

Life, Liberty and Law



Nancy Murphy

Quite frankly, I was disturbed three years ago to discover how little about abortion, sterilization and euthanasia some priests and nuns knew. Although most of them were "against abortion," few taught the Catholic position on the matter "because it is a pluralistic world"; and fewer still spoke out against the increasing availability of this trinity of evils despite the fact that all of it is supported by the same taxes which supported napalm and defoliation, both of which were roundly decried by the religious community.

A priest, whom I commend for his work with divorced Catholics, emphasized to me that he would not take a stand against abortion, and that he supported sterilization as both a contraceptive and a means to "control people." Another priest said that as "most Americans" accept abortion, we must accept it too. A year ago, a group including the Catholic chaplain of a general hospital, a Catholic layman-educator, a teaching nun, and a priest active in family services recommended support for legislation which might restrict some second trimester abortions "even if that same

legislation continued to allow abortions during the first trimester." (83 per cent of all abortions are first trimester) And very recently I was told by a leading nun-educator (not of Rochester) that Values Clarification will soon replace "old Catholic doctrine" in Catholic schools "because everything changes, Mrs. Murphy."

If I were less knowledgeable of the Human Life issues I might be inclined to accept these attitudes without comment. But I am neither ignorant of the facts nor indifferent to them. I know that Catholic teaching is opposed to the writers and organizations currently recommended in some Catholic texts: Hellwig, Curran, Oraison, McLaughlin, Imborski, Callahan, Baum, Brusselman, Siecus, Aasect and others. I know the Catholic position on religious education and sexuality as pronounced by Vatican II and in subsequent Vatican declarations. I know the Catholic teachings on the origin, the worth, the use, education and destiny of the human body especially as these pertain to abortion, sterilization and euthanasia.

As a layman, and a product of a public school system, I cannot hope to match the clout of the priest or the nun; I have neither their education nor their social standing. But I will devote this series to the positive, inclusive and continuing force of Vatican teachings because these things must be published.

Next week: the Blessed Mother of God...

AS I SEE IT



Pat Costa

Television viewers who are considering the possibility of subscribing to cable TV's Home Box Office should be forewarned that movies are not better than ever (the industry's slogan of the '60s).

The films purchased by Time-Life Inc., at least, to be screened to unsuspecting viewers, are for the most part mindless, plotless, boring and dreary. To compensate for imagination, ingenuity, character development, story telling and motivation, film makers deal in banalities riddled with violence and graphic sex.

Those viewers who sit with the control boxes in their laps, punching indiscriminately to see what is on various stations without consulting the booklet that comes each month with the bill may be in for a rude shock.

In recent months, button punching here without checking the guide first has yielded an assortment of unsavory scenes including decapitation and copulation.

Even films with PG rating

which are shown at 5 in the afternoon, when youngsters are more likely to be involved in program selection, are punctuated with bathroom words. Granted, the kids undoubtedly have heard them before, but it is unsettling to have them bandied about in the family room.

Those who plan to subscribe for reasons other than the movies — because they enjoy watching Lieke Nastase making an ass of himself at Wimbledon, for example — should remember that sports are only one area of programming, and to subscribe for their reception is also to leave the family open to frontal nudity at Las Vegas revues, lascivious language in a variety of formats and a general atmosphere of coarseness, cruelty and perversion of what is good and decent.

Parents of children who cannot be trusted not to turn the set on without adult supervision would do well to invest in a lock the cable company sells which will scramble the picture, although not the sound.



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