

More Letters

Slander Charged

Editor:

In the name of all the other theology teachers in the diocese, and particularly those at McQuaid Jesuit High School, I would like a retraction or an apology for Father Paul Cuddy's slanderous remarks in the Courier-Journal 10-12-77.

Slander is a false report which injures the reputation of another, and Father Cuddy's column was slanderous.

He tells of meeting two boys, one black and one white. The black boy, who went to St. Monica's, still practices his religion. The white boy, who went to Blessed Sacrament and McQuaid, no longer practices. Father Cuddy concludes, "Looks like the Jesuits didn't do you much good." He does not burden us with the name of the black boy's high school. Could it also have been McQuaid?

Later Father Cuddy says, "I should hesitate to fault the Jesuits for the lacunas and twists in my friend's understanding, or lack of it." And he has already said, "Looks like the Jesuits didn't do you much good." Father Cuddy is right, he should have hesitated. The trouble is he didn't.

He says courses in apologetics have been "suppressed, to be replaced by frequently intellectually vapid and emotional paperbacks." This is evidence that Father Cuddy is again victim of what I arrogantly call "O'Malley's Law." To wit, the less you know, the more certain you can be. In point of fact, I myself teach two courses in apologetics at McQuaid, one on the existence and nature of God, one on the reasons for being a Roman Catholic by choice rather than merely by the chance of birth. Since I teach every senior, I taught at least one of those courses to the boy Father Cuddy quotes. I have also written seven books on apologetics: besides the two themes above, there also is one on prayer, one on faith, one on vocations and two on Scripture.

All but the last two, which will be published in the spring, are available at religious book stores. Father Cuddy can test whether they are indeed "intellectually vapid and emotional." He may come any day he chooses, unannounced, and sit in on one of these classes. It would be prudent — if not Christian — for him to know the facts before he writes.

He longs for the days of the catechisms with their "concise, capsulized nuggets." May I remind him that one can memorize without accepting, one can listen to truth without hearing it. My audiences are free (as hopefully Father Cuddy's are) to reject what I say, my arguments, my evidence — for all sorts of reasons. If I knew as little about the difficulties of persuading comfortable pagans to be Christians as Father Cuddy seems to know, I would be a happy man. Well, at least I'd be comfortably smug in my ignorance.

Surely, all these Catholic

renegades he speaks of did not graduate from McQuaid. One or two must have come from Aquinas Institute, Cardinal Mooney High School, Bishop Kearney High School, Our Lady of Mercy High School, St. Agnes High School or Nazareth Academy. What of those from Father Cuddy's own parish? He seems almost to imply that the sole purpose of the religion teachers in the diocese — and the Jesuits in particular — is to tear down the faith of young people. Why does he think we stay at it? The fat salaries? The ease of the job? The manifestly tangible results in our students? Does it ever cross his mind that we are trying to do the same job as he, that we are on the same side?

Father Cuddy is a good priest, but that does not guarantee instant expertise, even in all matters religious. His column is read by people who know even less than he does about what goes on in religious

education classes in the diocese. He guesses what "must" be going on and then shares his guesses with thousands of people.

Father Cuddy owes a profound apology to every teacher of religious education in the diocese.

Father William J. O'Malley SJ
1800 S. Clinton Ave.
Rochester, N. Y. 14618

Hyde Bill Supported

Editor:

People who take time to defend the unborn members of our human family should take heart from all the lambasting they are getting from the Gannett editorial pages and columnists. We are finally having an effect. They can ignore the basic facts of life and all the medical, moral, ethical and Biblical arguments

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upholding the value of each human life. However, they come out screaming when we say emphatically, "No, you cannot use our money to kill unborn children."


Hang in there, Congressman Hyde! I'll keep writing letters to back you up. I will not fall for the sophistry that we should solve the problems of the

poor by eliminating the poor.

Jeanne D. Sweeney, RN
135 Nob Hill
Rochester, N.Y. 14617

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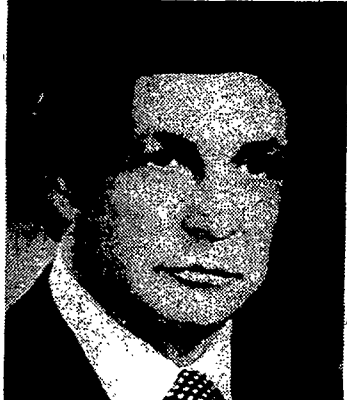
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Dear Friends,

My wife and I have been life long residents of the city's 26th Legislative district.

Both of my children attended and graduated from St. Anthony's Grammar School. My daughter Maria graduated from Nazareth in 1968 and my son Louis from Aquinas in 1971.

My children, both married, with their families, still reside in the 26th district.

My life is the 26th District. I ask the voters from St. Anthony's — Holy Rosary — St. Patrick's — Sacred Heart and friends of Aquinas and Nazareth who live in this district to vote for me.

Sincerely,
Joseph N. Ferrari
JOSEPH N. FERRARI
Legislator, 26th District

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