places as public toilets, as well as sleeping quarters of public institutions."

2.) "The provisions of this article shall not impair the validity of any laws of the U.S. . . . that make rape, seduction, or other sexual offenses punishable as crimes and will extend protection from such crimes to members of both sexes."

3.) "It does not require that any level of government establish quotas."

4.) "The amendment would bar a state from imposing a greater liability on one spouse than on the other merely because of sex. . . . Where one spouse is the primary wage earner and the other runs the home, the wage earner would have a duty to support the spouse who stays at home."

Sen. Bayh, of Indiana, one of the framers of the ERA, explained that the amendment would have no effect on laws prohibiting homosexual activity other than to require that the prohibition apply equally to male and female homosexuals.

The most recent report of the State Law Revisions Commission lists only about 100 laws that will be affected — and the changes will be either to prohibit discrimination or to extend to both sexes, privileges now claimed by only one.

There is no law presently in New York that requires that children bear the name of their father. This is a social custom and as such the ERA will have no effect on it.

The amendment will not compel women to work. Those who are urging the establishment of day-care centers are merely aware of the great need that already exists for them. In 1972, (the last year for which data is available) women in the work force had 5.6 million children under the age of 6. — while there was space for only 1.2 million in licensed day-care centers.

The ERA does not duplicate the Civil Rights Act or the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. It is not a legislative remedy but

fundamental constitutional protection.

The ERA will enable women who choose to work, or who must work (in N.Y. in 1970, 13% of all families were headed by women) to compete for jobs and job training on the basis of ability. It is time for the middle-class housewife to stop thinking of herself and think of these people and her husband as well. One of the major causes of premature death in males is heart disease — in which stress is an important factor. Perhaps if the burden of family support was shared equally by both partners, couples could spend their final years together.

For further information or speaker arrangements, you may contact League of Women Voters, 11 Goodman St., N., Rochester, 14607, (717-473-1697) or Mrs. Lynne Locher, 4 Almond Drive, Auburn, N.Y., 13021, (315-253-2643).

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Writer Did 'Disservice'

Editor:

I would like to register my strong objection to John Dash's article on the Lopez program (C) 9/17/75). In his article Dash read into my nominations to the new Budget Review Committee. I was nominating five priests for this committee whom the priests of Tompkins-Tioga region wanted placed in nomination. Two of the names were not on the Budget Review Committee last year. All five were chosen by the priests of our region and were not just my choices.

Dash has done a disservice to me and to the whole process of Budget Review. In no way was I "implying that the committee's work would be considered valueless." As a matter of fact, I spoke in favor of our nominating people to this committee when the other Senators were expressing a reluctance.

I thank you in advance for the opportunity of clarifying this issue.

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Other Letters On Page 20