

No Freedom to Slander

Freedom of speech ranks among the most important of all human rights, almost equal to freedom of thought. It is healthy for human beings, the only creatures to whom God gave the ability to reason, to exercise our minds. It is fortunate that when so doing we be allowed to express our thoughts publicly. Nations where this is not possible are the worst example of oppression.

However, there are times when supposedly intelligent beings abuse this freedom. One of the most scurrilous examples in recent times has been provided by a Frenchman writing in an Italian magazine — both will remain nameless here because the article obviously was done as a publicity gimmick.

The piece slandered Pope Paul VI, referring to him as a homosexual. The Holy Father himself responded to the article to 20,000 persons in St. Peter's Square on Sunday, April 4. He said: "We know that our cardinal vicar and the Italian Bishops Conference have urged you to pray for our lowly person, made an object of scorn and horrible and slanderous insinuation by a certain publication lacking dutiful regard for honesty and truth. We thank you all for your expressions of filial love and moral awareness. Thank you from the bottom of my heart."

We all should offer our prayers for the Holy Father but even more, for the perpetrators of the scandalous attack. They need prayers far more than Pope Paul VI.

Also, each of us should sit down and write an expression of our love and concern to Pope Paul VI, care of Vatican City. He will be pleased to receive such sentiments from this far away corner of the world. Do it as a Lenten or Easter message. Do it now!

Too 'Macho'?

While there are no doubt strong influences at work in today's world that endanger the family unit, there may be one that has not drawn as much attention as, say, working wives, relaxed morality, or mobility.

Sorry, men, but it may be that your days of sitting smugly and objectively by, looming as a societal bulwark, may be drawing to a close. For instance, try this statement on for size: "Twentieth Century males are a breed that God certainly never intended."

Hurt? There's more and it's all part of an article in the April issue of Columbia magazine, a Knights of Columbus publication. The authors are Urban and Jeanette Steinmetze, co-founders of the Family Enrichment Bureau in Escanaba, Mich.

According to Religious News Service, they charge that strong "macho" tendencies in modern men make them reluctant to seek family enrichment and counseling. "It is simply a matter of male pride and male training," they say. "All men are supposed to stand on their own two feet and solve their own problems."

In an accompanying article, "Can the Family Survive?" written by Valerie Vance Dillon of the Indiana Catholic Conference, a U.S. study is cited which reveals that a group of seventh and eighth grade boys spent an average of 7 1/2 minutes each week with their fathers.

The author also says the head of the household is whoever is home and implies that dear old dad just isn't there that often. Referring to modern children, Mrs. Dillon said that "their father often is not in touch with their day-to-day problems."

We wouldn't dare point a general finger at all those breadwinners in the diocese as culpable, in the senses described in Columbia. However, it does seem that there may be enough justification for our male diocesans to check their "macho" quotient. Perhaps some adjustments are in order.

Opinion

Criticism Not 'Valid'

Editor:

The opinions expressed by three readers regarding the prize-winning art work of Nazareth Academy students in the recent Scholastic Art Exhibit displayed at Sibley's raise many questions in my mind. Is it valid to judge the level of teaching and the degree of Catholicity offered by a particular high school in our diocese on the basis of one art piece done by one student? Can that level of consideration satisfy parents' obligation "to be familiar with the education given their children?" Does anyone seriously believe any religious or lay teacher is teaching or cultivating "improprieties"? How can one attribute a loud and clear subliminal message about the meaningfulness of short skirts and newspeak to an art work without even knowing the intent of the artist?

I believe the educational philosophy and objectives of Nazareth Academy deserve serious, responsible and comprehensive consideration. I invite anyone interested in discussing these issues to contact me and to come to Nazareth in order to see at first-hand what we are truly about.

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'Art Critics' Taken to Task

Editor:

In reference to a reader's letter in the March 24 Courier-Journal, we feel it appropriate to express some of our thoughts regarding art and education. The reader seemed to feel that we are teaching non-values (anti-Americanism, secularism) through the process of indoctrination. This is based upon photographs printed (3/10) from the Scholastic Art Exhibit.

The students and art faculty do not feel that it is possible to discern a student's intention or a school's philosophy by assessing a single piece of art work. A better view is attained by seeing a collection of a student's work which totals her experiences and her evaluation of them. To view a collection of many students' works such as in the Scholastic Art Show makes one amazed and appreciative of the breadth of young adult interests and their innovative handling of old themes that demand fresh inspection. Each piece is a bite from the whole.

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of what life offers us—beauty, ugliness, faith, despair, truth and deceit. It is unreasonable to demand that each work must present all of life's facets.

The presence of clear symmetrical order as seen in the lovely piece of macramé is absolutely fitting in position to a satirical Uncle Sam wielding the power of big money. Both are legitimate expressions of what can fill our lives and while completed by two different individuals, they could easily have been done by one. We find humor in the religious characters in "Those Were the Days" and reject the idea that the work of these young adults is the product of instructional prodding that espouses cynicism or radicalism.

We are proud and happy with what we feel is a learning situation in our school's art department. We would like to take this opportunity to invite your readers to come to Nazareth Academy and spend some time meeting our art students and teachers and learning first-hand what we believe art and education are about.

Rose Strickland
Sr. Eileen Curtis
Sr. Kristin Malone
Sr. Anne DeMare

Priests Shortage ... Why?

Editor:

We read and hear a lot about the shortage of priests: fewer vocations, quitting the seminary, men leaving the priesthood.

Perhaps, a few reasons why —

Picture a young man who wants to give his life to practicing and preaching the Gospel message of love. He is thinking of the priesthood, or, perhaps, he is already in seminary. He reads, among other things, about Cardinal Dearden's telling a group of Charismatics that the authority of the Church comes ahead of everything (C-J, 9-10-75); about Cardinal Carberry's edict on hair styles for the priests of his diocese (C-J, 10-29-75). He sees in the recent Vatican pronouncement on sexual morality the same old arbitrary rigidity, the same old telling what not to do — no help, no encouragement, no understanding, no human-ness, no love. Might not our young man have some second thoughts?

Let us hope that regardless of doubts he goes ahead.

Jesus was a revolutionary. He fought against the Rulers of the Temple and the status quo throughout his ministry. We hope our young man will also be a revolutionary. We hope he will stay within the Church and have the strength and love and courage to fight for the New Reformation which many of us had hoped Vatican II would bring.

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Office Funding Raises Protest

Editor:

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan has approved of the establishment of a diocesan office of "Justice and Peace" after discussing the proposal with the Sister's Council, the Diocesan Pastoral Council, and the Priest's Council.

The Priest's Council rejected the proposal.

Surely, the adoption of this new office for "Justice and Peace" should have the unanimous support of all three bodies consulted.

Money for this project will come from mission funds.

People are always very willing

to give money to the needy around the world through Mission collections. It is wrong to use any of this money for pseudo-social activities.

If this "Justice-peace" unit is a good cause let the bishop ask for a special collection for it and not appropriate mission funds which were not donated for that purpose.

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Fr. Greeley Wasting Time

Editor:

Since anti-conception has always been contrary to Christianity, which can be made quite verifiable by a quick glance into the past by the writings of the saints and popes, we somehow cannot conceive of Father Greeley wasting his time and ours by saying that a reaffirmation of this hallowed doctrine poses a threat to American Catholic practices. Surely Father Greeley isn't differentiating between American and Roman Catholic practices?

To blame *Humanae Vitae* as the cause of declining Catholic devotions is no more credible than blaming our Blessed Lord for announcing that we were to eat his body and drink his blood. For on that day "many of his disciples broke away and would not remain in his company any longer." "Does it shake your faith?" He asked them.

As these current agitations continue from well-meaning sociologists as Father Greeley and company, who are ironically precipitating discord, we certainly hope that their recovery from this pious coma will be short in coming.

Richard and Theresa Hussar
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Gun Control Unpopular

Editor:

If, as your editorial states, most Americans feel that handgun control is needed, where are these people? The lack of organization, funding and effective action of gun control groups compared to the NRA demonstrates that pro-gun control poll respondents are paying nothing more than "lip service" to gun control. When the majority of Americans TRULY want gun control, they will show it by their actions. Currently, I think that people who sincerely want stricter firearms legislation are in a distinct minority.

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Coming Event In Toronto

Editor:

People of the Diocese of Rochester will want to know that Mother Teresa of Calcutta will be speaking in Toronto at Convocation Hall, University of Toronto, 7:30 p.m., Thursday, April 29. Mother Teresa's theme will be "Love Without Limits."

Tickets are \$3 per person and are available from the Youth Corps, 56 Bond St., Toronto, Ont. No orders accepted by phone.

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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.