

Editorials

Not Ostracized

Any diocesans entertaining misgivings about helping divorced and remarried Catholics should be edified by a recent pronouncement of the Vatican's International Theological Commission, an advisory body to the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith.

It has recommended that the Church give "full pastoral care" to divorced and remarried Catholics, even though they may not receive the sacraments of Matrimony and Holy Communion.

Not only have divorced and remarried Catholics been the object of prejudice on the part of some but they have often believed themselves officially ostracized from the Church.

"These Christians are not to be excluded from the action of divine grace and still have a bond with the Church," stated the high-level 30-member commission.

The document upholds the traditional Catholic Church teaching on the indissolubility of marriage and the ban on priests officiating at non-sacramental wedding ceremonies. But according to Belgian theologian Msgr.

Philippe Delhaye, the document repudiates "a rigid pastoral stance" of former times which considered divorced and remarried people "ostracized and abandoned unto themselves, like sheep without a shepherd."

The document says that such Catholics "must not be ignored but rather helped equally with all other Christians who are trying to free themselves from sin with the help of God's grace."

The commission maintained the traditional stance by urging priests to help prevent divorcees through better pre-marriage preparation of engaged couples.

Three Magi?

Only history will tell whether the three modern world leaders, Begin, Sadat and Carter, have carried the gift of peace to Jesus much in the fashion of the three gift-bearing "kings" of the New Testament.

But whether Mideast peace becomes a reality, these modern counterparts of Gaspar, Melchior and Balthasar have already brought the gift of hope to a cynical world. We pray it is not rejected.

The Vatican has called this promise "the seed of peace" and it is obvious that it is going to need all the care, attention and nourishment possible if it is to reach full bloom.

It is befitting that one of the present-day trio is a Christian, in a way the fulfillment of that long-ago promise much as that newborn Babe was the fulfillment of the prophecy of the House of David. Let us pray that all of this is a good omen for the fulfillment of the dream of Camp David.

Sunday Specials

Talk about shooting from the hip.

A new offshoot of the gun lobby, something called the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, has called on Roman Catholics to stop making their customary Sunday Mass offerings to force American bishops to back down on their support for legislation banning the sale of cheap handguns, known as "Saturday night specials."

Such a self-seeking organization obviously does not care about the world of good that is possible from Sunday offerings. We feel that if such clap-trap makes any headway, then Catholics should make an extra offering to show their support for the bishops and their opposition to the dissemination of cheap handguns. Let's hope such a backfire could show the "Saturday night special" adherents where the heart of the church is.

We could call it a "Sunday morning special."

and Opinions

Election A Concern

Editor:

Election Day is fast approaching and we are quite concerned about those who will be elected to political office. We believe that a candidate cannot and should not be judged by one issue alone and we encourage voters to have as complete a profile possible of the candidates they intend to vote for. In this profile, find out what the candidates are saying on as many issues as possible, such as taxes, welfare, crime, etc.

We strongly urge voters to take a good look at the candidates' viewpoints on "life issues," such as food policies, abortion, the death penalty, euthanasia, the elderly and the handicapped. We believe life is God-given and must be, as Pope Paul VI stated, exempt from any arbitrary power to suppress it, worthy of all respect, all care, all dutiful sacrifice.

May we vote into political office those who will promote and respect life — ALL LIFE, those who will hold sacred and dignified the lives of the elderly, the poor, the unborn, the imprisoned, the handicapped, the victims of crime.

Pope Paul VI also stated that peace is "the joyful celebration of life," which is realized only when nations recognize "the primacy of life as a value and condition for peace."

Peace demands an order of justice in society "when human rights are truly professed and publicly recognized and defended."

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CEF Reveals Pols' Records

Editor:

Following its long-standing custom, the New York State Board of Citizens for Educational Freedom (CEF) does not endorse political can-

didates. Instead it makes known candidates' records. Their records in the field of education is only one aspect of their candidacy, but we believe it is an important one.

Governor Carey has been a long-time champion of parental rights in education. As a Congressman he helped enact the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which made funds available also to children in non-public schools. As a member of the House Ways and Means Committee, he introduced a bill providing federal tax credits for parents preferring non-public schools.

As governor, within the rather stringent limitations of New York's Constitution (the Blaine Amendment), he has signed many measures helping such parents.

By contrast, going back to the Constitutional Convention of 1967, and continuing ever since, Perry Duryea has been a staunch opponent of parents rights in education. He opposed the repeal of the Blaine Amendment in 1967, and has since opposed nearly all measures affording relief from the public school monopoly.

Now I should like to step out of my role as secretary of the N.Y. State Board of CEF, and as a member of its National Board, and offer a piece of political advice to administrators of Catholic schools.

Since the thing which an office seeker most needs is political exposure, administrators of Catholic schools who afford their enemies in the field of education a platform are simply committing suicide. Claims of "political neutrality," are fatuous.

Kenneth O'Loane
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Readers Thanked For Their Help

Editor:

As a member of the Blessed Sacrament Refugee Fund I wish to thank the many people who responded to help the

two Laotian families who recently came to Rochester.

Without the feature story John Dash wrote our needs might never have been known. Funds, clothing, and household items continue to come in from people who share something in common — generosity.

To receive a donation from a retiree on a fixed income or the head of a household who is presently out of work is truly an inspiration.

Our sincere gratitude, too, to Fathers Stuart Hogan and James Callan for their moral and financial support.

These people, in their concern, proclaim the Gospel of Christ who said, "I was homeless and you took Me in ... for whatever you do to the least of My brothers, you do unto Me."

Margaret M. Finucane
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Situation Desperate

Editor:

For the thousands of children homeless and without parents in Lebanon as a result of recent bombings we beg your editorial assistance and as much publicity as possible.

Please advise your readers that the situation is desperate beyond words. Money is needed, immediately, please. All gifts marked Lebanon are tax-deductible if sent to the Catholic Near East Welfare Association.

Our office in Beirut guarantees all help will reach the neediest, directly, with no overhead costs.

For God's sake please help!

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Satan On the Rampage

Editor:

Seven hundred and seventy-four years ago in the year of Our Lord 1204, the Lord Jesus spoke these words to Francis of Assisi: "Francis, my church is falling down, I want you to rebuild it for it sways." The whole world knows how well Francis obeyed his Lord's command.

Today in our own age, the church of Jesus is again falling down, this time in the Western world. The Lord speaks to every loyal Christian heart. I can hear the Blessed Voice in my own heart. He is saying, "My church in the Western world is again falling down, help me rebuild it for it sways."

The beloved church in America is reeling under the sledge hammer blows of sin, evil, wickedness in high places, violence, crime, greed, hatred, oppression, slavery and the inhumanity of man against man! All this by the master of deceit and his demons.

Are we who profess to be Christians so in fact or only in fancy? If we are Christians then let us prove it. Let us unite in an army of God's faithful and under the leadership of the Holy Spirit that is within us arise and restore the Church of Jesus to the power and glory of the near past. The church is tottering under the assault of the netherworld to destroy all that is good, clean and pure in a decadent world that seems bent on speeding to its own destruction. To all lapsed Catholics and to the falling away and to all who face the grim specter of a helpless and hopeless future, turn to the light that is Christ and once again return to the glorious sacrifice, to the holy devotions, to the safe and tranquil atmosphere of our beloved Holy Mother the church. Let us stand up and be counted. Let us cry out, "onward Christian soldiers." Can we defeat Satan and his plan to reduce the people of the

world to depravity? Yes we can.

To all denominations and faiths, be true to your trust, be true to your Christian heritage, fill your churches, let the world ring with prayer. Let us call to the spirit of God most high and win the victory for heaven, let us throw off the yoke of lethargy lest we perish.

The voice of the beloved, "Come unto me all you who are weary and are heavy laden and I will give you peace and rest for your soul."

For my part, I come quickly Lord Jesus.

Brother Francis
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"I THINK WE CAN TAKE THE COLLAR OFF IN ABOUT A WEEK, FATHER!"

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 1 1/2 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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