

**Editorials**

**Deadly Reminder**

We have long been on record as opposed to capital punishment. We have heard all the arguments, the pros and cons of the deterrent value of the death penalty, the statistics quoted freely by both sides of the debate to support opposite viewpoints, the emotional positions, etc., etc.

To us it is simply that a Christian cannot support killing, especially the cold-blooded variety by edict of the state. Too often modern society has turned to death as a solution for the problems it refuses to meet head-on. We see this in abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment and war.

We, of course, are not alone in our view although public opinion polls show that a majority favor capital punishment. So does a majority favor abortion but that doesn't make it morally acceptable. No one ever said that it is easy to be a Christian. The first one was an unpopular figure in His day. And also a victim of capital punishment.

Bishop Thomas C. Kelly, general secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, has stated that the recent electrocution of John Spenklink by the State of Florida "promises to further erode respect for human life ... instead of adopting such desperate and doubtful remedies to curb crime, we should be marshaling our energies to combat lawlessness in a manner which promotes rather than diminishes the value of being human."

How much of the support of the death penalty is generated by the urge for revenge would be difficult to calculate. Yet, it is there and brings to mind an old saying: "The one who seeks to get even should dig two graves, the first for his victim the second for himself." That could apply very aptly to the society that chooses death as a remedy.

**King Holiday**

Why is it so difficult to designate the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. a national holiday?

And isn't it odd that a black American has ever been so honored?

The debate is under way again in Congress. Sen. Edward Kennedy has sponsored the holiday bill in the Senate and Rep. John Conyers has introduced the House version.

Opponents, led by Sen. Strom Thurmond, say they base their opposition on the premise that such a holiday would cost \$22 million in overtime pay for federal employees, presumably to catch up on the work missed on the holiday.

Sen. Thurmond also said, "We must not forget that the government pays \$173 million a day to its employees. If they don't work, they still get paid, so this would cost the taxpayers \$195 million" (counting the overtime).

Sen. Kennedy supplied the counter to that argument by pointing out that national holidays are often bell-ringers for retail stores and would generate enough revenue to make it worthwhile.

Excuse our cynicism, but we have the feeling that the economic factor is not the crux of the opposition. And we think it is high time that such a holiday be declared and that it become a focal point for education on racial justice and peaceful social change, two of the pursuits of Dr. King.

**and Opinions**

**Columnist Defended**

Editor:

I believe that Mr. Hussar (Courier-Journal, 5/30/79) owes Father Hohman an apology. I don't know what brought up this tirade again because Mr. Hussar and Father Hogan already gave Father Hohman "both barrels" in the issue of May 4, on the same subject.

If Mr. Hussar wishes to base all his faith and facts on council decrees and dogma, which are apparently the last word, infallible and "not open for further discussion," then he should start to investigate the facts pertaining to the council of 553 AD, because prior to that time there was no dogma of Original Sin.

Father Hohman, according to Mr. Hussar, is "blind," "tone deaf," a heretic and is calling God a liar because God states right there in "black and white" in Genesis that He created everything in just seven days. And Father Hohman disagrees.

God did not write Genesis. Moses wrote Genesis, and, with the help of his Egyptian background and education, it is one of the greatest mystical and allegorical stories ever written. Father Hohman has tried to explain in his column however that it is not to be taken literally.

How else could Moses explain to a group of primitive and ignorant people the actual facts of God's creation and His involution and evolution out of matter? Is it any less wonderful that God created the world in seven million years, rather than in just seven days?

I do not believe that Father Hohman is heretical. He is writing for adult readers and not for first graders. He is trying to tell his readers that there is more to the body, or exoteric side of the Bible: that there is a soul, the esoteric side of the Bible that has a much deeper meaning — the hidden truths that have been passed down through the centuries.

The fundamentalist approach to the Bible is one reason the Church has lost so many thousands of its members to agnosticism and atheism; and while I respect Mr. Hussar's point of view, I do not believe that he has the right or authority to come right out and flatly state that Father Hohman is absolutely wrong and does not know what he is talking about.

Perhaps the Courier-Journal should take a poll to find out just how many Catholics actually believe in the story of the Creation and Adam and Eve literally, as written by Moses, in Genesis.

**Robert C. Karley**  
138 Hillary Drive  
Rochester, N.Y. 14624

**Editor's Note:** The theory that Moses wrote Genesis is not widely accepted and has been contradicted by notable theologians.

**New Facts On 'the Pill'**

Editor:

In a Courier-Journal letter of May 31, Mrs. Therese Petracca of Natural Family Planning decried the Planned Parenthood visits to Rochester Catholic schools to teach the use of contraceptives.

Does anyone realize the full implications of the latest research concerning "the pill"? Research at the Kaiser-Permanente Medical Center published last December found three to five times more cervical cancer in women using birth control pills for more than four years than in women who had never used them. Cervical cancer in women who had taken the pill two years or less occurred twice as often as in non-users. This study included 170,000 women.

In her book, "The Joy of Being a Woman," Ingrid Trobisch quotes the eminent Dr. Roetzer as saying he found significant evidence of genetic defects in aborted fetuses of women who had been taking "the pill." He

stated that "the pill" should not be given without grave reservation to women planning to have more children.

The new lower dosages of hormones now used in "the pill" in an attempt to lessen other dangerous side effects now permit union of ovum and sperm as it takes a high dosage to prevent ovulation. Implantation of the fertilized egg in the uterus is still prevented, but now an abortion occurs as the egg and sperm are united. Abortion is called an abomination in the documents of Vatican II.

When are we going to realize that we cannot "get our children off" when they make mistakes by tragically advocating "the pill" to control teenage sexual promiscuity? Because advocating this solution is what we are really doing when we play at the sophisticated game of seeing that they are informed by Planned Parenthood. Besides parents it behooves priests and nuns to take a second look at the new research. We are being shown Pope Paul VI was right, after all.

**Agnes O'Herron, RN**  
205 Overland St.  
Elmira, N.Y.

**Common Cup Advocated**

Editor:

It was with interest that I read Father Cuddy's article regarding Communion from the common cup (6/6/79). I have always compared his articles to that of watching a lava pool in a volcano. You look at it and all of a sudden, plop! A bubble bursts over to one side of the pool. You quickly glance over to where the bubble burst to see another, when plop! Another bubble bursts in an entirely different area. You just never know when or where the next plop will evidence itself. I feel that Father Cuddy has plopped again. Please consider this reply from one of the "Grassroots Catholics" (whatever that means) that he is always referring to.

Father Cuddy mentions that "non-elitist" Catholics will be offended by the common cup. This implies

that only "elitist" Catholics will receive the cup. There is no such thing as a "non-elitist" Catholic. Very simply explained, just stress the word common in common cup. To me, that means everybody.

Another plop is the statement that there is a small group forcing common cup on all of us. This conjures up the vision of people being dragged up the aisle, kicking and screaming, having their mouths torn open by their hair, then being forced to drink, choking and spitting until they swallow. A vision, no doubt, Father Cuddy wanted to project. The simple truth is, people will have a choice to receive from the common cup or not. If they feel guilty for not receiving from the common cup, they shouldn't. If anyone makes them feel uncomfortable, those people are wrong. You will never be forced.

Now comes my favorite plop. Syphilitic germs! Asked about the practice of common cup, the American Medical Association said, "It is the opinion of the AMA that, as far as we know, there have been no cases of transmission of germs to communicants using a common cup. The alcoholic content of the wine plus the hygienic practice of wiping the cup and turning it to a new position for each communicant seems to remove any danger of disease." The Pasteur Institute of Paris is reported to have said that the practice is dangerous — like going to the supermarket or the subway. People with colds and other forms of communicable sickness should, of course, only take Communion in the form of bread.

I have made no attempt to explain the wholesomeness and goodness of receiving from the common cup. I have faith in the Spirit, and hope that someone else will address that issue. If you have any questions about common cup, do what I did. Call the Pastoral Office and ask for the Department of Liturgy. You will get simple, straight, honest answers, put in terms simple enough for anybody to understand.

**Anthony T. Rimore**  
135 Holyoke Apt. B6  
Greece, N.Y. 14615

**Pope Approved Death Penalty**

Editor:

In the public debate over capital punishment (Courier-Journal, 6/13/79) no one has as yet put on record the clear, incisive statement of Pope Pius XII of Sept. 14, 1952 at the First International Congress of Histopathologists of the Nervous System at Rome:

"Even when it is the question of the execution of a man condemned to death, the State does not dispose of the individual's right to live. It is then reserved to the public power to deprive the condemned of the benefit of life, in expiation of his fault, when already, by his crime, he has dispossessed himself of the right to life."

**Father James P. Collins**  
St. John the Baptist Church  
325 Lake St.  
Elmira, N.Y. 14901

**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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