



"I WAS JUST GOING TO BUY A POPSICLE, BUT THEN I FOUND OUT HE GIVES A CLERGY DISCOUNT..."

Editorial

Freedom of Choice Endangered

The decision last week by the Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency to recommend closing the obstetrical unit at St. Joseph's Hospital in Elmira is a bitter pill for all who believe in the freedom of choice, not just Catholics who live in the Chemung County area. But there is still time for recovery.

The FLHSA does not have the final say. It sends its recommendation to the state commissioner of health, Dr. Robert P. Whalen. The decision is his.

Aside from the obviously important fact that Catholics and others who believe in the sanctity of life from conception to death stand a chance of losing a pro-life facility, there is even the more essential element of freedom of choice.

As Bishop Joseph L. Hogan pointed out in a letter in the Courier-Journal of April 6:

"St. Joseph's Hospital has provided quality obstetrical services since its establishment in 1908. It is the only hospital in its service area that offers the alternative of a religiously-sponsored obstetrical unit and the right to give birth in a hospital that does not perform elective abortions. It is important that this fundamental, constitutional right of freedom of choice is preserved."

One might ask if the public hearing last week was necessary - if indeed the members of the FLHSA had not already made up their minds. Of the more than 70 who signed up to speak, only four spoke in favor of the closure.

Furthermore, the board is Rochester-oriented and not attuned to Elmira conditions and sentiment. The subarea council of the FLHSA, the local arm of the agency in the Chemung area, had already voted to keep the facility open but its ear-to-the-ground sentiment was rejected.

A feeling also exists that Rochester area residents have not rallied sufficiently to the cause. Indeed they have been preoccupied with a similar situation regarding St. Mary's Hospital which has been resolved favorably, at least for now. And there is no gainsaying that each community must strive to ward off threats to its own institutions.

But there is an overriding concern here. We all must work to keep freedom of choice alive, especially when threatened by government. If the obstetrical unit at St. Joseph's is closed, Catholics and other pro-life adherents will actually be denied the right to give birth in a hospital of their own choice.

Bishop Hogan asked on April 6 that all dioceses send letters in support of the St. Joseph's OB unit. We reiterate that request. Write to:

Gov. Hugh Carey, State Capitol, Albany, N.Y. 12224.

Robert P. Whalen, MD; Commissioner, State Department of Health, Albany, N.Y. 12237.

Opinion

Thanks From Brazil

Editor:

It would be difficult to estimate the good that has been done by the visit of Bishop Hogan, Father Conboy, Father Golden, Father Rinehart and Anthony Costello, for all of us in Brazil. Many people were gladdened by a bishop to their homes and receiving his special blessing. (One lady even received his hat!)

Hopefully, the campaign for water filters, to which the people of Rochester through the Courier-Journal have so generously responded, will improve the health of many families. Because of the generous contributions of many Rochester families, many more people here will have good drinking water. What would have been impossible for hundreds has now become a possibility.

We want to express our thanks for the support and interest shown by the Rochester diocese. We want to assure you, so that you are very close to us and the people we serve through prayer - you will always be remembered.

Sisters of

St. Joseph in Brazil

Jean Bellini, Ellen Kuhl, Christel Burgmaier, Katherine Popowich, Loyola Schmitz, Mary Ann Mayer, Ann Laferty

Turn Off TV

Editor:

Turn off the T.V. during the week of July 24-30.

If you are tired of too much sex and violence on T.V. now is your chance to do something about it.

An invitation is extended by the National Federation for Decency to turn off the TV for one week between July 24-30. The Federation asks three things, observe the national day of prayer July 24, turn off the TV set, and call or write your TV station during the week to inform them of your opinion.

The Federation is asking the networks that they follow their own 1952 Ethics Code, which contains the following points. 1. Profanity, obscenity, smut

COURIER-JOURNAL

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Vol. 92 No. 10 July 6, 1977

Published weekly by the Rochester Catholic Press Association. Subscription rates: Single copy 20¢; 1 year subscription in U.S. \$7.50; Canada and Foreign \$12.00. Offices: Richford Building, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604 (716) 454-7050. Second Class Postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.

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and vulgarity are forbidden. 2. Illegal drugs will not be displayed. 3. The use of liquor will be de-emphasized. 4. Showing crime in detail to invite imitation shall be avoided. 5. Violence and illicit sex shall not be presented in an attractive manner.

The Federation feels that following this code would be a tremendous help. As things stand now, during the next year, on prime time TV you and your children could witness 1300 acts of adultery, 2,700 sexually suggestive comments, sex activity with a ratio of 9 to 1 outside of marriage, 5,000 murders, rapes, beatings and stabbings. We feel it is time to turn off the TV now.

Mrs. H. Pikuet
460 Chestnut Ridge Rd.
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Government Takeover?

Editor:

The U.S. Supreme Court's recent limited concessions on the rights of children in the (approximately 8%) non-government schools, are a small financial victory but a major tactical defeat in the battle against Secular Humanism's designs for complete nationalization of education and Government control of religion. In a crucial battle for the survival of Catholic schools, Cardinal Krol, priests of Philadelphia, and their attorneys, are in legal struggle with the National Labor Relations Board which, since 1975, maintains that Catholic bishops with schools are "employers, like any others" and if necessary, subject to forcible restraint. History, the ethical character (distinct from moral) of our Government and the state of the Church as a house divided against itself overwhelmingly indicates relatively unobstructed victory for Secular Humanism - unless we return to God and become God-centered.

Former diocesan colleges have retained Catholic names but exchanged Catholic Faith for government monies. Now this established road for government control has been widened to accommodate elementary and high schools. The tactical victory of undermining the Voucher System effectively aborts alternative school options.

Father Thomas Miller noted (C-J 6-15-77) that public schools originally had a religious purpose. Now they are nurseries for Secular Humanism, amorality, and practical atheism. Catholic schools are education-centered, rather than God-centered, and infested with self-destructive philosophies.

During the past several years, those of us who have not defensively removed our children from Catholic schools have had to combat false values, heresies and environment of scandalous disobediences by "Sisters and Brothers" who impose their own wills and manipulate the souls of children entrusted to their care. For example, my initial (Jan. 1977) and subsequent written appeals to the H.S. Principal to stop the classroom promotion and practice of distributing Holy Communion in the hand (a

nation-wide promotion and manipulation of the faithful) were ignored and not yet acknowledged.

We should support Parents' Rights, Inc., Citizens for Educational Freedom and other organizations who are fighting for religious freedom, but unless our parishes and schools become God-centered we will reap our self-destruction.

Joseph J. Murray
38 Wyndover Rd.
Rochester, N.Y. 14616

A One Time Sacrifice

Editor:

I would like to make a few comments concerning the article "Dissident Priest Continues Criticism of Pope Paul," which appeared in the June 15 issue of the Courier-Journal, page 13.

It seems to me that the Mass is more of a memorial of His sacrifice, rather than a sacrifice itself. I say this because in I Corinthians 11:23 it says: "For I received from the Lord the teaching that I passed on to you: that the Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took a piece of bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and said, 'This is my body, which is for you. Do this in memory of me.' In the same way, after the supper He took the cup and said, 'This cup is God's new covenant, sealed with my blood. Whenever you drink it, do so in memory of me.'"

Besides, how can we say that the Mass is an actual sacrifice of our Lord each time it is performed? In Hebrews 7:27 it says: "He is not like other high priests; He does not need to offer sacrifices every day for His own sins first and then for the sins of the people. He offered one sacrifice, once and for all, when He offered Himself."

I think someone has not been reading his Scriptures!

Ivan Ramos
241 Lux St.
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Industry Asked To Support

Editor:

Having just returned to Rochester from the Special Olympics for the mentally retarded, I would like to make an appeal to the industrial community of this area.

Each year Monroe County selects 60 olympians to represent it and each year the financial picture gets dimmer.

These children are a sports team. Sports teams usually have uniforms - not so with district 20 - Monroe County. The extent of their "uniform" for the past seven years has been a nylon shell jacket purchased only if enough money was left after all other expenses (transportation, room and board, snacks, etc.) were paid.

Because of an unexpected last minute rise in train fares this year, the jackets could not be purchased.

Fortunately, interested educators and staff from Rush-Henrietta donated the money the day before the children left.

There is a great need for more permanent financial support of these children.

Are there not 60 industries in all of the Rochester area willing to sponsor one of these children? The children are proud to represent you! Hopefully, next year you will be proud to sponsor them.

Christine Russo
Teacher, CRMD
953 Linden Ave.
East Rochester, N.Y.

Defense Stand Questioned

Editor:

The Courier-Journal in their June 22 editorial continued to criticize defense spending.

Lamenting that the defense budget was \$85.3 billion in 1975 (The 1976 World Almanac gave a \$87.4 billion figure) no mention was made concerning the House, Education and Welfare budget which was \$112.4 billion for that year.

What was disturbing about the Courier-Journal editorial was that nothing was said in relation to Soviet defense spending and the reason for this military buildup.

According to Major General George Keegan, former chief of U.S. Air Force intelligence and now executive vice-president of the U.S. Strategic Institute, the U.S. is second in overall military strength.

General Keegan points out that we've allowed ourselves to deteriorate militarily because in essence we believe that a nuclear war is unthinkable while the Soviet Union holds no such view.

The mutually assured destruction (MAD) strategy developed by former Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara is not necessarily the strategy followed by the Soviet Union.

In the last decade the Russians have amassed an incredible array of offensive and defensive weapons; nuclear and conventional.

If we are to prevent a nuclear war we must maintain at least the equivalent in military strength that our adversary, the Soviet Union, possesses.

Failure to do so would invite another but more devastating Pearl Harbor attack.

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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.