

Editorial

Passing the Bus

One of the problems of editorializing in a weekly newspaper is that is difficult to stay ahead, or even on top of, fast-breaking news stories.

By way of example, this is the third time this editorial has been written. It concerns the Board of Education's decision not to transport city pupils to private schools outside the city.

First we began: "The ball is in the City Council's court now." Then no sooner had our compositors got that editorial into print than the City Council displaying noteworthy legerdemain managed to deflect the ball back into the Board of Education territory.

First editorial killed. New one mulled over the fact that the Board of Education once again had the ball. As soon as it was in type, however, the school board, displaying a fast break that would do the Philadelphia 76ers proud, had the ball right back in the City Council court again.

So here we go again and please bear with us if this editorial is out of date by the time it is published. What is important is that the City Council has until June 14 to decide if it will accept the Board of Education's plan to drop the bus transportation.

We think that parents and pupils concerned should let their individual councilmen know of their feelings before that date.

One for HEW

The Washington administration has taken a step forward by establishing regulations, effective June 1, which will ban discrimination against the handicapped. The new rules will apply to institutions receiving Health, Education and Welfare funds. It is expected to affect thousands of schools, colleges, hospitals, day care centers, health clinics and other institutions in their employment practices, building design and services, according to Religious News Service

What will it mean practically? For one, handicapped students cannot be segregated but must be educated with the non-handicapped in regular classrooms whenever possible

But perhaps the most important provision is that any new facility built must be barrier-free and readily usable by the handicapped. This is significant not only in the case of the new buildings but also because it should contribute to a trend of concern for the handicapped in all construction

It is about time and will help strengthen the rights, including freedom of movement, for a great segment of our population

Tom O'Connor

The phrase "coming of age" has been applied to the Catholic press in the Vatican-II era but that phrase does not accurately cover the Courier-Journal which long has been blessed with capable and conscientious priest and lay journalists

Because of them the Courier-Journal long has held a respected position both in and out of the religious publications field. A good deal of that success is owed to Thomas H. O'Connor who died last week. Mr. O'Connor so toiled through 35 years of thick and thin that when he retired some 10 years ago he was able to pass on a bright and vibrant torch to his successors

Though a man of varied interests, he was principally a newspaperman and in his retirement years maintained contact with present staffers, offering helpful advice and valuable tips. As capable as any who labor in this complicated, often frenetic field, Mr. O'Connor nevertheless managed to maintain a gentility of manner and serenity of spirit that rubbed off on all his endeavors and greatly enhanced the image of the newspaper he served

Thomas H. O'Connor was a gentleman of the old school and he will be missed by all who believe that accuracy is more important than gossip, that there is indeed virtue in truth and truth in virtue, and that a sense of humor can be therapeutic in an often abrasive business

Opinion

Missionaries Send Thanks

Editor:

Today, as we four Sisters of Mercy of Rochester returned from the airport with Sister Anna Gleason, a Sister of Mercy from Australia who valiantly comes ready to adjust, not only to the Chilean culture and the Spanish language, but to American ways of living and speaking the English language, we stopped at the post office for our mail. How fitting it was to find the Courier-Journal in the box with the excellent pictures and stories of the Sisters of St. Joseph who work on the other side of this continent and the mission insert appealing for all of the diocesan mission efforts.

This is a perfect day to say thanks for so many things to so many people. Thanks to Bishop Joseph L. Hogan who undertook such an arduous journey through Selma, Panama, Bolivia, Chile and Brazil with Fathers Michael Conboy, Edward Golden, Louis Hohman and Joseph Reinhart as well as the genial and diligent manager of the Courier-Journal Anthony Costello gets a first-class rating for photography as well as for patience and perseverance as he sought to record just the right situations. We thank all of these compatriots who made their three days here a most enjoyable interlude for us who know that they have finished their journey more convinced than ever that the Catholic Church is a missionary church which must be intensely and daily concerned for the poor of the world.

Abundant thanks to all the diocesans who have supported the Rochester missionaries and the people for whom we work for the past nine years; and a special thank you to those who contributed to this year's appeal. If it weren't for the generosity of all of you, we would not be able to be here ourselves, let alone help the people in their dire need.

But there are so many people in the Rochester diocese who are suffering themselves for want of financial security who would like to be a part of the missionary outreach. We hope that they know that financial support, necessary as it is, is nothing without the spiritual power we receive through the prayers

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of our friends, relatives and fellow-diocesans who lift our people and us who serve them to the Lord. On our part, we gratefully present them and all our benefactors to the Lord confident of His blessing upon them.

To the Lord of the Harvest we give thanks for having called us to work in His harvest, a wonderful privilege and opportunity to know and to grow to love so many of his forgotten and neglected sons and daughters. Thanks go to Him also for responding to our prayers for more workers. Just as Sister Anna has come to us today, and Sister Kay Schwenzer will rejoin us next month after having completed her language studies and her visit with her family and friends, so also will two more Sisters from Rochester soon begin work in Chile.

As we end our litany of thanks, we make just one appeal: that all the people of the Rochester diocese and beyond forbid themselves to be blinded to the fact that much injustice in the world exists because good people allow their powerful and selfish compatriots to influence American legislation in such a way that citizens of underdeveloped countries suffer. May all persons reading this become aware of what is going on in a silent, hidden fashion, and may they voice clearly their dissent.

One final word of appreciation — we associate with many missionaries and know of no group in Chile that receives the strong diocesan backing that we do, and the others marvel upon hearing of it. May your hearts be filled with the peace and joy that comes of extending the bread of the Good News to hungry brothers and sisters.

The Sisters of Mercy
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Death Penalty Opposed

Editor:

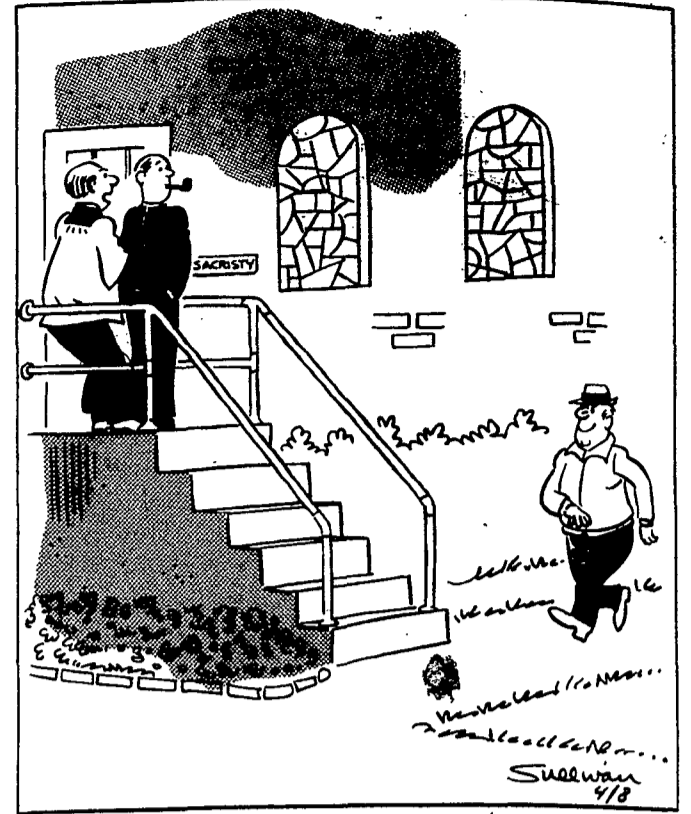
We are alarmed that our state legislators say they have not heard from people opposed to the death penalty and that Gov. Carey's office reported that the latest count of mail on the death penalty was 973 in favor, 124 against.

We wish to formally register our opposition to the death penalty and urge others who hold this opinion to make their views known immediately to their state legislator or to Gov. Carey in support of his stance against the death penalty.

We believe with the U.S. bishops, who have taken a moral stand against capital punishment, that it detracts from life. Their stand is consistent with their positions against abortion and euthanasia

Our reasoning is in line with the views expressed in a recent issue of MORE, Office of Human Development Newsletter, from which we quote

"The lives of all persons, even those who have committed heinous crimes, are sacred. To execute someone denies the sanctity of life and legitimizes violence as a solution to human problems. Secondly,



"HERE COMES A NEW QUOTATION FROM ANDREW GREELEY!"

empirical studies strongly indicate that the death penalty is ineffective as a deterrent to murder, and that it is objectionable to kill one person in order to instruct or caution another. Thirdly, the available evidence demonstrates that capital punishment has been most frequently used against racial minorities and the poor, who have little power or none at all in this society. Finally, executions are officially imposed acts of revenge, as violent as the acts they are designed to punish and deter. To involve the court system and prison system in such violence degrades the American judicial process and all efforts toward the rehabilitation of offenders. Reliance upon the death penalty obscures the true causes of crime and distracts attention from the effective means to reduce it. And once a person is executed, it is done forever. It is irreversible; society cannot restore to life a person. Only God can because He is the source of life."

For these reasons we strongly oppose the death penalty.

Members of Mercy and Justice Committee, Sisters of Mercy of Rochester
Sister Sheila Geraghty, Sister Karen Kenrick, Sister Elaine Kolesnik, Sister M. Elaine Loeb, Sister Marlene McQueeney, Sister Mary Edwardine Weaver, Sister Mary Wintish

Newspaperman 'Man of Faith'

Editor:

May I express tribute — not only for myself but for what I know to be hundreds of others — to the memory of Thomas H. O'Connor, whose death May 31 took him forever from his native city, on which he left an indelible mark?

Tom and I had been friends for four decades. Space here will not indulge the many praiseworthy adjectives which would describe him. In summary: he admirably fulfilled his life's vocation as an unswerving man of faith, as father of a family and as a newspaperman. We are a better community because he was among us for the last 83 years.

Courier-Journal readers should know that Tom gave untold extra hours of time and effort to keep this paper alive — at times sacrificing a

paycheck so that it might keep a publishing schedule.

Through it all he remained unpretentious — with a simplicity often associated with the lives of the saints.

In chorus with his friends: "Peace be with you, Tom! Well done! You have merited the reward which God will grant you"

"May the angels lead him into Paradise — may the martyrs await his coming. May his soul rest in peace"

Arthur P. Farren
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School Praises RapAround

Editor:

I wish to congratulate Joan M. Smith and the staff of the Courier-Journal RapAround section for the first prize youth coverage award of the Catholic Press Association.

I find, and I think the faculty and students of Cardinal Mooney High School find, that section of the Courier-Journal interesting and informative. RapAround is indeed a unique contribution to the diocesan weekly.

It is with a sense of appreciation that I acknowledge the contribution of RapAround. The youth of the Rochester diocese can be very proud of their section of the Courier-Journal.

Brother Edward O'Connell, CSC
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More Letters On Page 7

Letters intended for publication must be addressed to Opinion, Courier-Journal, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604.

They should be no longer than 1 1/2 pages, typed double-spaced, with names and addresses. The paper reserves the right to edit all letters.