

Editorial



"I'M HAPPY TO REPORT THAT, AFTER PRAYING LONG AND HARD FOR A SOLUTION TO OUR PARISH'S FINANCIAL PROBLEMS, I FINALLY KNOW WHAT TO DO! I'M GOING TO WRITE TO SYLVIA PORTER!"

Vote; Do It

We agree with the bishops of New York State who have stated that it is a moral duty for all Catholics to vote. There are many issues on which we have not only a right but a responsibility to make our opinions heard.

Admiral Thomas Moorer, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, seems to agree. In an unofficial moment during a taping session last week at WOKR-TV (Channel 13) he said that he felt that perhaps there should be a "reverse poll tax" whereby everyone who does not vote would have to pay an extra tax.

Now, bishops and admirals generally are not cut from the same cloth. So it is interesting to hear both express the necessity of everyone voting if we are to have true representative government.

Even though this is an off-year election, there are still many individual offices and issues at stake. The Courier-Journal does not endorse candidates nor can it get involved in every issue because its non-profit status prohibits its entry into any but the most Church-oriented issues — school aid, abortion, for two.

To the extent of our limitations we have tried to present information on topics in which our readers obviously have interest. We allow use of our Opinion space for letters of good taste, pro and con such issues. We avoid letters of obvious political puffery.

So do your homework. Know your facts. Have some background for your choices. But even if you have only your emotions to go on, still get out and vote. If you don't you may end up cursing the darkness.

Sound Advice

Gov. Ella T. Grasso of Connecticut has provided a healthy and appealing touch to the political scene. In a speech at the annual Al Smith dinner in New York City, she told some 1,800 persons in attendance that St. Elizabeth Ann Seton provides a proper example for today's politician.

"Mother Seton was," Gov. Grasso said, "in the forefront of an equality movement — one that gave due regard to humaneness, professionalism and piety. It strikes me that this is an unbeatable combination — the qualities of a winner on any ticket."

If only more politicians would see their vocations in the same light.

Wait Till Spring

The Cincinnati Reds, a team with verve, class and now the world's baseball championship. They're all right.

But think of the Boston Red Sox. Their dream died in October. Or did it? In baseball, as in life, there always is a new spring coming and never any reason not to be anticipating the fulfillment of our fondest hopes.

Opinion

Writers Said Misinformed

Editor:

In answer to Agnes Dunford's letter, "ERA has dangers," equality, contrary to her statement, is equal representation before the law. In answer to Marilyn Timmons most recent letter, "Say nay to ERA," she has been misinformed. No, five homosexual couples were not married in Colorado because of ERA. The legislatures have decided that ERA has nothing to do with homosexual unions. In Minnesota applications for adopting children have not been rejected is implied but she does not know that they have been accepted. Here again, ERA has nothing to do with adopting children. If "consenting sodomy" is no longer a crime in California it may be a problem but not because of ERA.

Men and women have not been housed together in state prisons. If they were, this would not be the result of ERA ratification but would reflect a change in police regulations of that particular state.

If rapes had occurred in Tennessee prisons, we would not be reading about it on the opinion page. It would have reached all media including the large publications.

Other facts should be read carefully by someone who wants to give more credence to common sense than to sensational, unsubstantiated comments.

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Are Unborn Less Equal?

Editor:

Today I accepted a New York Coalition for Equal Rights' flyer from a young woman working for passage of the Equal Rights Amendment. The text of the flyer's message concluded: "It's really quite simple. Either you believe that all people are created equal or you don't." Across the bottom, in large letters were written ALL PEOPLE ARE CREATED EQUAL.

In view of the fact that to create means "to bring into existence," I would naturally assume that these proponents of ERA would champion the most basic equality — the right to live. Every year hundreds of thousands of human lives, approximately 50 per cent of them female, are legally killed by abortion.

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Paradoxically, many of the organizations belonging to the N.Y. Coalition for Equal Rights are actively involved in maintaining the laws that allow the killing of unborn children on demand. The most militant pro-ERA organization, National Organization of Women, is also most militantly pro-abortion. None of the organizations listed concern themselves with social justice for the unborn.

The continuity of human life from fertilization until death is an obvious reality. The N.Y. Coalition for Equal Rights that can ignore the clear disenfranchisement of unborn children and clamor for a sweeping constitutional amendment that could result in anybody's guess may be serious in backing the ERA but certainly can't expect us to think they seriously believe that "all people are created equal." If they expect us to believe they are paragons of equality, then we have every reason to ask why they are discriminatory toward some of our human family.

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St. Joan's Unit Backs ERA

Editor:

The Rochester Chapter, U.S. Section, of St. Joan's International Alliance strongly endorses and urges support for the passage of the New York State Equal Rights Amendment on our upcoming Election Day, Nov. 4.

For over 60 years our organization has worked to secure equal rights and opportunities for women in church and society, in testimony to our belief in the Christian principle of human dignity and the worth of all God's people without distinction due to race, creed, color, or SEX.

Passage of the Equal Rights Amendment will legally assure these rights and opportunities for women in our state to pursue careers and life-styles commensurate with their individually God-given talents and capabilities. Not to guarantee these rights for women would be to deny the full humanity and human dignity of women — a direct contradiction of our Christian heritage.

As full-fledged and contributing members of our society, women are entitled to and must be assured equal protection and benefits of the law. Nothing is more fundamental to the concept of Democracy and Christianity than this vital concept. Passage of the ERA would finally guarantee long-overdue rights to women on an equal basis with men.

We urge the women and men in our diocese to exercise their right to vote on Election Day, and we urge them to display their Christian concern for the human dignity of all God's people by voting FOR the ERA.

Lyn Somers, Co-ordinator for the Rochester Chapter, U.S. Section, St. Joan's Alliance

ERA Concerns Legal Right

Editor:

I am appalled at the number of letters you have printed opposing the state Equal Rights Amendment (Oct. 22). These letters are panic-driven, emotional statements which unfairly link the ERA to every activity from abortion to homosexuality. But all the ERA states is that men and women will be treated equally before the law.

ERA concerns legal rights and has nothing to do with a person's choice of life style, or the choice to work outside the home or not

to work, to raise a family or not. Nor does it have anything to do with public toilet facilities or how you divide household chores, or the care of children or with social amenities.

The ERA has nothing to do with abortion or homosexuality.

On Page 2 you did run the position of the Office of Human Development. Their position is that "We believe that the whole of society is strengthened whenever the basic rights of any human beings are finally provided." They state the issue well.

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ERA Fears Examined

Editor:

Let's examine basic "fears" expressed about the Equal Rights Amendment.

ERA would require sexually integrated restrooms, prison cells, dormitories etc. FACT: "Just as the principle of equality does not mean the sexes must be regarded as identical, it does not prohibit the States from requiring a reasonable separation of persons of different sexes under some circumstances. The States can continue to require segregation of the sexes for these regulatory purposes with respect to such facilities as dorms at co-educational colleges, prison dormitories and military barracks.

The constitutional right to privacy established by the Supreme Court in Griswold v. Connecticut (1965) would likewise permit a separation of the sexes with respect to such places as public toilets." U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee Hearings. Equality of rights does not mean sameness. It would merely require if there is soap in the women's room there must be soap in the men's room.

The Draft Scare: ERA would subject women and mothers to the draft and assign them equally with men to combat duty. FACT: The New York State ERA cannot deal with the draft because it is a federal issue. THE STATE MILITIA HAS NOT BEEN CALLED UP FOR 200 YEARS. "Under the present U.S. Constitution Congress already has the power to draft women and to decide those classifications of citizens exempt from the draft. ERA will require that women be allowed to volunteer for military service on the same basis of men. Today women are often arbitrarily barred from military service and from the benefits which flow from it." (U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee Hearings).

The Loss of Support Scare: Wives would be forced to provide 50 per cent of the family income. FACT: "The amendment would bar a state from imposing a greater liability on one spouse than on the other merely based on 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 in compensation for the performance of his or her duties." U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee Hearings. Again: Equal rights and equal protection do not mean sameness and would not impose any quota system. Relationships and responsibilities within the home are and will remain free from interference by the state.

Betty Ann Tichenor
Vice Chairman, Rochester Area Coalition for ERA

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