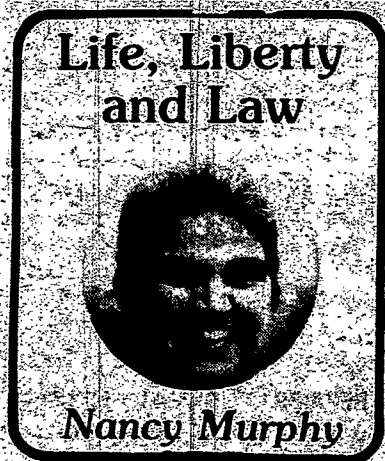




Fest Feature

Parish boys of St. Thomas the Apostle Church are treated to sneak preview of a Face-Painting Booth featured at the Church's Outdoor Festival last week. The pirates, Indians and clowns are (l. to r.) Roby Glazier, Jim Crisafulli, Jeff Glazier, Gerard Luken and Dan Considine. Mrs. Elaine Casey and Mrs. Mary Daniels coordinated the booth.



Seventeen hundred years ago, Christians might have celebrated their bicentennial. Did they have reason to rejoice and to celebrate? Behind them by the year 200 were the Annunciation — "Ecce ancilla Domini" — the Birth, the teachings, the miracles and the Passion, the betrayal and the denial, the Crucifixion, Resurrection and Ascension. The gospels had been written, the organization begun. Ridicule, persecution, imprisonment and death, although very much with us today in Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Russia and the Ukraine, were vigorously opposed in the second century by all Christian leaders. Fear was contained. Yes, there was reason to rejoice.

And although Christian blood was to become the seed of the Church, Christian faith edged out despair. They held to their faith in the unchanging truths of Christ. Yes, they might have celebrated their bicentennial.

Only the most perceptive Christian in the year 200 would have prophesied that the second and third centuries would contain the first of potentially the most lethal attacks of all — attacks from heretics within the Christian gates. Church history records that early Christians were not so much occupied with attacks from Roman emperors as with attacks from the heretics: the Gnostics who denied God's omnipotence, the Ebionites who sought to disprove the divinity of Christ, the Manicheans who held that there were two Gods, and the Sabellians who denied the Trinity. (There were more as the centuries unfolded.)

Yet that small church built on the bedrock of Peter has survived human frailty. She has protected and defended the teachings of Christ for a decade of bicentennials — two thousand years because she is based on the truth of an almighty creator.

Are we of the United States —

this week celebrating our own bicentennial — are we not similar to those bicentennial Christians? Two hundred years ago Thomas Jefferson wrote the short-articulate Constitution of a new nation. We have that document in its original handwritten form, we have thousands of martyred soldiers and statesmen, we have the recorded follies of a class of American putting himself first in our shameful treatment of the Black, we have shed our own blood on our own ground, fought when there was little hope of victory, and held fast to our faith. We have rectified what we could, changed immoral legislation, punished and forgiven the wrongdoers. What does the coming century hold for us? Have we cause to rejoice?

Thomas Jefferson, a man of rare courage who bore witness to truth and justice as he recognized them to be, will not come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, each of us according to our merits (those who have responded and those who have refused). But this Constitution, though to a lesser degree, is based as is the Church on the Almighty Creator. Our inalienable rights to life and liberty are guaranteed in his brave document, not as another Jefferson said recently, "by the Supreme Court or the federal government or the several states, but by the Creator."

And do we not face political and legislative heresy which threatens to undermine our nation when we face those who would continue to destroy the coming generation of Americans through legal abortion? Do we not face extinction, if we supinely accept political and religious leadership, which encourages this slaughter? If sterilization and abortion become the law of the land, are we not denying the foundation of our Constitution by denying and refusing our natural role as obedient creations of a loving Creator?

I suggest to you that Dr. Mildred Jefferson, President of the National Right to Life, is correct when she says that we are on our way to extinction when we deliberately throw away our coming generation. And I further suggest that only those who resist the official ridicule, rhetoric and silence, only those who speak and act for the unborn and the unwanted, only those few will know the deep glory and the fine celebration of our bicentennial. Those few will rejoice in the manner of the bicentennial Christians.

Yes, we too have cause to rejoice. The pursuit of happiness is not the sacred goal of this nation.

Carey Vetoes 'Abortion' Bill

Albany, N.Y. [RNS] — New York's Gov. Hugh Carey vetoed a bill that would have required parental consent for abortions for girls under 18 only minutes before it would have gone into effect.

The governor, a Roman Catholic, had delayed taking action on the measure in the hope that the United States Supreme Court would issue a ruling on such laws in cases pending from Massachusetts and Missouri.

Under the bill, penalties of up to a year in jail could have been imposed on persons performing abortions for girls under 18 who did not have parental consent.

Assemblyman Frederick Schmidt (D-Queens), one of the bill's sponsors, had pointed out that a girl under 18 must have her parents' permission "to get a penicillin shot or have her tooth filled."

He fought successfully to have

the penalty of a year's imprisonment restored to the measure on the Assembly floor after it had been eliminated by a legislative committee.

In a two-page memorandum explaining his veto, Gov. Carey described the bill as "an attempt to substitute symbolism for a substantial and legally sound treatment of a serious issue."

The bill, he said, placed "a cruel and intolerable burden" on "those who lack a secure home."

He said that he personally is "morally opposed to abortion" and that as a parent of 12 children he is particularly aware of the desire and right of a parent to know what is happening to his children, especially when they are minors.

But, the governor added, "as I talked to many other parents, I also realized that we are not acting under ideal circumstances."

Mr. Carey reported that he had seen statistics indicating that teenagers have more abortions than persons in any other age group, and that many of them have no parents to turn to.

"That is one of the facts that struck me," he said. "That helped me come to a decision."

Gov. Carey related that some supporters of the measure had urged him to sign it as a "moral statement" even though they anticipated that the U.S. Supreme Court would rule against such laws when it acts on the pending cases from Massachusetts and Missouri.

"I believe there are less cynical and far more meaningful ways to make such a statement," he declared.

The governor announced that he will appoint a commission to propose "a workable legislative solution" to the problem of giving parents a role in their daughters' abortion decisions.

Vatican Reiterates Sterilization Ban

New York [RNS] — In at least one Indian state, compulsory sterilization is being considered to lower its birth rate.

In the United States, sterilization is fast becoming a leading method of birth control.

A report from the Sterilization Association, issued recently, revealed that of the 1.3 million Americans who submitted to sterilization procedures last year 51 per cent were women. In 1971, women accounted for only 20 per cent of sterilization operations in the U.S.

The association completed its report by announcing that the total number of persons in the U.S. who have submitted to sterilization operations has risen to 8,244,607 — 4,635,213 men and 3,609,294 women. Of that number, 6,659,000 sterilizations were completed in the period 1970-75.

As a consequence, the news in the United States that the Vatican's Doctrinal Congregation has restated the Church's position — that direct sterilization remains "absolutely forbidden" — has made worldwide news.

It was a major topic in London where the European Federation of Catholic Physicians heard Dr. R. C. Tompkins of Tulsa, Okla., read excerpts from the Vatican congregation's document sent to the U.S. Catholic Bishops in March 1975.

When Dr. Tompkins made the full text of the Vatican document

Student Wins Essay Award

Todd Flowerday, a 1976 graduate of Bishop Kearney High School, received a United States Savings Bond from the Knights of Columbus for his essay on Americanism, which he entered in the K of C's annual contest.

He received the Award at the organization's annual dinner held at the Party House on Thursday, June 24.

TRINITY ALUMNAE MEET

The Rochester Chapter of the Trinity College Alumnae Association had a summer picnic at the home of Mrs. Richard Chapman Saturday, June 26. Officers for next year were elected: Mrs. Chapman, president; Mary E. Statt, vice president; and Mrs. William Modney, secretary-treasurer.

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available to delegates and to the press, the U.S. bishops released it from their conference headquarters in Washington, D.C.

In restating the Catholic Church's stand on the topic, the Doctrinal Congregation said that "notwithstanding any subjectively right intention of those whose actions are prompted by the care or prevention of physical or mental illness which is foreseen or feared as a result of pregnancy (sterilization) remains absolutely forbidden according to the doctrine of the Church."

"Sterility intended in itself" the congregation said, is not oriented to the "integral good" of the person "inasmuch as it damages the ethical good of the person, which is the highest good, since it deliberately deprives foreseen and freely chosen sexual activity of an essential element."

In its statement the congregation recognized that there has been some theological dissent on the issue.

"The Congregation, while it confirms this traditional doctrine of the Church, is not unaware of the dissent against this teaching from many theologians," it said. "The Congregation, however, denies that doctrinal significance can be attributed to this fact as such so as to constitute a 'theological source' which the faithful might invoke and thereby abandon the authentic magisterium (teaching authority) and follow the opinions of private theologians which dissent from it."

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