

Editorials

Poor Warsaw

Leave it to the Communists to come up with outlandish efforts aimed at subverting freedom.

The Polish government has decreed that foreign journalists wishing to cover the visit of Pope John Paul to that country in June will have to pay a tax of \$500 to do so. It must be paid in advance at Polish embassies or consulates and receipts attached to applications for visas.

In addition, foreign journalists will be charged \$100 a day for hotel rooms and cables (which will be censored by the government), to be paid for in either dollars, pounds sterling, Swiss francs or West German marks.

Heaven forbid that a Communist government would be suspected of trying to make a quick capitalist buck, in healthy Western cash, if you please.

As a matter of fact, that is not really their main objective. Warsaw is simply trying to cut down and dilute the coverage of a man who is clearly the number one thorn in the vulnerable side of communism, particularly in his homeland.

We do not see cause for overconcern. The ploy won't work. The Western press, thanks to the free enterprise system and a healthy regard for facts, will be ready and willing to pay the price. Communists, and totalitarians of all shades, have never really understood how to deal with a free press, aside from either shutting it down or controlling it. And neither will work in this instance.

As for censorship of cable transmissions, that is also

foolhardy. Any distortions will be exposed shortly anyway, thus reflecting even more poorly on the plight of Communist government.

Indeed the whole strategy has already pointed up the magnificent effectiveness of two great powers in the world - a holy person and the means to communicate his message. It's kind of like macaroni and beans, separately they are nutritious; together the value of each is multiplied.

The Communists have again made it clear that they have a great fear of that man from Rome. He commands no military divisions; nor does he have great sums of cash at his disposal. Indeed, the Communists have shown that they can match the West in both commodities. Rather John Paul possesses something far more threatening to the oppressor. He appeals to the heart, soul and mind of the masses, particularly in Poland. That is the weapon that could bring down the dictator.

and Opinions

Gives Thanks To Volunteers

Editor:

May 22-28 is National Volunteer Week, and the American Heart Association, Genesee Valley Chapter (Monroe and Orleans counties) would like to thank its over 600 volunteers publicly for the thousands of hours they give each year. The Heart Association directs its efforts at the prevention and treatment of the nation's number one and number three killers: heart attack and stroke.

Research, public and professional education, and public service programs all function through substantial volunteer commitments. Heart Association volunteers may be seen taking blood pressures at hypertension screening sites, teaching cardiopulmonary resuscitation, doing office work, sitting on the board of directors, running fund-raising events, driving stroke patients to stroke group meetings, giving speeches,

reviewing research proposals.

While their number embraces lay and medical people, ranges from teenagers to those well past retirement, spans ethnic, political, and religious groups, they hold in common the recognition of a need, the belief that the need can be met through shared effort, and a commitment to contribute to that effort.

The April 11 Democrat and Chronicle carried an Erma Bombeck column with the headline "Volunteers Reflect This Nation's Compassion, Caring, Unselfishness." We at the Heart Association feel this characterizes our volunteers and hope all will accept our hearty thanks and sincere appreciation.

Cynthia L. Bartlett
Volunteer Development
Genesee Valley Chapter
American Heart Association

Birthright Not Funded

Editor:

From a Times-Union

article of April 17 I was very disappointed to learn that again this year the Community Chest is making no allocation to "Birthright of Rochester" - an organization that does so much to defend the rights of the unborn. Therefore I feel in conscience that I should allocate some of the money that I would have donated to the Community Chest to "Birthright."

Fr. William Endres
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Guitars Are Secular

Editor:

I want to thank you again for publishing my letter last month (Where Are the Cassocks). This time I have another gripe against Secularism in the Church, viz. Guitar Playing in the Church.

Secularism is making further inroads in the Church today with guitars taking the place of organ music. It is distracting, and in poor taste, to listen to the strumming of guitars rock style, in church.

We have a beautiful organ in our church which is hardly played. There is nothing more soothing to the spirit than to listen to the sweet strains of organ music, compared to the harsh strums of guitar playing.

Charles G. Mikeltish
205 Chestnut Ridge Rd.
Rochester, N.Y. 14624

Credit Where Credit's Due

Editor:

I was glad to read your article about the purchase of the St. Joseph's tower by the Landmark Society. This is good news indeed.

I wish, however, to make one correction. Your statement that the tower was designed by Mr. George F. Lorenz of the Oberlies firm is based on a remark of mine in an earlier article on St. Joseph's. I subsequently learned that this statement was incorrect. The tower was designed by Mr. Joseph Oberlies - the crowning achievement of his many architectural contributions to the Rochester scene. The drawings for the project were made by Mr. George F.

Lorenz, then associated with the Oberlies firm.

It is only just that in any future allusions to the St. Joseph project you give full credit to Mr. Oberlies, whose tower is a true Rochester landmark.

(Rev.) Robert F. McNamara
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Xavier Group Helps Blind

Editor:

Just as with the sighted child, it is so important that the young visually impaired student develops his or her reading ability.

Our Elementary and Junior High School catalog is sent free to visually impaired youth who wishes to make use of our Large Print, Braille or Tape libraries.

The Xavier Society for the Blind is the national Catholic press and library for the visually handicapped. It was incorporated in 1904.

We have recently received many requests from your readers stating how grateful they were to learn of our services for the visually handicapped in the Courier-Journal.

Miss Betty J. Dodd
Xavier Society for the Blind
154 East 23rd St.
New York, N.Y. 10010

Word for Sunday

By Father Albert Shamon

'When Is Progress Progress?'

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Jn. 10:11-18. (R1) Acts 4:8-12. (R2) 1 Jn. 3:1-2.

Next Sunday's gospel is that of the Good Shepherd. In the first reading, Peter showed himself a good shepherd. Filled with the Holy Spirit, he fed the sheep of Israel the truth that Jesus is the cornerstone of life, without whom there is no living, no salvation.

He derived his knowledge and his courage from the Holy Spirit. "Filled with the Holy Spirit, he spoke up." He sought not to curry favor with the religious leaders of Judaism, the builders. He did not say what they wanted to hear, but what they needed to hear!

Eventually, like every good shepherd, Peter laid down his life for the truth.

I am studying now the first encyclical of the present good shepherd of the Church, Pope John Paul II, **The Redeemer of Man**. I say that I am studying it. In an essay, **Of Studies**, Francis Bacon wrote: "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously (carefully); and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention." An encyclical is a document that I feel must be chewed and digested—read with diligence and attention.

The encyclical is addressed not only to the Church but also to all men and women of good will. "I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must lead them, too, and they shall hear my voice." It is good to see the Popes once again assuming their role of guiding the rulers of people. Modern leaders are not

above the law. Judges of nations will themselves be judged. Who shall guide them, if not the good shepherds, the vicars of Christ, God-appointed custodians and guides of faith and morals!

Just consider these two truths picked at random from John Paul's first encyclical.

In the past two decades for some Catholics and theologians it has been popular to criticize the Church. Their verbal flagellations and breast-thumping, surpassing the jeremiads of Jeremiah, were justified as countering the post-Reformation Triumphalism of the Church. The Holy Father wrote: "Criticism should have its just limits. Otherwise it ceases to be constructive and does not reveal truth, love and thankfulness for the grace in which we have become sharers principally through the Church." How we need to hear that—that criticism must have just limits, that excessive self-criticism is neither constructive nor truthful!

Another malady of modern society is fear.

"What is modern man afraid of?" asked the Pope.

"His own works." Why? "They are being taken from him and turned against himself."

And why is this?

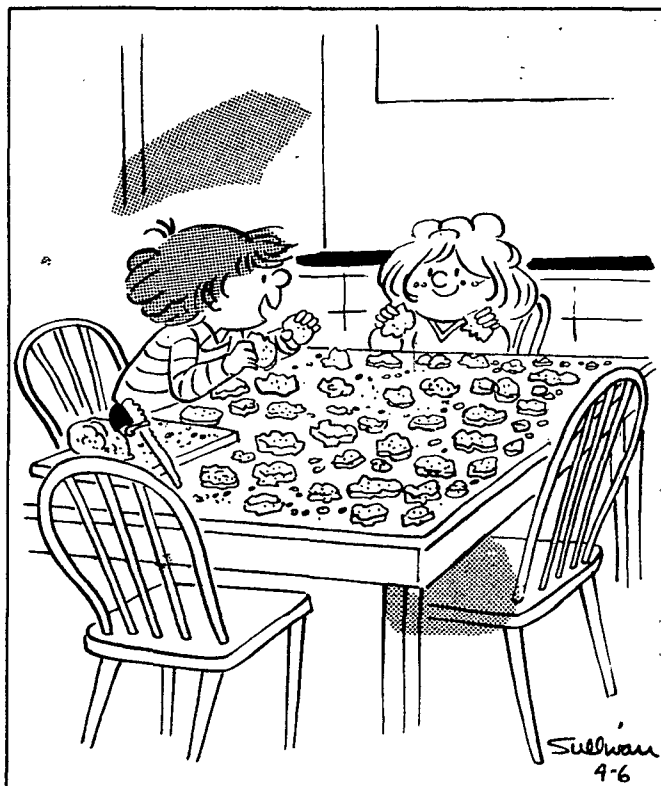
"Because moral and ethical growth has not kept pace with technological and cultural growth."

What is he to do. "He must ask the question, 'When is progress progress?'"

"Real progress," stated the Pope, "must promote the good of man—make human life more human; that is, man better, more mature spiritually!" How we need to hear that!

"Man," said the Pope, "is the lord and king of creation, not its slave." That means ethics must prevail over technology, persons over things, and spirit over matter. "Real progress is not more things, but better persons, not having more, but being more!"

Man is in danger today of becoming a slave to things, to political systems, to production, to products. Why? Because the builders, the leaders of society, have rejected the cornerstone: the Good Shepherd and His teachings.



"I THINK WE'VE GOT THIS 'BREAKING BREAD TOGETHER' THING DOWN PRETTY GOOD!"

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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.