

Editorials

The Best

It is a simplism that objects, events and even people are not the same when viewed by different persons. We each have our own perspective which shades our viewpoints so that, like crystals of snow, no two of us see the same world exactly the same way.

For some, every cloud has a silver lining; for others, every silver lining has a cloud.

This is something we should keep in the front of our minds when trying to reach agreement, compromise or consensus on difficult issues. Likewise, we should realize that our judgments also come in different hues.

Thus in assessing some of the events of the fading year 1978, each of us has his or her own subjective sentiment. Even grading the comparative importance of the various happenings is difficult.

With this prologue we would like to concentrate on what is perhaps the most important news to Catholics over the past 365 or so days. We refer to the deaths of two popes.

Intellectually and theologically speaking, death should hold no sting for Christians. Yet, to be honest, when someone we love or revere or depend on dies, it is a matter of grief for us. Perhaps it is only the selfish reason, we will miss the one who has died. Or it may be a bit more metaphysical and subconscious — the realization, as the poet said, that the death of anyone diminishes us all.

Still we would like to look at the papal deaths from another perspective. Only by losing Pope Paul VI, did we come to know Pope John Paul I, whose 33 days as pontiff gave us something to ponder the rest of our days. Then with this gentle man's passing, we achieved the historical breakthrough of our first Polish pope.

No normal person would wish the deaths of Paul VI and John Paul I who were great men — and if anyone disputes the accolade, compare these humane, God-fearing people with most of our other world leaders.

Yet, without their passing, we would in all likelihood never have come to know their successor.

At home, we have had the unsettling and unhappy experience of having our own bishop resign because of deteriorating health. Obviously this situation is not the same as concerns the two popes — we are still blessed with the presence of Bishop Joseph L. Hogan. And we can hope that the lessening of the burden may restore him to good health and many more useful and joyful years.

But parallels do exist. Many who will miss Bishop Hogan's leadership may regard the future with misgiving; others, equally praising of Bishop Hogan's tenure, will look forward with hope. The stepping aside of Bishop Hogan may provide a person whom we might never have met in any other circumstance.

The ways of the Lord are strange and wondrous.

So as a new year hovers just beyond the horizon, it is an appropriate time for all of us to don our best Christian perspective and realize that for us the best is always yet to come.

and Opinions

Thanks To All

Editor:

In behalf of Catholic Charities, its trustees and staff, I would like to thank

the following for the success of the 10th Annual Courier-Journal/Catholic Charities Christmas Appeal:

- The Courier-Journal, its leadership and staff for sponsoring the Christmas Appeal and publicizing the

needs of people through the "100 Neediest Cases;"

- The many hundreds of givers, who have shared themselves and their resources in helping us more adequately meet the needs of the poor of our total diocese;

- The staffs of Catholic

Family Center, the Office of Human Development, Office of Urban Ministries, Charles and Genesee Settlement Houses, who actually administer our program;

- The many parishes and organizations throughout the diocese who have been supportive of the appeal;

- Star Markets who cooperate with us in the administration of the Food Voucher Program;

- Holiday Clearing House (Christmas Bureau) for helping us eliminate duplication of services.

- The Salvation Army and Rex Worthy for the excellent cooperation received in planning and administering our program.

The 10th annual appeal

was successful because of the greatest generosity of the people and institutions of our diocese.

Thanks to everyone for a job well done.

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Teach Holiness

Earlier this month, Pope John Paul II met with priest-officials of the congregation of St. Leonard Murialdo. Following are excerpts from his address that day.

Remain faithful to three instructions of your founder.

The pursuit of holiness.



"Make yourselves holy and do so quickly," was Murialdo's constant exhortation. This must be our first concern and our fundamental commitment.

Holiness consists first of all in living the reality of God's love with conviction, in spite of the difficulties of history and of one's own life.

Murialdo wrote in his "Spiritual Testament," that "I would like the Congregation of St. Joseph to aim above all at spreading around it and especially within it knowledge of the infinite, actual and individual love that God has for all souls, especially of the faithful, and particularly for his elect and chosen — priests and religious — of the personal love he has for each of us. We read in books of piety, we preach from the pulpit that God loved men so much, but people do not reflect that it is now, at this very hour, that God loves us truly and infinitely..."

I too wish to say this to you all: in your daily difficulties, in moments of trial and discouragement, when it seems that every commitment is almost emptied of interest and value, remember that God knows our troubles! God loves you, one by one, he is close to you, he understands you! Trust in him and in this certainty find the courage and joy to carry out your duty lovingly and joyfully.

"Holiness" also consists in a life of concealment and humility: to know how to immerse oneself in the daily suffering of men, but in silence, without publicity, without worldly echoes. "Let us do and be silent!" was your founder's motto. To do and be silent! How relevant is this program of life and apostolate even today.

Treasure, beloved sons, the teachings of your saint!

They indicate the certain way for the coming of the Kingdom of God!

A second characteristic of St. Leonard Murialdo was pedagogical concern. He was unquestionably a great educator, like Don Bosco, and dedicated his whole life to the education of children and young people, convinced of the value of the preceptive method and of Christocentric guidance.

Let us meditate together on what he wrote to confreres gathered in the Spiritual Exercises of 1898.

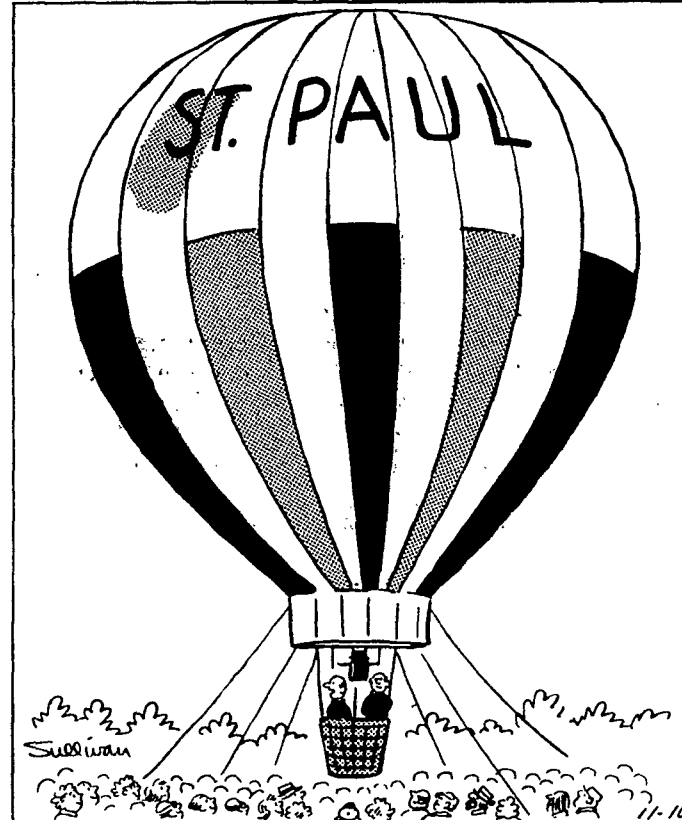
"May love of God bring forth zeal for the salvation of the young: 'ne perdantur,' St. John Chrysostom says, 'so that they may not be lost,' not be damned, and therefore... real zeal to save them, to instruct them well in religion, to instill in them love of God, of Jesus Christ, and of Mary, and zeal to save themselves. But all this will not be obtained unless one has humility of heart."

It is an exhortation which the pope wishes to echo this morning. Let this be your spur: educate to save!

From the "pedagogy of eternal salvation" there springs logically the "pedagogy of love." Commit your lives completely to edifying, to forming children and young people, behaving in such a way that your life will be a continual example of virtue for them: it is necessary to become a child with children and everything to everyone in order to win all to Christ.

Finally I would like to point out a last characteristic which seems to me to define more completely the nature of Murialdo, and it is his deep faithfulness to the Church and the pope. He lived in a very difficult age for the Church, especially in Italy, and intelligent and far-sighted as he was, he had understood perfectly that times were changing quickly and that it was better for the Church not to have any longer the concerns of temporal power. His letters, so profound and balanced, bear witness to this. He trusted in Providence, following the example of St. Joseph, whose name your congregation bears.

Act like this, you too! Love the Church! Love the pope! Be docile to his teachings and his directives, convinced that the Lord wants unity in truth and in charity, and that the Holy Spirit assists the Vicar of Christ in his indispensable and salvific work. And pray, and get your young people and your faithful to pray, for the pope and for the Church.



"FIRST OF ALL, WE WANT TO THANK OUR BISHOP FOR ALLOWING US TO EXPERIMENT WITH A NEW KIND OF PARISH..."

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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.