

# More Opinions

## Death Penalty ... Up to Kin?

Editor:

Re: Clergymen Issue Statement Opposing Death Penalty (C-J, 1-12-77). Let us examine a fundamental that made civilization possible. Leviticus 24:21 commands, "Whoever slays a man shall be put to death." Matthew 5:38-42 does not include murderers and rapists among the offenders we are charged not to resist. Had our Lord intended non-resistance for ALL evil doers without exception, He would not Himself have resisted the money changers.

Our nation faces an impasse between a galloping crime rate and no place to confine the criminals; no money to provide for their sustenance — often for life. The tens of billions spent annually on conviction, containment

and re-apprehension of hardened criminals would better be invested in areas where neglected children are being conditioned for future lives of crime.

In biblical times, a murderer was tracked down and done in by the victim's next of kin — case closed. A harsh but effective method, and just. Today, in a labyrinth of courts, lawyers, psychiatrists, judges, and months, sometimes years of litigation, the deliberate murderer or killer-for-kicks becomes a hero while the prosecution is regarded as vengeful. Enemies of freedom would gladly subvert the entire nation to secure the rights of a hardened criminal. They would even deprive the law-abiding citizen of the means to defend himself.

Keep the jury and the chair but let the victim's next of kin be judge and executioner. Who is better qualified? Who suffered the

loss? Who is the best assurance that the crime will not be repeated against a loved one of our own? Should the "avenger of blood?" After careful deliberation, finds grounds for clemency, let him dismiss the offender to go and sin no more — the Bible does provide for extenuating circumstances. If, however, he finds no redeeming qualities, let him personally throw the switch.

If the biblical solution seems incompatible with modern society, let us compare it with a police state which must eventually become a necessity if deliberate criminals are to continue at large. A saint may indeed forgive, but he is still responsible for the life and sustenance of his fellow men.

Edward A. Veith  
2952 Atlantic Ave.  
Penfield, N.Y. 14526

## Thanks to All Who Helped

Editor:

I want to send my gratitude to the hundreds of benefactors of "Hands of Mary" who have made it possible, throughout the past years, to send much needed help to the isolated missions. The gratitude of the people in these missions is still being sent to God for your goodness. You have made it possible to purchase a commercial size dryer and washer for the Dominican Nuns in Fatima, Portugal; for a chapel to be

rebuilt and completely furnished in the Biafra area of Nigeria (and the Holy Father sent them a priest for the chapel); for a few tons of religious articles, food, clothing, sewing materials, school supplies, some medicines and vitamins, printed matter, etc., to isolated missions in India, Burma, Nigeria, Thailand, Cambodia, Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia, to name a few. Our present project is to purchase a new motorcycle for Brother John, who works on the border of China, bringing the Word of God to the Chinese as well as the native Burmese.

We now have a new address — our old address was in Holcomb, N.Y. Since we are almost out of materials to send I would appreciate it if anyone could send rosaries and other religious items, clothing for a mission in India, any sewing materials, soaps, vitamins. We have another worker for "Hands of Mary" added to our list. He is Mr. William DeLozier, Bennett Avenue, Holcomb, N.Y. 14469. He also would appreciate materials to send. God bless all, and the prayers of the missions go with you all.

Eldora Scott, director  
Hands of Mary  
88 Maple Street  
Lyons, N.Y. 14489

## School Mass Meaningful

Editor:

I am writing in response to the interviews of the Cardinal Mooney students and the opinions of the people who wrote in. I think these kids answered

honestly and gave their own opinions of the question "Is Mass necessary?" but because they did that they were criticized by the people who wrote in. These eight seniors were said to have lost the meaning of Mass and the way they had been taught about Mass was wrong.

I also am a student at Cardinal Mooney. Our religion isn't lost and neither is the meaning of Mass! Just before Christmas we (our

theology class) planned a Mass which was held in our oratory; we had singing, one of our own students gave a homily, we picked out meaningful readings and it was a beautiful Mass. Some kids made banners on our theme, "A New Beginning." The meaning of Mass at Cardinal Mooney isn't lost or isn't being taught wrong. The class Mass for me was very meaningful.

Donna Benwitz  
Freshman

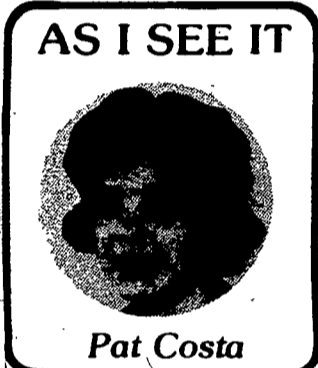
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AS I SEE IT

Pat Costa

I had read a good deal about Alec Haley's "Roots" before the series began its seven-day run on prime time television last week and determined, even eager, as I was to watch it I knew that there would be one part of this true saga about the enslavement and survival of the black man in America that I would find more difficult to watch than the rest.

Our family several years ago, during a vacation, boarded and toured restored whaling ships in New England and as we had descended into the dark, cavernous holds claustrophobia tendencies quickly manifested themselves.

The thought of heretofore free men and women being jammed in, chained together on shelves in these dark, dank holes with no room to move, barely to breathe for weeks on end must strike terror in the heart of anyone with even a modicum of imagination.

The actual scene in the movie was as horrible as previous publicity had made it out to be. Yet as I watched, the overriding thought here transcended the particulars of this awful moment in history and dwelt instead on the general theme of man's inhumanity to man — through the ages.

Nazi prison camps immediately came to mind and as one watched the pitiful weakness of the slave ship captain (played by Ed Asner) who deplored the treatment of the blacks but who did nothing to stop it one was reminded again of the excuse of those who argue they were simply following orders.

Thus such a show as the

ABC adaptation of Haley's tracing of family from 18th Century Gambia in Africa to present-day America is valuable to show not only the grandeur, the tenacity, the courage of one American family but to remind us that cruelty, evil, greed and the desire of some human beings to dominate others' souls will be with us as long as man himself.

The ploy of using celebrities in cameo roles, such as O.J. Simpson's tribal warrior, did much to insure a larger audience than the series must have pulled if the casting had been limited to talented unknowns, e.g. Le Var Burton as the central Kunta Kinte.

On the other hand, such well-known names, as the brilliant Cecily Tyson in the role of Kunta Kinte's mother gave the show a dimension and richness it might not have had otherwise.

Prior to the screening of each segment, the network was careful to run the message that parental discretion was advised, although I am certain that most children with a TV set in the home have seen at least as much nudity, violence, earthy talk and suggested sex on regular TV fare.

Parents who feel that this lesson in American history and morality is one they do not want their children to miss should have the opportunity to watch it with them.

The film will be made available to high schools and upper elementary grades. It has been recommended by the National Education Association.

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