

Editorials

American Malady

Is there a Catholic vote?

Or more precisely do American Catholics vote as a bloc, pressure as a group, act together for their common interests? Or are they, as Father Virgil C. Blum suggests, "political eunuchs."

President Jimmy Carter and his secretary for Health, Education and Welfare, Joseph A. Califano, particularly the latter, have been the objects of extremely bitter criticism from Catholic sources over their opposition to tuition tax credits.

For instance the same Father Blum says that President Carter is determined to perpetuate the anti-Catholic bigotry of the 19th Century. He labels Califano the President's hatchet man.

Father Andrew Greeley uses even more vituperative language, describing Califano as a "vile, turncoat wretch" and suggests that it is he, Califano, that has persuaded the President Carter to work against the tuition tax credits.

We do not endorse diatribe. We think it does the user and his cause far more harm than the verbal target. We hesitate to impugn bigotry, or even the hint of it, to the President of the United States. But . . .

We think that it is about time that Catholics realize that the President and his cabinet appointees are politicians, first and foremost. And politicians react to pressure—particularly if it comes from some 50 million citizens, about 23 per cent of the total American population.

We understand the frustration behind the criticism of Father Blum and Greeley. But we think another point made by Father Blum is closer to the crux of the situation. He writes that "as long as Catholics choose to be political eunuchs presidents will treat them as such.

If Catholics want tuition tax credits they had better let the powers-that-be know, and that means Mr. Carter, White House, Washington, D.C., U.S.A. And now.

But more is involved than even the critical issue of tuition tax credits. There is little doubt that there is a sickness on the part of many Americans that is evident in the consideration of such issues as tuition credits and abortion. Anti-Catholic bigotry is still extant in the land.

Sen. Daniel Moynihan, sponsor of the tuition credit bill, has said, according to Father Blum, "More and more I grow to believe that Nativism will prove to be the last and most persisting of American bigotries . . . primarily because Catholic institutions and Catholic intellectuals accept it."

Nativism in this country translates to anti-Catholic.

Moynihan sees the overwhelming vote in favor of tuition tax credits as historic as "overturning the religious bigotry of the 19th Century."

We hope that President Carter sees it that way. It will help him to do just that if all in favor of tuition tax credits let him know.

Father Greeley lays it on the line in this week's Courier, "If President Carter is permitted to veto it in the mistaken notion that Catholics don't care, it is his fault, of course, but is your fault, too."

We find the injection of the issue of bigotry into the consideration of tuition tax credits and abortion distasteful. But we do not think that we, Father Greeley, Father Blum or American Catholics are initiating that input. Sadly, it seems that anti-Catholic prejudice has been part of such issues from the beginning.

and Opinions

Comments On Column

Editor:

I was just reading your controversial Father Hohman's column "Conscience and Guilt" (6-28-78).

He very summarily sets aside the infallibility of Pope Paul's "Humanae Vitae" because the Holy Father had no intention of infallibility defining the immorality of artificial contraception.

I agree that "Humanae Vitae" was not an infallible definition. But Father Hohman must realize that infallibility can be attributed to a doctrine of faith or morality not only when it has been defined by the extraordinary magisterium of the Church, but also when it is taught by the ordinary magisterium provided certain conditions are met.

No open and objective theologian would honestly question the fact that the immorality of artificial contraception has been infallibly taught — not defined — by the Roman Catholic Church.

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Events Point To One Church

Editor:

In view of events concerning the Sacred Heart and the Blessed Virgin in the past few months in Wyalusing, Pa., there seems to be a message that I feel is clear and unmistakable.

These events have been taking place not only in a Catholic church but in a Protestant church as well.

I feel that Our Lord wants denominational differences in the United States to come to an end.

I feel that the Lord desires all baptized Christians in America to become united in a common bond of brotherhood and

Editor:

I wish to commend the Courier-Journal for bringing the truly bitter plight of abandoned wives to the attention of your readers. However, the extremely inaccurate quotes used from Father Charles Irvin's column accusing the women's movement of caring and doing nothing for our abandoned sisters, does Rochester feminists and feminists across the country a gross injustice.

For the last six years feminists have been trying to alleviate the sufferings of displaced homemakers. Because these women fall between the cracks of both federal income security

sisterhood.

When I consider the sin, evil, crime and the inhumanity of man against man that is so rampant all over the nation today, (I hope) that the Catholic See may see the message as a mandate to unite all Christians in a colossal move to save the world for Christ.

Only a militant and devout Christianity can accomplish this and bring on a religious revolution and overcome such evil, disorder and chaos as we are seeing today, otherwise the Lord himself will settle all things in a way that the evil elements will not like at all.

I think that the people look anxiously to the church to lead the way and bring peace and love and forestall the approaching ruin that is menacing God's beautiful creation. Satan seems to be winning now.

In 1942 Pope Pius XII signed a concordat dedicating the United States to the Holy Mother of God.

Protestants have never understood the Catholic devotion to the Blessed Mother. They should now in view of recent events in Pennsylvania.

Protestants as well as everyone should realize that the Blessed Virgin is the protective Mother of

Ways to Help Abandoned Wives

programs and state church organizations have not been forthcoming with monetary backing, our efforts have been necessarily somewhat limited.

Even so, in the Rochester area the Coalition of Feminist Therapists, the Women's Career Center, the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, individual Christian feminist counselors and CR groups have been able to give emotional, spiritual and practical support to many women.

Nationally, the Alliance for Displaced Homemakers (which includes abandoned

wives, widows, and other lone women) was founded by Tish Sommers and Laurie Shields in 1974 in California. Due to this organization's efforts, and those of other feminists across the U.S., there is now a Displaced Homemaker Assistance Act before committees in the House and in the Senate of the U.S. Congress. The act would authorize and direct the Secretary of Labor to establish a minimum of 50 pilot project centers for Displaced Homemakers. The House bill, introduced by Rep. Yvonne Brathwaite Burke, is waiting clearance before the Committee on Education and Labor in its subcommittee on employment opportunity. The Senate

bill, introduced by Sen. Birch Bayh, is before the Senate Committee on Human Resources in its subcommittee on employment and poverty. Letters to these committees to jar the bill out of committee and to a vote would be an act of justice and love.

And yes, the Equal Rights Amendment does have something to offer abandoned wives. The ERA will force the law to value the homemakers economic contribution (housework, child care, etc.) to the family as it presently values that of the male wage-earner. This will open the door to the possibility of Social Security benefits to

abandoned wives based on the monetary value of their work.

So, please, urge your readers to write the above legislators, inform themselves on the ERA, and most of all get into the women's movement at the local level.

"Somebody out there" is and has been trying to "do something." What we need is the Church, the people of God to join those now working to effect lasting and healing change.

Diane Dentinger Blum
Diocesan Pastoral Council
Representative for the
Emerging Role of Women
in the Church

all God's children. If I, an insignificant dot in the framework of Holy Mother the Church feel this way concerning the events and the message they imply, perhaps sincere Christians can see what I see.

I pray that such distinguished priests as our own bishop, Msgr. George Cocuzzi, and many other courageous spiritual leaders in our midst may agree with my belief that we may have a heavenly

message that can result in a great Christian and moral victory over the present forces of evil that seem intent on shattering all that is of Divine origin in our present age.

Brother Francis
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Demands Proof

Editor:

I read with interest Mr.

James Donahue's opinion (Courier-Journal 6/28) regarding amniocentesis which is done to determine a defective baby.

While I agree with the first four risks that Mr. Donahue feels expectant mothers should be warned about, I must question risk number five, "a possible average drop of 25 points in the baby's IQ." I have consulted experts in this field and to their knowledge no evidence has been documented to this effect.

Other Letters on Page 7

I would ask Mr. Donahue, if his point number five is to be believed, to identify the published material along with the names of the people who have done the research and how they can be contacted.

(Mrs.) Jane Wegman
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Guidelines

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

Expressions of opinions should be brief, no longer than 1½ pages, typed, double-spaced, with names and addresses.

We reserve the right to edit as to length, offensive words, libelous statements, or to reject altogether. Generally speaking, however, only limited grammatical corrections will be made and letters will reflect the writer's own style.

We encourage readers to submit opinions but since we try to print letters from as many different contributors as possible we will publish no more than one letter a month from the same individual.

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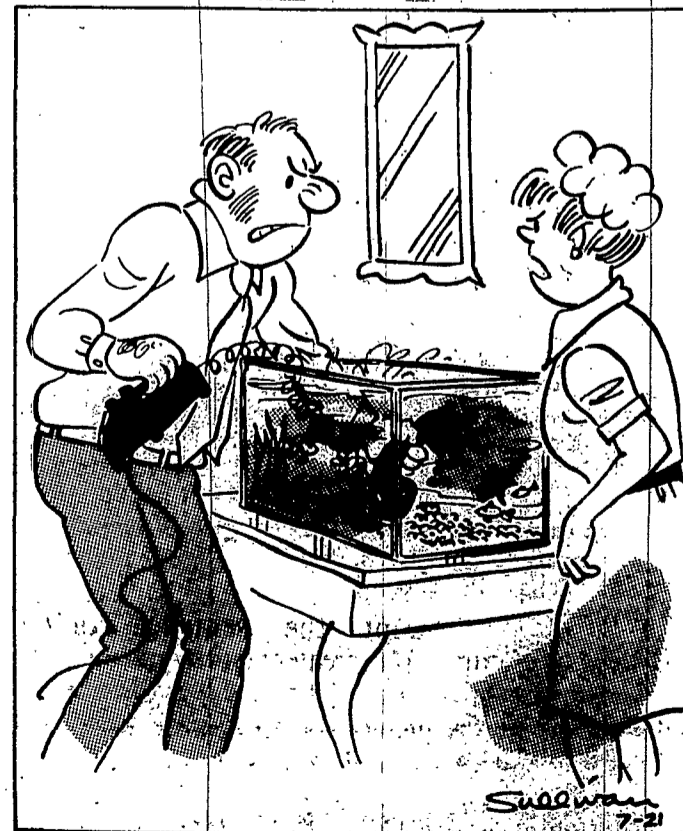
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