

**Editorials**

**Speculators**

With Pope Paul VI in his 81st year it probably is natural and perhaps even wise to begin discussion of his successor. Still it is not very comely in light of his continuing presence.

Still the Pope is a courageous and understanding man and even if it is in a sense inappropriate to wonder publicly about whose feet will next fill Peter's shoes, you can be sure that such speculation is rabid behind the scenes in the Vatican.

Recently a group of Roman Catholics formed a committee to influence the election of the next pope. We are ambivalent. We agree that in this age of collegiality a greater consensus should be brought to bear on the election. Few of the 118 or so cardinals

who actually will vote know little about the average Catholic in Timbuktu or Dubuque or Sydney.

Of course, there are those who point to the guidance of the Holy Spirit as overcoming such deficiencies. We chuckle with Andrew Greeley who mused in a recent Time magazine interview why the Holy Spirit thinks Italian ancestry is intrinsic to the papacy.

So be prepared, dear readers, for an avalanche of speculation and an outpouring of names which may become Catholic household words — the Felicis, the Pignedolis, the Baggios, Benellis and Pomos. There will be Humes and Lorscheiders and even Deardens for the suspense but probably for all intents and purposes the selection of the next bishop of Rome has already been whittled to a handful of possibilities where the only speculation that counts takes place — right in the Vatican.

So then why misgivings about the committee formed to influence papal selection? Mostly because it will be ineffective and we are inclined against the formation of another powerless committee. True, it may proceed somewhat to having some bearing on the selection of future pontiffs but that is hazy prognostication.

Then, we wonder at the rise of this new committee at the very time when a book on papal possibilities, "The Inner Elite: Dossiers of the Papal Candidates" is being published. In fact, the publisher of the book announced it is forthcoming at the same press conference where he unveiled the "Committee for the Responsible Election of the Pope."

We hope we are not putting II and II together and getting V.

**and Opinions**

**Reader Responds To Challenge**

Editor:

This is in response to the letter which challenged me to reveal the documentation supporting my statements on potential hazards of amniocentesis. Orlando J. Miller, M.D. is a professor of Ob. Gyn. as well as a professor of Human Genetics and Development at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University. He wrote in "Intrauterine Diagnosis" (sponsored by the American Society of Human Genetics):

"There are potential long-term risks to children subjected to amniocentesis. Amniocentesis and removal of a large amount of amniotic fluid in the 14th to 16th week of pregnancy might produce an average drop in IQ of 25 points. Studies performed to date could not have picked this up as amniocentesis is yet in its research stage, and I know that acual mental retardation as a direct result of amniocentesis is hypothetical, but such a fear is not without foundation. Amniotic fluid provides certain

classes of immunoglobulins to the fetus; removal of amniotic fluid might reduce the availability of such molecules at a critical period of central nervous system development. Protein deficiency has long been implicated as a potential cause of mental retardation — and while I do not suggest that amniocentesis will lead directly to mental retardation it is equally foolish to deny this possibility. It would be tragic if another highly touted advance were discarded because of premature oversell."

Many professional men, recognized by others in their field, warn of the potential dangers of amniocentesis as a new and experimental procedure. I trust this disclosure will be of benefit to your readers.

James J. Donahue  
212 Aldine St.  
Rochester, N.Y. 14619

**Priest Adds To Story**

Editor:

Your front page story (July 12) relative to the Sheen Housing Foundation's 10th anniversary

was most welcome. However, I find it passing strange that no mention is made of the man, Bishop Sheen, whose vision, compassion, imagination and money started it. In no way do I mean to demean the work, time, effort and talent of the people presently involved in the foundation's work. God bless them.

But the fact remains that by and large the money the foundation is working with is still about the same as 10 years ago. No mention is made of where to send funds to increase that capital (and that is even more strange). Ms. Bluhm is quoted about a significant step, namely, an expansion of service outside Monroe County. Great! I suspect that if any knew or checked the history of the foundation it would be discovered that almost from its beginning the foundation worked and contributed to projects outside of the county.

As I am presently engaged in writing the history of the Sheen years in Rochester, I suppose I am more sensitive to this issue than your reporter or indeed the board of the foundation. I do feel, however, that people like Mrs. Eleanor Cook, attorney David Baker, Bishop Dennis Hickey and Father James Moynihan, all of whom gave hours, time and money to getting

the foundation off the ground and seeing it through its first difficult years should not go unnoticed or unthanked or unremembered.

Father Joseph W. Dailey  
Mother of Sorrows  
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Rochester, N.Y. 14612

**ERA Support A Disservice**

Editor:

Several years ago, the Delaware State Workhouse stood out as one of the last strongholds of corporal punishment. The ancient cat-of-nine-tails was used in measured numbers on the bared back of any man guilty of wife-beating. The whipper could lash the man with tremendous force as long as he did not bend his elbow striking him. This law, thank Goodness, was changed. The horror of the crime itself has not changed and, although we applaud those who now labor to expose the facts surrounding it, we take informed exception to the rather wild claim made recently in the C-J which alleged (in a letter to the editor) that ERA will guarantee legal protection from wife-beating.

The ERA does not even MENTION women. It guarantees them absolutely nothing. Every

piece of women's rights legislation over the past 50 years uses the word female or woman or wife or girl; the ERA does not. Instead, it refers obliquely to "persons" or "sex." In addition, the ERA is unnecessary. The United States Supreme Court (Reed vs. Reed LW 4013 71) declared that any sex-based discrimination in the U.S. is in direct violation of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution.

Those who labor to expose the facts of wife abuse do their noble task a disservice when they promise the ERA will afford protection to women. The ERA is too ambiguous to guarantee anything to anyone.

Mr. and Mrs.  
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**Fr. Cuddy: Thank You**

Editor:

A recent article on this page stated, "It is sad to see that the Body of Christ, which is composed of all baptized Christians, cannot be shared at the table of the Lord which was meant to unite us." If you examine this startling idea, you will see that the first phrase is indeed correct. The Body is broken and we must all pray for unity. But what about following the Holy Spirit's timetable? Are we not obliged in conscience to follow the instructions of our Holy Father, the shepherd given us by Our Lord Jesus? In October 1973 (Vatican Council II, Gen. Ed. Flannery, pp. 560-561) it clearly states: "Within the full communion of faith, eucharistic communion is the expression of this full communion and therefore of the unity of the faithful . . . But eucharistic communion practiced by those who are not in full ecclesial communion with each other cannot be the expression of that full unity which the Eucharist of its nature signifies and which in this case does not exist; for this reason such communion cannot be regarded as a means to be used to lead to full ecclesial communion."

This is not my statement but a statement of the mind of the Church. This

interesting document also gives guidelines when other Christians may receive communion. Father Cuddy's article in June stated them clearly. For a Christian to receive in the Catholic Church, the third item is worth noting: "For a prolonged period are unable to have recourse to a minister of their own community." Father Cuddy very aptly shortened this to "the impossibility of the non-Catholic's going to his own denominational service" and he also stated so beautifully the example of the lady he gives to in a nursing home. He knows she fulfills the conditions.

I want to thank the Lord publicly for all those priests who are seeking to know the mind of Jesus Christ and who conscientiously follow the directions of our Holy Father and Bishops, including the instructions contained in the documents of Vatican II.

To Father Paul J. Cuddy I want to give special thanks for reminding all of us that there still exists a teaching Church and that a mark of a good Catholic is obedience and reverence for its teachings.

Mrs. Joan M. Rand  
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**Mass Books For the Blind**

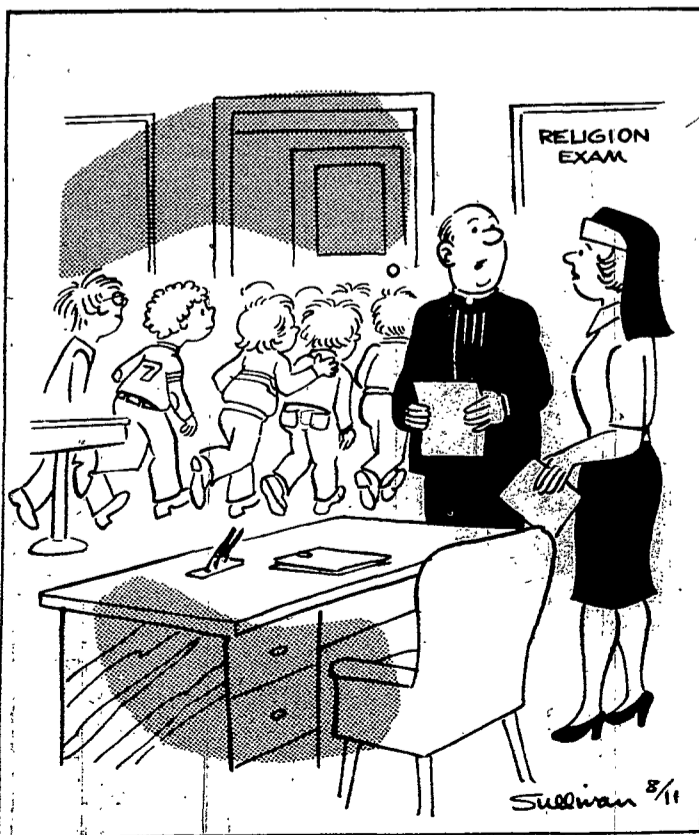
Editor:

Your readers frequently help us to reach the blind and partially sighted people for whom we have many free services. We are offering now both large print and Braille transcriptions of the Sunday Mass readings in Cycle A, which begins with the First Sunday of Advent. We have also, in both forms, the Ordinary of the Mass, in addition to a Manual of Prayers and other devotional materials.

Thank you for your gracious assistance in making our services known.

Xavier Society  
For the Blind  
154 East 23rd St.  
New York, N.Y. 10010

To 5



I FOUND A BUDDING PETE ROSE, A NEW JOHN TRAVOLTA, A POTENTIAL CARL SAGAN AND A POSSIBLE SPIDERMAN, BUT NO FUTURE BISHOPS!

**COURIER-JOURNAL**

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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.