

More Opinions

NCCB Stand Praised

Editor:

Thank you for your lead story in the Courier about the National Conference of Catholic Bishops reaffirmation of traditional Catholic principles. We are greatly encouraged that the secular atheistic values clarification will now come tumbling down.

We also wish to express our deep gratitude to the Catholic Courier for the Life Liberty and Law columns by Nancy Murphy. Her stand has been consistently based on the very standards reaffirmed by the bishops. We note that we were able to secure a copy of the Vatican Declaration on Sexual Ethics from Ms. Murphy, when it was unavailable from any other local source.

It is a most reasonable and compassionate document. It has been well-received in our interfaith discussions.

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Sees Vatican Belittled

Editor:

We don't want to put a Nun on the spot but we are obligated to respond to Sister Josepha Kennedy's remark in the Courier-Journal (11-17-76). Perhaps she didn't really mean it, but it seemed to us that her words were belittling to the Vatican when she said, "What in the name of heaven will Italy do when they are faced with the beginnings of the democratic processes in an otherwise hierarchical system."

Well, it isn't the first time at all. These things were tried in the late 19th-early 20th centuries and titled Americanism. And secondly, we advise Sister Josepha that the second Vatican Council stressed the hierarchical structure of the Church of Rome (not of Italy) in Lumen Gentium, Chapter III, paragraphs 18-thru 29, 21 Nov. 1964.

All we did was look it up in our paperback copy of Austin Flannery's Vatican II, the Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, available at any good book store.

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Students Miss Point of Mass

Editor:

It made me sad to read the "Equal Time" column in the "Rap Around" section of the Courier (Dec. 8, 1976). Eight seniors from Cardinal Mooney stated their views on "Is Mass Necessary?" They said it was irrelevant today, repetitious, too formal, cold and unfriendly. Some said it was somehow

necessary, something we do because we have to.

As a product of 16 years of Catholic education, most of which was prior to Vatican II, I believe that these young people have missed the point entirely. The Mass is not just a nice, necessary ceremony that is part of our faith. It is a supreme act of worship. In The Living Bread, Thomas Merton wrote that the Mass gives infinite glory to God and perfect praise and thanksgiving for His goodness. He says it offers: Him worthy propitiation for our sins and obtains for us all the graces we need to carry out His Will on Earth and come to union with Him in Heaven. If this were REALLY understood, no one would think of Mass as anything but the wonderful gift that it is.

Perhaps these young people need to mature a little to see that it is impossible to please every individual with the methods and music of every Mass. It is unrealistic to expect to leave every Mass feeling uplifted, fulfilled and enthusiastic. Mass is what the worshippers bring to it so it is different every time it is offered. You don't go to be entertained but to honor God. You get from the Mass what you are willing to give and usually much, much more.

As for having more informality and discussions with the priest during Mass, there are ample opportunities for such things at other times. The Mass is the formal celebration of the Sacrament of the Eucharist, a time to listen to the WORD of God to the priest's instructions and to God in the silence of our hearts. It is all of us joined in the Body of Christ, worshipping our Creator together, not some cold, meaningless sequence of events.

These young people also voiced the opinion that more people would attend Mass if they could fulfill their obligation any day of the week. Well, we've translated Mass into English, thrown out most of the old hymns, dragged in banners, guitars, and amplifiers, instituted afternoon, evening and anticipated Masses, changed all the sacraments to make them more meaningful, etc., and our churches are emptier than ever. Making things easier is NOT the answer.

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'Action' Seen Alienating Many

Editor:

The details appearing in the press about the National Conference of

Catholic Bishops held in Detroit to celebrate the American Bicentennial by a "Call to Action" have raised many questions and doubts regarding the motives of the participants.

Father Andrew Greeley stated that a Bicentennial discussion guide "Liberty and Justice For All" is being published to be distributed to individual parish study groups. He characterized this guide as "an attempt to celebrate the Bicentennial of our Republic by tearing the American accomplishment to pieces". If this is truly the direction the NCCB intends to take it will alienate a large segment of Catholics who do not agree that "social action" is the goal of the Catholic Church.

It has been my understanding that the Church's mission on earth was a spiritual one and its main concern was the salvation of men's souls. When the Church involves itself in political and social issues (especially if they are in conflict with its own teaching), it will create a schism which it can ill afford in these amoral and materialistic times.

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The Plight Of the Elderly

Editor:

About ruinous taxes, I am an over-65er, making a living doing less than minimum wage odd jobs. I do some work for a retired small businessman who has a nice house in the suburbs, although he really can't afford to own it. School tax, pure waters tax and property tax almost equal the amount of his pension, Social Security and interest on savings.

When he retired in the 1950s, he thought he and his wife would have income enough to live comfortably for the rest of their lives. But steadily increasing prices and taxes are now making them skimp. Medical expenses are a burden. Some people think that Medicare and Blue Cross/Blue Shield pay everything. But fully covered families are selling their houses to pay their medical bills. The person who has nothing has less to worry about than the one who has planned, worked saved and bought a home.

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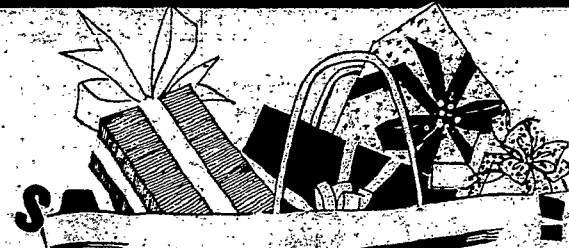
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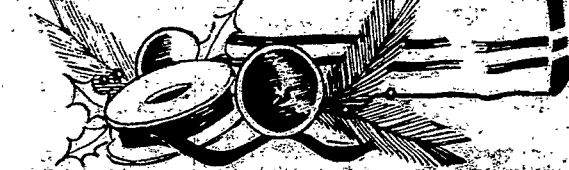
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