

Editorials

Mission Sunday: 'We Cannot Stand Idly By'

Now that the Pope has gone home, what will happen?

That is the question that pundits are mulling in the wake of that stupendous tour of our country taken by Pope John Paul II. Probably never before have American Catholics so much to consider about their roles in the Church. And probably never before have we been given the message in such a clear, straightforward manner from any Holy Father.

In an editorial before his arrival we wondered at what the Pope would tell us and we asked then how shall we answer this great man.

Fittingly, we shall be given an immediate opportunity to respond to one of the major messages from John Paul — the need to help the underprivileged of the world. For this weekend marks Mission Sunday.

We can think of no better way to suggest what our course of action be than by quoting the Pope himself as he delivered a straight-from-the-shoulder homily at Yankee Stadium.

Alluding to the story of the rich man and Lazarus the beggar who longed for and was denied the crumbs

from the well-off man's table, Pope John Paul II continued, "And the Scripture tells us that Lazarus found consolation (after death) but the rich man found torment."

"Was the rich man condemned because he had riches," the Pope asked, "because he abounded in earthly possessions, because he dressed in purple and linen and feasted splendidly every day? No, I would say No, I would say that it was not for this reason. The rich man was condemned because he did not pay attention to the other man, because he failed to take notice of Lazarus, the person who sat at his door and who longed to eat the scraps from his table."

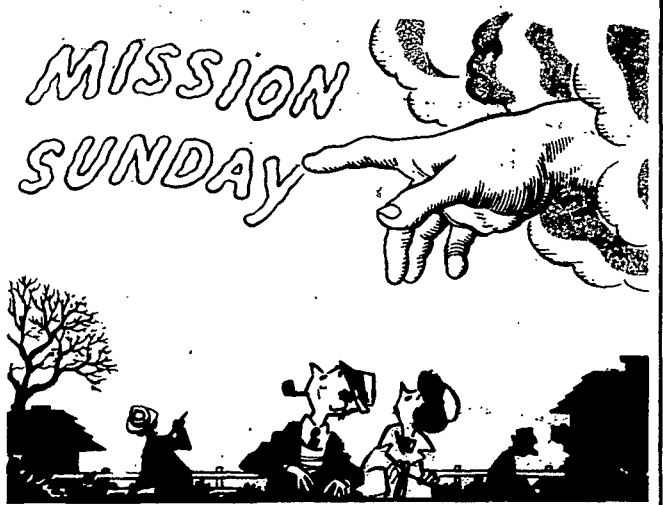
"No where does Christ condemn the mere possession of earthly goods as such. Instead he pronounces very harsh words against those who use their possessions in a selfish way, without paying attention to the needs of others."

Then Pope John Paul II, who knows how to bring home a point as well as or better than anyone in public life, makes his message come alive.

"We cannot stand idly by enjoying our own riches... if in any place, the Lazarus of the twentieth century stands at our doors."

It is interesting and probably not coincidental, that the Pope used the same symbolism of the door that is the theme of this year's Mission Sunday appeal. As Father Joseph Reinhart, diocesan director of the missions, said in a recent interview, "A door takes two-way traffic. It is open for people to come in. But it also opens for us to go out and seek them as the Good Shepherd did."

We do not think that many among us can dispute the Pope's reference to Americans as "the rich man." Consider some of these comparisons:



Remember Mission Sunday Oct. 21st!

In a recent year, Americans spent \$855 million on dishwashers while more than a half-billion people in the world live on \$50 or less a year; Americans spent \$686 on digital watches while more than two billion people lack fresh, pure water; Americans spent \$267 on hair dryers while the number of unemployed in the world is near one billion.

The list could go on but we think the point is clear. We suggest that the entire homily the Pope gave at Yankee Stadium makes timely and edifying reading. It was published in our Oct. 10 issue.

The message could not be misconstrued:

"We cannot stand idly by when thousands of human beings are dying of hunger." That's a direct quote. From John Paul II.

What will be our response?

and Opinions

Don't Close Windows

Editor:

Re Roger Sheehan's letter of Sept. 26: I cannot agree with Father Greeley on many of his views. I stopped reading his column because I found his ideas distasteful. Then I started reading his column again because it did cause me to give thought to the issues involved. That alone is worth a great deal.

Mr. Sheehan makes reference to an "open window" and suggests that we should close that window because "there are entirely too many squirrels and gooney-birds coming in while we sleep." I suggest that the mission of the Catholic Church is to open windows so that the "squirrels and gooney-birds" or more precisely lost souls and fallen

away Catholics may find peace and contentment in Jesus.

I read once that "the Church is a sign of unity in a disunited world." I think that this is only potentially correct. As long as we are united then we can be a sign of unity. We can build unity in our Church through sharing our thoughts and opinions and not be closing windows. If Father Greeley supports radical ideas for change in the Church it does not mean we need to attack him personally to disagree with his ideas.

With our Holy Father just finishing his visit here, there is much potential to bring about needed changes. Perhaps because of John Paul II, some "gooney-birds" and fallen away Catholics might decide to seek the word of God. They might start to seek Jesus. Are they going to continue on that journey when they find out

we are disunited or that we have closed windows?

I suggest that we need to open wide the windows of our hearts so that Jesus may pour His love in. Let that love shine for all to see.

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NFP Seen As Answer

Editor:

All Roman Catholics and anyone else truly concerned about the apparent conflict between responsible parenthood and the restatement of the Church's position on artificial contraception by Pope John Paul II should be aware of the following:

1. There does exist a reliable scientific and safe method of Natural Family Planning. It is not calendar rhythm.

2. This method, taught worldwide, with the support of many knowledgeable physicians, is available to all by writing or calling Natural Family Planning Education of Rochester, 89 Genesee St., Rochester, N.Y., 14611 (716-464-8705).

3. All instructors are experienced users of NFP and hundreds of couples have been instructed in the past year and a half.

4. There are many benefits of NFP, including the absence of side effects, knowledge of self, mutual cooperation of husband and wife, and liberation from dependence on contraceptives.

Instruction is available to all married and engaged couples. In addition, information sessions are scheduled regularly and speakers will be provided on the subject of fertility awareness upon request by high school or college classes or other interested groups.

There is no longer any reason why anyone cannot be responsible concerning fertility and parenthood and also be fully in accord with Church teaching and conscience.

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Where Is Charity?

Editor:

Re Father Cuddy's column of Sept. 26. How ironic that he found fit to open with a quote from 1 Cor. 13 on charity. He then proceeds to lambaste all women who desire a consideration of ordination for women. Though to Father Cuddy they speak with "shrill complaints", these are the same women who have served as the backbone of the Church in the education of our young. They serve as religious educators in schools, CCD and other programs giving guidance to children in the beginning knowledge of the love of Christ.

They long for a dialogue but Father Cuddy can only give a deaf ear since they do not represent "the majority of good Catholic women." Apparently in his opinion being a good Catholic woman consists of being passive, silent and possessing unquestioning loyalty.

He apparently doesn't want to consider the number of women who serve the Church with dynamic thought and action. For though they serve, they dare not desire to discuss the possibility of total commitment to Christ through the Church in the priesthood. Father Cuddy feels their only purpose is to cause a divisiveness within the Church, so we'd be better off without them. What a terrible loss to the Church.

How frustrating is the ambivalent treatment of

women in the Church. A recent example is the visit of Pope John Paul II. No women were allowed to serve as assistants to his holiness. Though any Sunday in the majority of parishes in this country women can be seen serving as lectors and as Eucharistic ministers.

Might I close with another quote from Cor. 13, for it aptly expresses the dilemma posed by Father Cuddy's comments. "If I should speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have charity, I have become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal."

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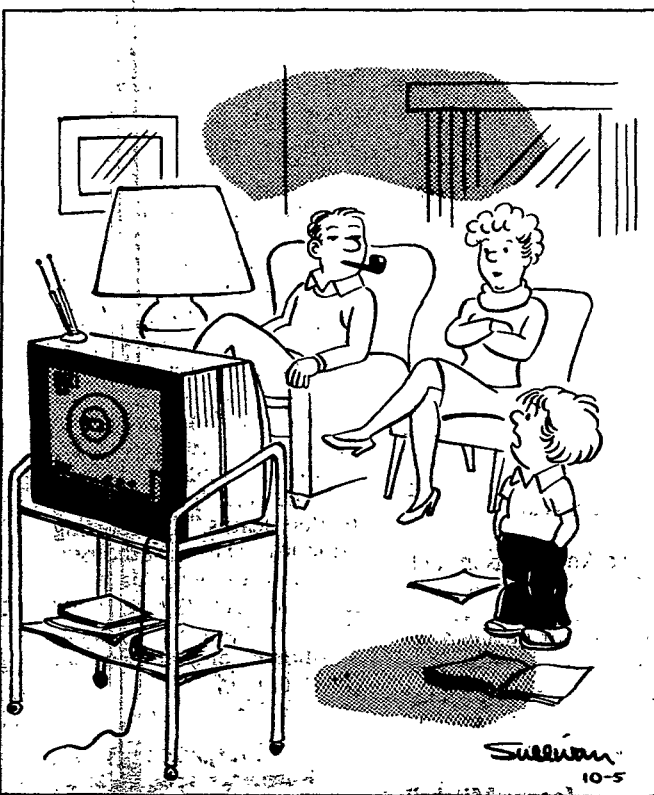
Why She's Now Citizen

Editor:

On Sept. 18, I finally became a citizen of these great United States. It was one of those things that you inescapably keep putting off till tomorrow. And with five young ones at home, it is quite easy to put most anything off till tomorrow. But if it was any one thing (and it was) that prompted me to act when I did, it was the abominable issue of abortion.

The same day I was sworn in as a citizen, I immediately joined the Right to Life Party. This party's primary purpose is to take the power of life and death out of the hands of the creature and restore it to the rightful place in the hands of the Creator. It is to restore those immortal words written in bronze on the front of each judge's bench: "In God We Trust." And it is to restore this nation and its people the respectability it has lost.

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"YOU MEAN NOBODY GAVE THE POPE A BIG MUG?"

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Vol. 98 No. 25 October 17, 1979

Courier-Journal (USPS 135-580)
Published weekly by the Rochester Catholic Press Association. Subscription rates: Single copy 25¢; 1 year subscription in U.S. \$10. Canada and Foreign \$15.00. Offices: Richford Building, 67 Chestnut St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604, (716) 454-7050. Second Class Postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.

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, 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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