

Editorial

Brotherhood

Now in its 44th year, Brotherhood Week begins on Feb. 20, as a special program of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. Aside from the fact that the masculinity of the term brotherhood may have fallen into disrepute in some circles (substitute, however, is difficult), the idea is just as sound now as at its inception 44 years ago. A time to show mutual respect for each other as creatures of God despite differences in methods of paying Him homage.

Great strides have been made in the whole theater of ecumenism in recent years and more undoubtedly are in the offing. Just last week, Mother Teresa, though not "officially" involved, issued an appeal for Christian reconciliation. And when that woman speaks, the world listens.

Without detracting from such commendable efforts and direction, it might also be suggested that a week should be set aside for a bit of "intramural" brotherhood right in our own Catholic family. True, issues such as women priests, celibacy, language of the Mass, Communion in the hand can make us testy but we should never forget that we are indeed brothers and sisters. We will not be effective in seeking brotherhood on the larger scene if we present a picture of a factionalized Church to the world.

So let us discuss the many issues confronting us openly and frankly. But let us discuss without haggling; let us be open in listening as well as in making declaration, and let us be frank without being insolent. Let us Catholics in the year 1977 show the world that we are able to take on the most momentous issues confronting us that we are also able to do so prayerfully, spiritually and with the utmost regard for the sentiment of those who may not reach the same conclusions.

Brotherhood is a fine idea but like its cousin charity, it should begin at home.

Private Matter

Blipped if you do, blipped if you don't.

That could be the sentiment of the government, or at least of the Census Bureau, over a flap concerning questions on religion in its national survey.

Some religious groups think much valuable information, sectarian trends, for example, could be gleaned from the official census. So the Census Bureau pondered the inclusion of such questions. But then other religious groups took the opposite view, saying religion is not a matter for government surveillance.

In the nick of time, a new law has come along which in essence forbids such questioning by the government.

In light of ever-increasing government inroads into the private lives of the citizenry we say "amen" to the new law.

Worthy Idea

A resolution designating Jan. 15 as Martin Luther King Jr. Day in the United States has been introduced in the Senate by Sens. Jacob Javits of New York and Edward W. Brooke of Massachusetts.

The Javits resolution would authorize the president to issue a proclamation each year calling upon the people of the United States to commemorate the life and the service to his country and its citizens of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and to observe that day with appropriate honors, ceremonies and prayers.

We wholeheartedly endorse the resolution and hope any of our readers who agree will write to Sen. Javits to lend him support.

Opinion

Abortion Is Murder

Editor:

We feel that abortion is wrong. Anyone who has an abortion should go and see a human life that has already been destroyed in an abortion. Can you imagine what a horrid sight it would be? We're sure if the person had any feelings they could not go through it.

They say if you "kill" a baby in its early stages it is not murder. But no matter how young a baby is, to us and many others, it is still murder. Even from the minute of conception the baby is alive. No one has a right to kill any kind of human life, no matter how small. There's a law against murder why not enforce it? If a person still goes through with an abortion we feel the person hasn't thought of what she's doing. If you don't want the baby or can't take care of it, put it up for adoption. There are many people who want children and can't have them themselves.

Michele Manion, 13
Maureen Kelly, 13
Martha Kelch, 13
Debbie Recco, 13
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Courier Keeps Link Strong

Editor:

Thanks to the kindness of my mother, I receive copies of the Courier-Journal here in the North Country, and eagerly peruse each issue for news of old friends, changes in my Church, and actions of the diocese. The churches in this area are for the most part mission satellites of churches in larger towns, sometimes as far away as 40 miles. It is a difficult situation. My ties with Rochester include many years in the Catholic school system, Nazareth College, my family, and an affection for the city. I share the Courier with another displaced Rochesterian, and together we recall names and memories.

Along with the majority of the population of the diocese, I, too, have some sweet memories of Bishop Kearney's touch in my life, and the issue covering the bishop's services will become as treasured as other papers covering historical events during my life. The tribute paid the bishop was proper, and also a just tribute to our faith.

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The excellent coverage helped include me in the services I wish I had been there in body, too. Thank you for unknowingly keeping me in touch.

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Clarification Series Lauded

Editor:

I have found the initial articles on Value Clarification by Nancy Murphy most interesting and educational. Large sums of our tax money is being used to develop value clarification in state programs. In fact, numbers of our Catholic educators are using value clarification in our parochial schools. If we are to continue to have values in our society I suggest that concerned citizens read Nancy Murphy's articles which began Jan. 12.

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Dress Counts

Editor:

Re issue of Feb. 2, letter by Mrs. Morris B. Culhane:

I was certainly pleased to read that someone else shares my feelings. It is not only on the occasion of Bishop Kearney's funeral Mass but every day of the present time.

We are frequently reminded to pray for vocations, both for the priesthood and for nuns. We all know that prayers, when properly said, can move mountains. But, we have to help as people also. (As our Lord said, "Ask and you shall receive.") Respect for all the orders is fast dwindling away. For example, the Holy Father gave permission to the orders that they may change their dress, I don't mean he meant such drastic changes.

At one time when you saw a nun or priest dressed in their traditional habits, both Catholics and non-Catholics showed respect for that person. Today, you don't know who they are, so down goes the respect for that chosen one.

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Judge Not By Clothes

Editor:

A priest or any other person should not be judged by their dress. It is the feeling in their hearts, souls and bodies that really counts.

Sometimes the outerwear covers a complete lack of love or respect. It has happened many times in history. You will know a man by what he is not how he may dress.

As for the Eucharist given in the hand I believe it should be and most of the world does so. It is safer in more ways than one and does not lessen the respect for the sacrament.

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"FANTASTIC RELIGIOUS SPIRIT IN THIS TOWN!"

Let Us Pray

Editor:

Re the recent report on women's ordinations by the Vatican as approved by Pope Paul VI in which one of the reasons given was the fact that Jesus was a man, in which I fully concur, but I do feel compelled to add to it my feelings which I believe to be prompted by the Holy Spirit.

Since my earliest lessons in catechism when I was taught that God knows all things and since Jesus is the second person of the Trinity — hence God — so it would follow that if it was his plan to ordain women he would have invited some to the last supper, including his Blessed Mother — and who would have been a more fitting candidate.

I pray that this controversy comes to a Christian conclusion before it is necessary for our beloved Pope to speak from the chair of Peter. So let's pray, "Come, Holy Spirit, etc."

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'Treaty' Vote Seen 'Silly'

Editor:

In the most recent bishops' conference a resolution was adopted recommending a new Panama Canal Treaty. This vote was not unanimous. It was passed on a position paper prepared by staff assistants in the Washington office of the conference.

Comments on this action by two respected Catholic authorities, and my own perceptions follow:

The late, scholarly columnist General Thomas Lane wrote, "We must realize our bishops... are fully committed to the Gospel and they are not and cannot be authorities of the things of Caesar." He continues, saying that the bishops are guided by staff assistants in these matters. They frequently argue from plausible though erroneous premises to reach an erroneous conclusion. In this case it seems that the erroneous premise was drawn from such inaccuracies as, "The Panama Canal is a natural resource, therefore it must remain in Panamanian hands."

The Panama Canal site was a malaria-infested swamp. The engineering skill and financing by the United States transformed this extreme liability into an asset and maintained it to benefit world shipping.

Actually there would be no country of Panama today were it not for the Panama Canal. The price of Panama's independence from Colombia was, in fact, the Panama Canal Treaty of 1903.

Points overlooked by the staff position paper are: total U.S. investment in the Panama Canal including its defense is estimated at nearly \$7 billion from 1904 through 1974. This has been the most costly territorial acquisition ever known to man. The U.S. repaid Colombia from whom Panama seceded \$25 million to vest title "entirely and absolutely" in the United States. The canal accounts for 21 percent of Panama's gross national product.

Another writer, a priest, in the National Catholic Register 1-16-77, asks what the conference had in mind by way of a new treaty. "If the old treaty was wrong, this should be the new deal: 1. Get our money back. 2. Fill in the canal. 3. Return the canal to Colombia, not Panama. This silly resolution deserves not to be taken seriously."

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Call to Action Not for Her

Editor:

Tripping down the path of liberalism, some of our clergymen and sisters, in search of personal power, have become a divisive factor in their presentation of and clamor for a watered down version of the Catholic religion, often contrary to the proclamations of the Vatican. Hence, the laity has become a confused and scattered flock, easy prey to the anti-Catholic sentiment in the news media. With boldness advantage has been taken lately in the press, by derogatory cartoons of our pontiff.

I reject the Call to Action and shall continue to follow the Vatican in its teachings with respect to faith and morals.

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