

More Opinions

Sarah Child ... Unfair?

Editor:

What does God want in regard to women as priests? Those agreeing with Sister Kane's plea for full ministry for women see those upbraiding her as incompetent, as does Sarah Child in her Courier-Journal column. Those disagreeing saw Sister Kane as tight-lipped, aggressive.

Why are those against women priests placed in but one of two derogatory categories, a la Child? A. Those who think of women in the line of second class citizens/unclean or B. as less efficient - more emotional or worse.

COME NOW, Sara, who writes the kind of columns we enjoy, is this fair? I can see no benefit but only problems for the Church. How would the Church afford quarters for women and men priests, are they intending to marry? Do not the laity have some voice here? Or was the Pope wrong when he said most of the laity are against it. Could any woman saint have been bettered by priesthood, or in what way were they hindered? Sister Teresa of Calcutta is having no problem serving, nor many others. Silly, some of us saw "The Church in Turmoil" on television and had a look at a few of the women already training to be priests and didn't like what we saw, a la Father Cuddy. One woman had five children, there were a few distasteful ones and a lack of respect. While Sarah in her complacency may be saying more power to them, most of us are saying "ugh."

It is disheartening to read in the C-J that so much pain is being suffered by nuns NOW - because of the expectancy of priesthood. It sounds like sudden rebellion, joining the other rebellions of our anti-authority era. If not, all should be seeking God's will here, defying the Pope doesn't seem to be the way.

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Sr. Kane's Greeting

Editor:

On the occasion of Pope John Paul's Oct. 7 visit to the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., Sister Theresa Kane, president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, had the privilege of extending him a welcome on behalf of the women religious gathered there. Her greeting has sparked much controversy among people, including many who themselves did not see the telecast. I enclose the text of Sister Theresa Kane's greeting.

There is a rich diversity within our Church and Christ calls each of us to speak the truth in love and fidelity. Let us dialogue with one another in openness and with reverence, seeking to discover what God chooses to reveal to us through the events of our times.

Sister Kane's greeting: "In the name of the women religious gathered in this Shrine dedicated to Mary, I greet you, Your Holiness Pope John Paul II.

It is an honor, a privilege and an awesome responsibility to express in a few moments the sentiments of women present at this shrine dedicated to Mary the Patroness of the United States and the Mother of all humankind. It is appropriate that a woman's voice be heard in this shrine and I call upon Mary to direct what is in my heart and on my lips during these moments of greeting.

"I welcome you sincerely; I extend greetings of profound respect, esteem and affection from women religious throughout this country. With the sentiments experienced by Elizabeth when visited by Mary, our hearts too leap with joy as we welcome you - you who have been called the Pope of the people. As I welcome you today, I am mindful of the countless number of women religious who have dedicated their lives to the church in this country in the past. The lives of many valiant women who were the catalysts of growth for the United States Church continue to serve as heroines of inspiration to us as we too struggle to be women of courage and hope during these times.

"Women religious in the United States entered into the renewal efforts in an obedient response to the call of Vatican II. We have experienced both joy and suffering in our efforts. As a result of such renewal women religious approach the next decade with a renewed identity and a deep sense of our responsibilities to, with, and in the Church.

"Your Holiness, the women of this country have been inspired by your spirit of courage. We thank you for exemplifying such courage in speaking to us so directly about our responsibilities to the poor and oppressed throughout the world. We who live in the United States, one of the wealthiest nations of the earth, need to become ever more conscious of the suffering that is present among so many of our brothers and sisters, recognizing that systemic injustices are serious moral and social issues that need to be confronted courageously. We pledge ourselves in solidarity with you in your efforts to respond to the cry of the poor.

"As I share this privileged moment with you, Your Holiness, I urge you to be mindful of the intense suffering and pain which is part of the life of so many women in these United States. I call upon you to listen with compassion and to hear the call of women who comprise half of humankind. As women we have heard the powerful messages of our Church addressing the dignity and reverence for all persons. As women we have pondered upon these words. Our contemplation leads us to state that the Church in its struggle to be faithful to its call for reverence and dignity for all persons must respond by providing the possibility of women as persons being included in all ministries of our Church. I urge you, Your Holiness, to be open to and respond to the voices coming from the women of this country who are desirous of serving in and through the Church as fully participating members. Finally, I assure you,

Pope John Paul, of the prayers, support and fidelity of the women religious in this country as you continue to challenge us to be women of holiness for the sake of the Kingdom. With these few words from the joyous, hope-filled prayer, the Magnificat, we call upon Mary to be your continued source of inspiration, courage and hope: "May your whole being proclaim and magnify the Lord; may your spirit always rejoice in God your Saviour; the Lord who is mighty has done great things for you; Holy is God's Name."

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Pope Quoted On Dress

Editor:

From L'Osservatore Romano, Oct. 15:

To the vast gathering of priests, religious men and women, missionaries and seminarians in St. Patrick's College in Maynooth, the Holy Father delivered the following:

"It is not what you do that matters most, but what you are, as women consecrated to God: For you, Christ has consecrated Himself, so that you too may be consecrated in truth."

"To you and to priests, diocesan and religious, I say: Rejoice to be witness to Christ in the modern world. Do not hesitate to be recognizable, identifiable, in the streets as men and women who have consecrated their lives to God and who have given up everything worldly to follow Christ. Believe that contemporary men and women set value on the visible signs of the consecration of your lives. People need signs and reminders of God in the modern secular city, which has few reminders of God

left. Do not help the trend toward 'taking God off the streets' by adopting secular modes of dress and behavior yourselves!"

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Commends Columns

Editor:

The October columns on liturgy have provided guidelines permeated with the spirit of Vatican Council with a priority given to reverent worship of God by all of us in community singing.

Father Kennedy's column on music for Communion particularly struck home for me. Congregational participation is seldom provided in the continuous solo performance approach. Although a loyal devotee of the Scriptural Mary, I cringe when Jesus is not the subject of a Communion hymn. His Mother would say: "Do

whatever He tells you" (John 2: 5). Communion time belongs to Him, not Mary. Father Kennedy speaks up for the congregational singing with specific suggestions. He reminds us the song of silence is a meditation song in a heart full of thanksgiving, praise and worship.

I admire a local pastor, Father Smith, who is a man of love and joy and shares his gifts of music in love with his people.

The Thanksgiving and Christmas Courier-Journal liturgy columns should be reviewed by every parish Liturgy Committee regardless of what is already planned. The Holy Spirit's gentle wings of reverent worship are courageously expressed in wisdom and counsel in all the October columns in a unique, creative way. Thanks to each individual author.

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