

Divided, We ...?

Those opposed to the pro-life movement come in various classes and are of assorted motivation. Many simply are pro-abortion and in their zeal are not above appealing to the prejudice of many Americans by painting the pro-life movement as directed by the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. They also may encourage the concept that pro-lifers are rightwing, religious fanatics, out of step with modern society.

Then there are those who are not pro-abortionists but who have not supported the pro-life cause. They subscribe to the above prejudices but to a lesser degree. They may see pro-life as at least Catholic in nature and/or "conservative." They may like to believe that because abortion on demand is legal it is moral; that because the Supreme Court has given it its imprimatur it is here to stay. Might as well learn to live with it and stop all that protesting.

Logic will not dissuade the former group but we would like to use a pro-life leader to make a point with the latter.

We give you the Rev. Richard John Neuhaus. Check his credentials.

- * He is a Lutheran pastor.
- * He is known for his participation in liberal causes.
- * He has been arrested for demonstrating for civil rights and for anti-war activities.
- * He is pastor of a low-income, largely black and Puerto Rican parish in Brooklyn.
- * He is opposed to abortion on demand and sees the U.S. Supreme Court decision of 1973 as a "disaster" because "it removed from the American people and the normal political process discussion of one of the most urgent questions facing any society: how are we going to define and protect human life?"

We would wish that all those in the pro-life movement were equally adamant in speaking out for the dignity and worth of human life in all spheres — war, poverty, racism. Pastor Neuhaus speaks of this unfortunate situation as playing into the hands of pro-abortionists.

On the other hand it would have been pleasing to see the waves of anti-Vietnam War protesters who spoke up for life then join the anti-abortion movement. This does not seem to have happened.

Somehow although most of us are pro-life, we live in divided camps. We should be particularly aware of those who do not share our views and who delight in keeping us separated.

Good News

For anyone who tends to see our younger generation as one-dimensional, that is, rebellious, an article in the April 4 Twin Circle should serve to remind that there is still plenty of old-fashioned virtue inside those floppy clothes.

Seems a restaurant owner in Lexington, Ky., lost her day's receipts, \$1,700, when she couldn't resist attending a football game before going to the bank. Three girls, Jeannie Minton, 17, Lucille Minton, 16, and Barbara Patton, 17, found the bag of money and with the aid of security guards, returned it to the owner.

"We didn't think for a moment of keeping our only thoughts were for the owner who must have been feeling terrible," said one of the girls.

The owner, who no doubt was feeling mighty low, responded in kind, with \$100 to each of the girls.

But the Good News does not stop there. A local two-year Christian college, Midway, offered each of the girls a \$2,000 scholarship to reward their honesty. "We believe in Christian values," a spokesman said.

Amid the tumult and distress, a pleasant reminder to reflect on the goodness which also abounds in this world.

Opinion

Also Shocked By 'Non-Art'

Editor:

We agree with the letter expressing shock at the pathetic display of non-art which depicted uniformed nuns as grotesque subhuman creatures. But we point out that according to the Vatican, Catholic parents are obliged to be familiar with the education given their children.

In the case of the recent display of graphic hatred, perhaps some determined parental investigation might have nipped the nonsense in the developmental bud. Improprieties taught or cultivated by newspaper nuns and lay teachers is very effectively silenced with genuine Catholic teaching from the parents.

On the other hand, perhaps the display rendered a service to those of us who are parents of junior-high-aged youngsters inasmuch as it revealed the level of teaching and the degree of Catholicity offered by a particular Catholic high school in the diocese.

Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Murphy
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Commends Column

Editor:

Many parents have seen evidence of the humanist religion in the situation ethics and behavior-modification methods in our area schools. I would like to commend Nancy Murphy for her recent series on the Humanist Manifestos and follow-up columns on Siecus.

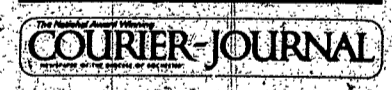
I wish that Mrs. Murphy's series could be a part of the educational training of every Catholic school teacher in the diocese, and for every priest and parent.

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Student Art Criticized

Editor:

Distortion is often used in art for a purpose. However, I am shocked to see it used in a textile woven by a Nazareth student in feature characterization of four elderly nuns of yesteryear wearing religious habits (Courier-Journal 3/10/76, p. 15). It is regrettable that the youth of today have no opportunity of



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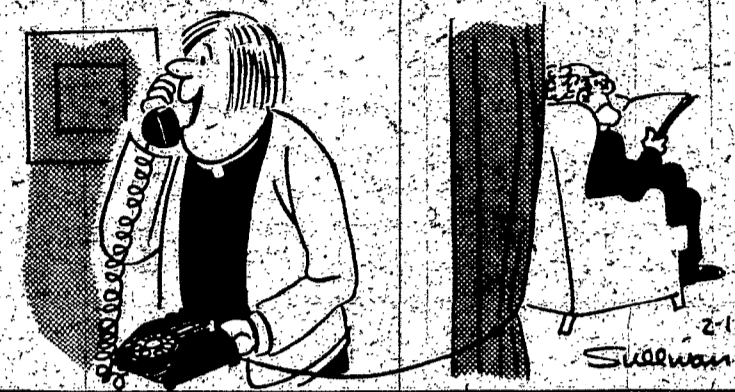
Rev. Louis J. Hohman
Episcopal Advisor

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"WHEN I SAW IT IN THE PAPER, I SAID, 'HEY, WOW! A UFO LANDING SITE! WHAT A TERRIFIC BICENTENNIAL PROJECT!' YEAH! UH, JUST A MINUTE, MR. MAYOR..."



"SURE, I'LL BE GLAD TO BLESS IT FOR YOU!"

Keep Issues Clarified

Editor:

I wish to comment on the letter written to you by Mrs. Mary Margaret Hober concerning the national ERA amendment (Courier-Journal 3-24-76). Nothing distresses me more when a person or a group of people will take things out of context to get their point of view across. I think that people are intelligent enough to make up their own minds when given the issues properly. This also goes for ERA. She mentions a number of things that would affect women if this amendment were passed, such as wars, property rights, divorce, alimony, child custody and inheritance rights. This in my opinion is very vague. If she wishes to get her point of view across she should be more specific.

I saw some of the pamphlets distributed by the opponents of ERA. One such article stated that if ERA were passed, it would mean that men and women might have to use the same toilet facilities in public places. Now I ask you is that the way to present an issue? I want it clearly understood that I am not saying that Mrs. Hober was a part of that group, but her letter sort of clouds the issue in the very same manner.

I would refer you to your editorial concerning Guns, Babies. The NRA will stop at nothing to halt any gun legislation that would be beneficial to the American public. Their biggest slogan is that according to the Constitution the American people have a right to bear arms. If I am not mistaken they are taking the article referred to out of context. The Constitution states: "A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed."

In conclusion all I am saying is give the public clear and concise issues. Then let them decide for themselves.

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Health Plan Questioned

Editor:

At last night's meeting (March 22) of Holy Rosary Board of Education many of us learned for the first time of a contemplated plan for a diocesan change in health insurance carriers. A good deal of concern was expressed, since it was felt a change in companies may cause some persons to have less adequate coverage than they now enjoy. Because of our responsibility toward those who teach our children (and other parish employees as well) we feel that a full comparative disclosure of the current and proposed plans should be presented to those most affected by it. We also believe they should have an opportunity for meaningful input into any decision regarding their health care coverage.

We have expressed our concern to the Pastoral Office. Are no other parent groups or teachers aware of the problem or concerned with it?

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Editor's Note: A check with the Pastoral Office elicited the information that the new health plan, the Wasau plan, was endorsed by Bishop Joseph L. Hogan after five months of seeking bids and comparisons, as well as by the Priests Council, Sisters Council, diocesan Finance Committee and hospital chaplains. As soon as a schedule of benefits involved and method of operation is prepared it will be distributed to all employees. The Wasau plan was described as "more enriched."

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.