

More Opinions

Proud of Kearney

Editor:

I see that it's Onions 'n Orchids time again. Onions to Channel-8 for its flagrant report on the Bishop Kearney High School. And orchids to the Courier-Journal, the BK staff, the BK students and the BK parents. The school and all who remain devoted to it are to be commended for their poise, their refusal to be "put down" by a slick Robitaille clarification of a dreadful Dobrovitz story, their good sense not to be frightened by the power of the media; their thoughtful responses in the Courier-Journal; their inspiring support of a fine Catholic high school; and their obvious determination to continue administering Bishop Kearney High as they always have.

Orchids to the C-J staff who handled a delicate intermedia matter in a most laudable manner, telling readers the truth. I am personally proud that we will become Bishop Kearney parents in the Fall. Our daughter is enrolled in the freshman class.

Nancy Murphy
Courier-Journal columnist

Parents 'Failing'

Editor:

The answers given to the question "Is there a Devil?" by students from Bishop Kearney High School is one more indication that parents who are failing in their primary responsibility cannot expect the Catholic Schools to do their job for them.

Through my 16 years of Catholic school education (when Catholic schools taught the one true Faith) I can't remember anyone ever questioning the existence of the fallen angels collectively known as the devil. We are told in the Bible that our Lord was tempted by the devil three times. We also are told of Jesus casting out the devil. Were not our first parents also induced to sin by the devil?

Although some of the students admitted the devil might exist, they gave the impression that man's will is not always free because of this outside influence. The freedom God gave man also made it possible for man to reject His call and the graces He offers us and instead choose sin.

Mrs. Monica Sherony
51 Lambeth Loop
Fairport, N.Y.

Only God Omniscient

Editor:

Concerning the recent criticism of Bishop Hogan, Father Atwell, et al, in response to their positions on the Vatican's declarations on women's ordination, perhaps some clarifications may be helpful.

The necessary corollary of true assent to the

teachings of the magisterium is honest dissent. Since non-infallible teachings always contain the possibility of error (otherwise there would be no difference between infallible and non-infallible teachings) there can occur instances when a person in the light of reason and conscience cannot assimilate a particular non-infallible teaching. The only response consistent with one's freedom and personal integrity in such a case is dissent. This is neither disloyalty to the Church nor a denial of the magisterium's right to teach for the Church does not ask a person to compromise his or her own personal integrity and well-formed conscience.

Anyone familiar with the history of the Church and Gregory XVI's teaching on liberty of conscience (1832), Pius IX's Syllabus of Errors (1864), the early 20th Century restrictions placed on biblical scholars by the decrees of the Pontifical Biblical Commission until rescinded by "Divino afflante Spiritu" (1943), as well as the initial suspicion of the work of such creative theologians as Congar, de Chardin, de Lubac and Rahner will realize that divergence of opinion within the Church initially is not popularly received but has aided the Church to modify her teachings.

The Church's understanding of the Gospel and of the mystery of human existence is ever in a process of growth and development. In each age people ask new questions from the concrete situations in which they find

themselves. Regarding new questions of the Gospel and the meaning of Christian existence, because the questions are new, the answers are not always immediately available nor are they attained without struggle. Only God is omniscient and we must not make the mistake of thinking that this prerogative has been shared with the Church. We must admit that the Church simply does not possess at any one time the totality of truth in all its explicitness.

The magisterium needs human as well as divine aid in deepening its understanding of the faith by which the Church lives. It needs the help of all its members, and the members should feel obligated to offer this help, even if at times this means that it is in the form of disagreement.

As "Gaudium et Spes" Article 62 concludes: "Let it be recognized that all the faithful, clerical and lay, possess a lawful freedom of inquiry and of thought, and the freedom to express their minds humbly and courageously about those matters in which they enjoy competence." As from the beginning of Lumen Gentium Article 37: "An individual layman, by reason of the knowledge, competence, or outstanding ability which he may enjoy, is permitted and sometimes even obliged to express his opinion on things which concern the good of the Church."

Kevin J. Morrisroe
St. Bernard's Seminary
Rochester, N.Y. 14612

Gays Seen Deprived

Editor:

This is in response to a letter of Feb. 9 concerning homosexuals and their civil rights. First, the writer states that homosexuals have all of their civil rights. This is true only so long as no one else knows of their sexual orientation. Any person, known to have, or even suspected of having, a preference for the same sex is vulnerable to facing blatant discrimination in employment, housing, military service, civil courts and in the law.

They can be fired, evicted, dishonorably discharged, lose custody of their children in divorces, and be arrested for what they do privately. Legal recourse for people faced with this discrimination is in many cases impossible because legal protection is nonexistent for them.

Second, the writer speaks of "perpetual fornication" by homosexuals. Many gay people develop long-term, significant relationships and are no more promiscuous than their straight, single counterparts. Current information on the overall subject can be obtained by reading either "The Homosexual Matrix" by Dr. C.A. Tripp, Ph.D. or "The Church and the Homosexual" by Father John J. McNeill, S.J.

Finally, the writer draws an erroneous analogy between homosexuality and alcoholism. Homosexuality is not a disease and there is no "cure." Constitutional homosexuality is a subjectively natural, irreversible variation of sexual orientation, evidenced throughout history by every species of mammal. Dignity/Integrity Rochester is a combined local chapter of national organizations for gay Christians. We believe, as many competent theologians and scripture scholars do, that gays can

express their sexuality in a manner consonant with Christ's teachings. We further believe that we have a responsibility to both gays and society to work for justice and social acceptance through education and legal reform.

Kevin Scahill
Communications
Chairperson
Dignity-Integrity/
Rochester
17 S. Fitzhugh St.
Rochester, N.Y. 14614

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