

Editorials

Rejoice Together

Amid some of the prejudicial blather intended to detract from the visit of Pope John Paul II to our shores, it was extremely gratifying to learn of the warm welcome proffered by Protestant leaders in Massachusetts.

In a letter to Cardinal Humberto Medeiros, the State's Council of Churches offered its "fullest cooperation" and their "ecumenical hospitality."

This is a far and gratifying cry from the complaints of such groups as atheists, the American Civil Liberties Union (which always seems in a frightful hurry to criticize things Catholic), and certain fundamentalists who have objected to the Pope's visiting our president in the White House, a place that should have it this good more often.

Now it must be stated that some of those joining such causes do so out of a sincere, if misguided sense of separation of Church and State. But, sadly, for most, it is simply an exercise in bigotry.

Therefore, the open and sincere remarks by the Bay State Protestants serves as aspirin, Mama's chicken soup, a warm hand on a cold day, and loving hug.

The Boston archdiocese has announced that it will

pay for the construction of an altar and sanctuary platforms for the Papal Mass on Boston Common. It has instituted a fund to do so.

The Rev. George Blackman, speaking in a radio broadcast from St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, proposed that members of that congregation also send contributions to the archdiocese.

The Council of Churches statement said, we as "members with the Roman Catholic family in the one body of Christ... remember the words of St. Paul, 'if one member is honored, we all rejoice together.'"

They called on all Christians "to transcend our present and past differences on this occasion, and to mark the papal visit as a sign and stimulus for reconciliation, a time to celebrate the unity we have and to pray for the unity we seek."

The churchmen also plan to present the Holy Father with a pectoral cross as a gift from the New England Consultation of Church Leaders.

It is appropriate to remember at this time that most Americans will share in the interest and joy of the visit of the pontiff to our country. Although the action of some miscreants hurts, it is not to be considered the norm.

Thus, we join with the good churchmen of Massachusetts in their call to "rejoice together."

Turnabout

In the interest of journalistic objectivity or balance or just old-fashioned fair play, the local morning newspaper should now interview a normal priest to give its readers an equalizing viewpoint to the one expressed in a recent article.

For those who missed the article, a Philip Nobile questioned an anonymous and admitted homosexual priest who proceeded to give an "educated guess" that 80 per cent of priests are gay.

We feel that figure is either an exaggeration or a lie. Then the interviewer, with no further proof or statistics, accepts this "guess" and asks if Rome is aware of all this. To which the interviewee, without flinching, replies, "Of course."

The subject of homosexuality is delicate and often painful because of the human element. It is worthy of treatment in the press. But we feel it deserves more than 16 inches of space, on a shallow question and answer basis cloaked in anonymity, with a True Confessions headline.

But, as we said, we are sure that the newspaper has already scheduled a balancing article, perhaps an interview with one of the thousands of priests who could speak from an alternate viewpoint. Of course, this will not be quite so sensational and is only necessary now that the newspaper has dropped the first shoe.

And may we suggest to our readers that if you miss the follow-up article, please contact the Rochester morning newspaper to find out when it will appear.

and Opinions

Support Our Priests

Editor:

Across the Rochester Catholic diocese today an appeal for contributions to help sustain our seminarians was sent forth by Bishop Clark. We all know the plight of many parishes who now are sharing a pastor, who no longer can have the luxury of daily Mass in their own parish and the exhaustion of their priests. We are called to support these seminarians by both our prayers and money in order to perpetuate the Good News.

My heart was saddened, however, to find in our local Democrat and Chronicle, Sept. 23, an article by Philip Nobile titled "Homosexual, Catholic and Ordained." Once again our secular society is tempting us not to trust our priests. Why on a day when we are so conscious of our priests and are willing to contribute to their education are we subjected to what might cause doubts in our people?

I plead with you my brothers and sisters to pray for our priests, support them with love, and assist them in whatever manner you can. They have given their lives to God to serve us. How can we be unconcerned about so precious a gift from our Father?

Karen M. DeLorme
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PLO Termed Courageous

Editor:

I wish to commend John S. Walker, executive secretary of the Office of Black Catholics, for his rebuttal letter of your editorial "Savagery." I have been upset and frustrated in recent months by several

your editorials that appear to have pro-Zionist leanings. You presume calling the courageous Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) terrorist, when Menachem Begin of Israel led the attack that "savagely" massacred hundreds of innocent men, women and children of Deir Yassin.

I do not condone violence, being a Christian (Catholic), but please put things in their proper perspective.

Palestine belonged to the Palestinian people just as the United States belongs to us — the American people. To what religious group should our country be given? Please be fair.

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IRA Apologia Horrifying

Editor:

I was horrified and appalled to read John S. Walker's defense of the murder of Lord Louis Mountbatten (Courier-Journal, 9-19). Such a defense of unrestrained and indiscriminate violence would be bad enough in itself, but coming from one who holds an official position in the Church of Rochester, it is scandalous.

Mr. Walker's apologia for the IRA has more in common with the ethics of Marxism-Leninism than with gospel morality. Lenin asserted that the criterion of right and wrong is the degree to which the act assists the revolutionary cause. Mr. Walker asserts that the killings by the IRA are not to be condemned because they advance a just cause. He adds that "most students of history understand that Mountbatten was an imperialist who was central in the denial of full human rights to the Irish people."

As a student and teacher of history I understand no such thing.

Mountbatten's great role in history was to dismantle imperial rule in India, and in such a way to win the hearts of the Indian people. The Earl could be adjudged an imperialist only on the basis of class membership, not on the basis of his own actions.

Mr. Walker implies that given a choice between patriotism and the church, the choice must be patriotism. This is often the case, but it may nonetheless be un-Christian, for Jesus demanded our unconditioned loyalty. Mr. Walker further distorts history when he places the IRA and the PLO in the same category as the Americans of '76. The latter were revolutionaries, to be sure, but they had a civilized sense that some acts — like the deliberate butchery of noncombatants — were not justified by the revolutionary cause.

Finally, the policy of indiscriminate slaughter for purposes of terror is not only immoral, it is ineffective.

Attempts to terrorize a people into surrender only make them more determined to resist. We should have learned that from World War II and Viet Nam. Ulster Protestants and Israelis react to terror by becoming more determined and by resorting to counter-terror. The only result is to escalate the cycle of hatred and suffering. No cause, however just, can be advanced by immoral means.

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SALT II Promoted

Editor:

Suddenly, at a strategic point in time, when our senators are considering ratification of the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty, SALT II, the news tells us that a "belated intelligence discovery" reveals the presence of several thousand Soviet combat troops in Cuba.

The Cuban situation raises some questions for those of us who believe SALT II can set the stage for a slowdown in the arms race and for eventual disarmament.

To offset internal pressures oppressive governments like the USSR's usually foster external tensions. They seldom let anything ease these tensions. SALT II could do this... Could the scheme be to give lip service to SALT II and then, somehow, induce our Senate to reject it? Then to its own people and the rest of the world, the USSR would be the peacemakers and the USA the warmongers. Is this why they let us, at this particular time, intercept the communication that told of the troops in Cuba?

We wonder if the recent Pravda report that the troops had been there a long time is true — or were they moved in at the critical moment?

In 1961, President Eisenhower warned, "We have been compelled to create a permanent arms industry of vast proportions... We must not fail to

comprehend its grave implications... In the councils of government we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex." Despite this warning, the Generals-Admirals-Industrial partnership has gained unwarranted influence. SALT II could lead to drastic reductions in the proportions of the military and the arms industry.

We wonder how much arms industry money goes into the campaign funds of some of our senators?

UPI reports that Sen. Frank Church received an anti-SALT II letter signed by 1,678 retired generals and admirals. We wonder how many of these officers are, in some way, associated with the arms industry or have other axes to grind. We wonder what Admiral Stansfield Turner's CIA plays in all of this. Have you written your senators about your position on SALT II?

Adolphe and
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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 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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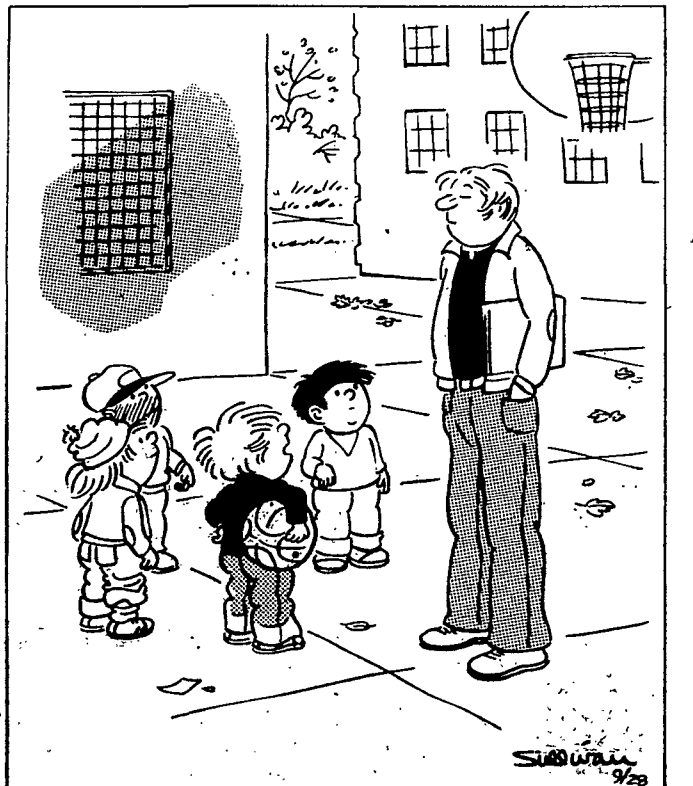
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* OKAY, FATHER, GIVE IT TO US STRAIGHT... TO ANGELS' EAT SPINACH CARROTS AND BROCCOLI.