

Editorial

The Game

We happen to think that we Catholics too often misuse the words of those in authority in the Church, particularly the Holy Father, to support our own contentions.

It's a kind of game and Catholics of all stripes indulge in it. Playing the game is not a sin but it is a foible that we should recognize. If you do any of the following you are a player.

You argue for the protection of Israel as a sovereign nation. You build your premises carefully. But you do not mention that the Vatican does not formally recognize the state of Israel.

You favor granting the option of Communion in the hand. You talk about the fact that Catholics in countries across the world already enjoy this option. Somehow you leave out the fact that the U.S. Catholic bishops have expressly forbidden the practice.

You say the Church, particularly in this country, shouldn't be spending so much time and effort worrying about the plight of those in underdeveloped nations, the Third World. You forget to point out that Pope Paul has said that this is precisely what Catholics across the world should be doing.

You frequently attack the United Nations or some of its agencies. You make some good points but somehow do not include any mention of the many exhortations of Pope Paul VI in favor of the United Nations.

You frequently assail as "do-goodism" the efforts of many American Churchmen to bring a fairer distribution of services and goods and resources. You make the classic American point concerning free enterprise. But you leave out any reference to Pope Paul's encyclical Progress of Peoples which calls for fairer distribution of the world's bounty.

Many of our readers could add to the list. Unhappily we are apt to recognize the proclivity in those who disagree with us before we spot the same in ourselves. But that, too, seems to be part of the game.

Christian Lesson

The Catholic schools of South Africa are teaching the world a lesson in Christianity. Defying apartheid laws and ignoring government threats to close the schools, Catholic officials have opened the places of learning to all people, regardless of color.

While Catholic schools across the country were enrolling children of all shades, the Irish-born principal of St. Catherine's Convent in Johannesburg, South Africa, verbalized the action, saying the schools were "merely following the teachings of Christ to whom the color of children's skin means nothing."

Perhaps by the time this editorial appears the government will have shut down the schools but by so doing it will illustrate further the folly of apartheid.

Meanwhile there are two courses we Americans can follow. We must not get self-righteous for apartheid under other names was practiced in this country until recent years and traces of it persist. And we must pray for those Catholic educators who are marching to a different drum than prescribed by temporal law.

First Step

The task Archbishop Jean Jadot, the apostolic delegate to the United States, laid before the National Conference of Catholic Bishops is difficult and complex.

He told them they must find ways to serve diverse groups which "do not feel at home with our white, western, European ways of public worship and community living" and do not want to adapt.

At the same time the bishops must find ways "to foster the unity of the people of God within one Church," he said.

The first step in shedding unsavory vestiges, such as racism, is admitting that they do indeed exist. This diocese has already begun the task. And it is gratifying to hear a churchman with the credentials of Archbishop Jadot equate racism with arrogance to the national leadership of the Church.

Opinion

The Way to A Man's Heart

Editor:

Many years ago while still a young seminarian, James Kearney took part in a Corpus Christi procession in the Cenacle gardens of Riverside Drive in New York City. He often remarked that it was the pink lemonade and cookies after it which endeared him to the Cenacle. After his ordination he frequently gave days of recollection and retreats for children and adults there.

When he became Bishop of Rochester, he decided to have a Cenacle there. When Mrs. Nora Todd gave him her house at 693 East Ave., he already knew what he would do with it. In 1948 he offered it to the Congregation of Our Lady of the Cenacle, asking the sisters to open a retreat house which would be of service to the people of the Diocese of Rochester.

In June of that year they arrived. And it was not long after that they conducted their first retreat. Since that time retreats of various kinds, days of recollection, evenings of recollection, study groups, seminars and institutes have followed each other throughout the year.

The sisters look forward to the challenge of meeting the needs of the times by providing considerable variety in their programs, all with the purpose of "awakening and deepening faith," thus carrying on the tradition established by Bishop Kearney in 1948 and built upon their own vocation and charisma.

Sister Angela Murphy
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(Editor's Note: Sister Angela Murphy is, with Bishop Kearney, a co-founder of the Rochester Cenacle.)

Dignity, Joy Seen in Rites

Editor:

The challenges of membership in the Church today are best understood by those who have a sense of our history as Church. We were given a gift in Bishop Kearney. I believe his

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funeral liturgies were a farewell gift to us: we were called together in dignity and a joyful faith to mourn neither the man nor his days in the church, but to sense our roots and celebrate a God still calling us to growth in the Church today.

May I thank the many who prepared and hosted these celebrations. There was dignity and joy, history and mission.

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Student No Less Catholic

Editor:

I feel compelled to protest against "Speaking Out," by Jean Marie Hill (1-12-77). Miss Hill explained why she prefers Catholic high school.

I have been an active participant in Christian Youth activities, such as Teen Seminar and Young Life. I have also, by my own choice, gone to public schools. I am no less of a Catholic because I do not attend Catholic high school.

Because Miss Hill has "seen" public schools, as I have seen Catholic schools, does not make her an authority on them. I am also no authority on Catholic schools. I do know that being a Catholic is more than attending classes on theology. My upbringing in the Catholic faith is what makes me want to stay a Catholic; living in a Catholic home can benefit more than my "conscience telling me" that I should stay with the Church.

My parents pay public school taxes — am I to feel deprived because I do not ask them also to pay tuition to a Catholic high school, for a "Catholic Education?" Life and Death are not things one can learn in school. Public schools are not atheist. Miss Hill's personal feelings have not been separated from orthodoxy, and it is obvious in her essay.

I am sure that the advantages and disadvantages of public school balance with those of Catholic school.

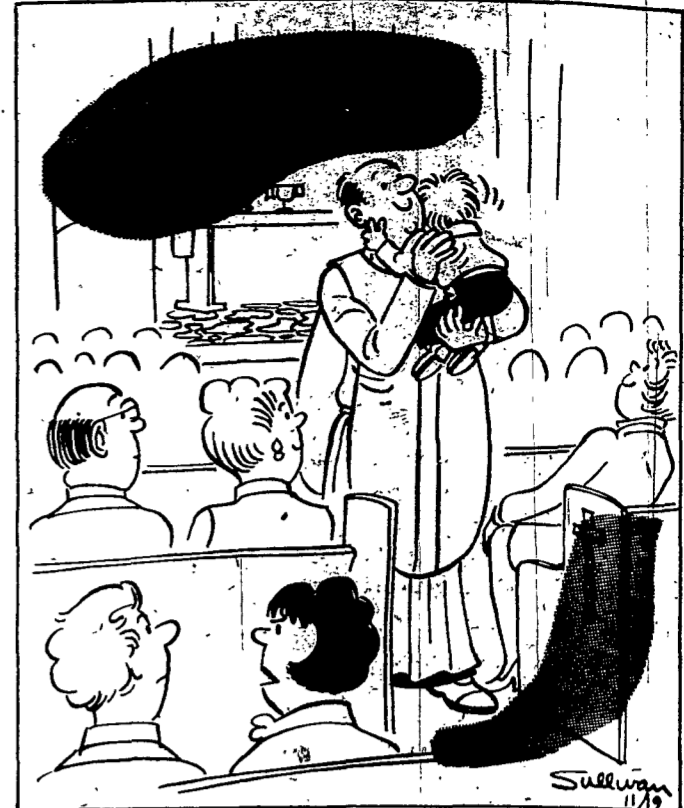
Cynthia M. Yacono
Greece Olympia High School,
Class of 1977

Bible Cited For Penalty

Editor:

Since the death penalty is one of the most discussed topics of our troubled times, it seems good to consider what God has said about it.

In Matthew 15, Jesus said to the scribes and Pharisees, "Why do you transgress the commandments of God... for God says: Honor thy father and mother, and let him who curses father and mother be put to death." In Exodus we read "Whoever strikes father or mother shall be put to death," again in Exodus, "Whoever



"OKAY, MAYBE HIS SERMONS ARE DULL, BUT I LIKE THE WAY HE HANDLES DISTRACTIONS!"

touches the mountain (Sinai) shall be put to death." Elsewhere in the Old Testament we read "A kidnapper, whether he sells his victim, or still has him when caught, shall be put to death;" and "Anyone who lies with an animal must be put to death."

The death penalty is the only punishment that will deter men from great crime. Nearly all the Christian nations of the world, up to now, have put to death not only murderers, but those who committed many other crimes. Crime has increased by leaps and bounds in the USA since the death penalty was abandoned a few years ago.

Women who put their unborn babies to death deserve nothing better than that they too be put to death. Theirs is the most shameful and cruel kind of murder: the murder of the helpless, the unbaptized, the unborn.

Father F.J. Gettelfinger
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Columnist 'True Gem'

Editor:

I would like to share with those of you in the Rochester diocese a true gem we have in our midst.

On Jan. 16 the Women's Club of St. Patrick's, Elmira, was privileged to have Mrs. Nancy Murphy as our speaker for our annual Communion Breakfast.

Mrs. Murphy was not only delightful in her presentation of "Values Clarification," but very informative and captivated her audience of 150 Catholic women throughout her program.

We cannot in words express our gratitude, not only for making the trip to Elmira in most unpredictable weather, but also for giving us her valuable time and exuberance.

(Mrs.) Gerry Caporiccio
President
St. Patrick's Women's Club
Elmira, N.Y.

Action Issue 'Absurd'

Editor:

How absurd can you get?

Your "Special Edition — A Call to Action" of 12/29/76 has to be an affront to the intelligence of every member of the Rochester Diocese.

How can you ask people to comment on well over a hundred complicated recommendations covering the entire gamut of church activities all in one shot? It would take 40,000 words to answer your questionnaire.

I get the gut feeling that you're merely sluffing the whole proposal off by including the entire conference in one issue — worse, you make it mighty easy to entertain the suspicion that you don't truly want my reaction to the Detroit Conference, because, if you did, you certainly would have presented their work in a more responsible manner.

Bill Schneider
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Mass Seen Faith 'Peak'

Editor:

I entirely disagree with the Mooney seniors on "Is Mass Necessary?" (12/8/76). The Mass for me is the peak, the "high" of my faith. It renews my bond with Jesus week after week, it strengthens my love for him and for all people. The Mass is very important in my life right now, as I hope and pray it will always be.

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