

Editorials

Dilemma

Lent may provide a proper time to reflect on the injustices of the world that defy solution. We do not suggest that for the next six weeks we should merely grin and bear societal travesties. But perhaps it would be a proper Lenten meditation to pray for the means with which to cope with such societal anomalies.

The goings-on concerning Skokie, Ill., provide a perfect reason to beg understanding of the crucified Christ. The Illinois Supreme Court has "reluctantly" ruled that Nazis have the constitutional right to display swastikas in demonstrations in the predominantly Jewish Chicago suburb of Skokie. The Nazis plan to march in full storm trooper regalia on Hitler's birthday, April 20.

Obviously the court is stuck with the premise that if you are to have freedom of speech, it sees the swastika as a symbol of speech, then even the scum of the citizenry are to have that right.

We must admit that we can understand, painfully, that line of reasoning. But we feel that an ancillary viewpoint of the court is questionable. It rejected Skokie's argument that the display of the swastikas in that community constituted "fighting words" likely to provoke a violent reaction. Some 40,000 of the 70,000 Skokie residents are Jewish, including at least 5,000 who are survivors of the Holocaust. Oh, God!

The classic example of the exception to the freedom of speech is that we are not allowed to shout "fire" as a joke in a crowded theater. Nor are we allowed to jokingly claim that we have a bomb aboard a plane. We are not legally astute enough to know if a display of swastikas before the eyes of survivors of the barbarism of four decades ago fits such categorizing. But we definitely feel that a community in self-defense must be able to restrict some rights — particularly of obvious outside and vicious troublemakers. In the name of common sense.

The American Jewish Congress says it will take the dispute to the Supreme Court. So the matter is not closed at this point.

It is extremely regrettable that such scurrilous slime as the American Nazis (the very terms should be mutually exclusive) can continue to thrive in the sunshine of freedom.

But as we said perhaps this is one of those democratic freaks that defy rectitude. It so perhaps all we can do is pray to the merciful God that he grant surcease to our Jewish brothers and sisters. And may He erase whatever human blight that produces such devilish breeds as Nazis.

Hustler

Larry Flynt, who received reams of publicity through his recent announcement of his conversion to Christ, now seems about to make it pay off — financially, that is.

In a front page editorial in the latest issue of Hustler, Flynt explains his sudden seeing of the light thusly, "I know many of you are confused because of what you have read about Hustler's changing editorial format. Nothing has changed, except that the publisher has become a better man and will respond more effectively to the readers' difficulties in dealing with society's sexual and spiritual ills. I will remain responsive to your needs, because without you we would never be in this position. No one should think for a second that Hustler Magazine is going to turn its back on the people who made it successful."

In a recent N.Y. Times report, Flynt reportedly still can't stand organized religion and explicit sex is still the cornerstone of his Hustler magazine.

Don't go spending the \$2.25 Flynt gets for his porno mag. Take our word for it — there is nothing worth finding and there is certainly no evidence of any change or conversion.

We editorialized here when news of Flynt's conversion was disseminated that we would rather wait and see. We have waited and we have seen nothing.

Opinion

School Is A Family

Editor:

School is like a family. It helps us grow. School is a place where we learn new things every few weeks. It's like a family because we're known there. Not a stranger, but a part of it.

At school, we have our friends and teachers who make us feel at home, not like we're at a strange place. It even helps us to grow. It makes us know what to do when we have to add five and ten, or speak a correct sentence.

Even though many of us don't like it or think it's boring, or don't know why we bother with it at all, we bother with it because we need it and it needs us.

School not only teaches us things, but makes us have fun, too. We have parties, dances, field trips, and many other activities. School also teaches us what to do when the principal walks in, or we have a special guest.

But most of all, school makes something out of us, so we can make something of our lives.

Benny Candeloro
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incest promptly, virtually turns this legislation into open approval of federal funding for abortion for low-income women.

The interpretation of Libassi's group now states, in essence, that the federal government will help finance abortions for impoverished women who are victims of rape or incest provided they or "anyone" reports the crime within 60 days to a law enforcement or public health agency. It is interesting the word "crime" is used for the act or acts and the woman or girl has 60 days to decide if a "crime" has been committed against her.

In reporting the "crime" the "criminal's" name need not be given. No description is necessary. Details of the incident and time are not given. In other words, any woman in the low-income bracket can get an abortion, paid for by federal taxes, simply by telling a small untruth. And this lie cannot be challenged, questioned or traced in any way.

I imagine most of our senators and congressmen are breathing a sigh of relief now that they feel both sides of the politically explosive abortion issue have been appeased.

But it is sad. Again, the unborn child loses another battle for its rightful survival.

Dave Rebolz
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Libassi View Vitiates Law

Editor:

Peter B Libassi, general counsel to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare and his nine lawyers interpreted the abortion legislation enacted recently. Their logic escapes me.

The Senate and the House, after long wrangling, passed legislation prohibiting the use of federal funds for abortions for low-income women with three exceptions: when the mother's life would be endangered, when severe and long lasting physical damage (in the judgement of two physicians) would result from the birth, and for such "medical procedures" that are necessary following rape or incest, provided that the crime was reported promptly.

Now, the Libassi interpretation of the last part, that of reporting rape or

'Thank You, Bishop Hogan'

Editor:

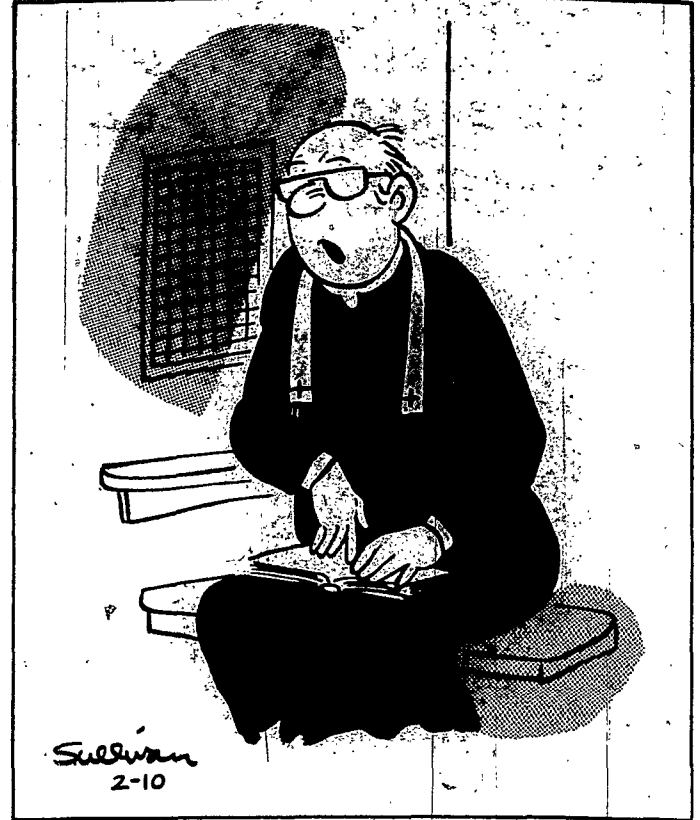
The appointment of the Bishop's Liaison Committee for the Rochester Catholic Charismatic Renewal is welcome. The Church-based renewal in this diocese consists of the Catholics faithful to the Church and loyal to the Magisterium with a balanced view of a Church that always has had the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Fundamentalism and elitism have been described by Cardinal Suenens as possible danger areas. If a Catholic knows his rich heritage and tradition, no denial or conversion to another church would be the case as has happened locally in growing numbers. We have the blessing of the Church of Jesus that includes a sacramental theology, Christian values, a love of the Trinity and a respect and reverence for the Mother of God.

Pope Paul strongly recommended discernment as a higher gift when he praised the evident joy displayed in Rome by the International Catholic Charismatics. Each one of us needs to listen carefully, test the spirits and verify what is called "teaching" at prayer meetings. We can test teachings against the truth found in the Church, the Pope and the complete Magisterium, including the Vatican documents.

Besides, more quiet, it is said the real renewal in our Church draws people back to God in the Holy Eucharist and Blessed Sacrament and other devotions of a private nature. Thank you, Bishop Hogan for your protection and provision for loyal followers in the Church!

Maureen T. Shapley
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"TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS IN ORDER: NO, IT'S NOT A SIN TO BE BLUNT WITH PEOPLE, AND, YES, I DID HAVE GARLIC FOR SUPPER!"

Inaction Rapped

Editor:

We heartily commend Bishop Joseph L. Hogan for his inspiring words regarding the sanctity of all human life. But we note with sadness the lack of visible diocesan action in this area. The religious leadership, the committees and task forces, might do well — following Bishop Hogan's articulate lead — to consider the following suggestions.

- An in-church collection three times yearly to support a media based information project, presenting facts on contraceptives, abortion and sterilization (i.e. TV spots, newspaper ads, billboards, radio blurbs etc.)

- Active high school and CCD programs to encourage knowledgeable student participation in Birthright of Rochester, Rochester Natural Family Planning Center, and other pro-life endeavors.

- Prayers (intercessions) during every Mass in every parish for unwed mothers and for the unborn.

- A thorough in-depth probe into such "community" groups as Planned Parenthood, Threshold and ZPC regarding their deep involvement in the local abortion scene.

- At least one pro-life Mass per month in every parish celebrated for the unwed mother and for the unborn and for the unwed father as well.

- A periodic listing of major pro-life publications and major pro-life organizations such as the Pro-Life Reporter, SEASONS, the Human Life Center, Marriage and Family Life Newsletters and the Arlington Virginia Notre Dame Institute Press.

- A diocese-wide distribution of the numerous Vatican documents covering contraceptives, sterilization, sex education and abortion.

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Columnist 'Snoops'?

Editor:

After reading Father Cuddy's column as it appeared in the Jan. 11 issue of the Courier-Journal, I am left wondering what his purpose of visiting "the unknown parishes" was.

As a loyal member of Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Greece (not Irondequoit), I resent his criticism of our facilities.

Quite frankly I am inclined to put him in the same category as the obnoxious woman in the well-known TV commercial who openly admits she snoops — especially in the bathroom. Shame on you, Father Cuddy.

Mrs. Hilda Smythe
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Honor Guard For Mary

Editor:

Devotion to Mary began to suffer in the 60's due to misinterpretation of some Vatican II writings. Today an upset world is coming to recognize Mary once again as the source of immeasurable help in times of trouble, and is attempting to restore her to the place of honor for centuries past.

One devotion approved by the Holy See that your readers may be interested in is called the "Guard Hour." For the busy person perhaps overwhelmed by distractions at home, at work or in the marketplace, the Guard Hour is as simple as offering one hour of the day's ordinary activities in Mary's honor.

For more information, please write to me at 135 West 31st St., Box 56, N.Y., N.Y. 10001.

Father Cassian A. Miles, OFM

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.

COURIER-JOURNAL

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President

Anthony J. Costello
Publisher &
General Manager

Carmen J. Viglucci
Editor

Rev. Louis J. Hohman
Episcopal Advisor

Vol. 92 No. 41 February 8, 1978

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, Rochester, Building 67, Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604 (716) 454-7050. Second Class Postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.

Courier-Journal