

## Editorials

### Impossible?

Elsewhere in this edition is an account of the foolishness of those who attempt to predict future events. We do not intend to duplicate such inanity but we will venture to guess what kind of world we could have if we, all the citizens of the world, literally performed as we know we should.

The super powers, the United States, Russia and China, will put aside their unjust arms buildups and re-channel that tremendous amount of effort and expertise into forming a common front to find a cure for cancer. The effort will be supported monetarily by the oil-rich nations.

The have nations will announce that a healthy share of the hundreds of billions of dollars spent on arms and luxuries will instead go to helping the have-nots develop industry and agriculture under the auspices of a more highly-regarded United Nations, with no political strings.

Ayatollah Khomeini and Shah Pahlevi will join to admit past wrongs, and copying a page from Mother Teresa, will cooperate in helping the poor in their area of the world.

Israel, Egypt and other Mideastern nations will sit down together to re-shape boundaries and attitudes so that all involved, including Palestinian refugees, will finally have a peaceful place to call home.

Both sides in Northern Ireland will bow to Christian priorities, erase personal prejudices and bring peace to their beautiful island.

Likewise, both extremes in Latin America will disown their struggles for power and recognize their responsibilities to the poor, hungry and diseased masses.

We have stuck to the political realm and we are sure readers could provide other situations which would be remedied if human beings were to follow their consciences and hearts.

Impossible dreams? Apparently so. But why?

## Richard Rodgers

Commenting on the life of Richard Rodgers, who died recently, one writer said that his music has infiltrated the sub-conscious of just about every single American.

He was writing not only about those who have attended his musical shows, movies, or who have heard his songs on television, radio or recordings, but also all of those who have heard Rodgers music piped into offices, shopping malls, and other public places.

If that is so, then we are all the better because of Mr. Rodgers. What beautiful balm our psyche must enjoy from the soothing strains of "Oh, What a Beautiful Morning," "You'll Never Walk Alone," "Mountain Greenery," "Some Enchanted Evening."

How could we ever measure the debt we owe to such civilized and talented artists who not only possess genius but who have managed to share it with all of us.

Thank you, Richard Rodgers.

## and Opinions

### Canonization Due Kung

Editor:

Our American tradition holds that the accused has a right to defend himself. This is especially so if the accuser has great power, wealth or titles. We do not assume a person to be guilty simply because he is accused by a president, an emperor or by the Pope. We like to hear what the accused has to say for himself before rendering a verdict. Moreover, we assume the accused to be innocent until proven guilty. We consider this to be a basic human right.

In regard to Father Kung, the Courier-Journal has shown only one side of the story, the side of the accuser. You printed 1500 words of accusation and allowed Father Kung to defend himself with only 21 words. The Courier-Journal is a catholic newspaper, and, as a Christian newspaper, should therefore have a deeper concern for truth, honesty, fairness and human rights than a secular paper. Yet The New York Times printed Father Kung's side of the story right next to the text of the Vatican declaration on Dec. 19. I wish our own Rochester Catholic paper would not only equal the Times in matters of plain human decency but, if anything, surpass it.

I myself have read Father Kung's monumental book, "On Being a Christian," which I purchased at Trant's. Even if his views should be presently opposed by some high ranking members of the hierarchy, I am convinced that in due time the Church will canonize him. Prophets were killed by hierarchies, so was St. Joan of Arc, so was Giordano Bruno for maintaining that the Earth revolved around the Sun, and, finally, so was Jesus because he was God. Nevertheless we should always honor and respect our leaders, especially those of our Church. But we should also honor and respect truth, justice, decency, mercy and love. We should also honor and respect our Lord Jesus Christ and the little voice of

conscience which He has placed into our hearts.

I myself will do anything and everything I can to allow Father Kung to teach and preach the Good News of Jesus Christ. Here is a great saint of our times, loved and held in highest esteem by those who know him, and especially by our late Pope John Paul I. Here is a man who has spent his life helping Catholics to practice the Gospel, to help them see that faith is more than rituals and repeating phrases, that faith means daily picking up our cross and following our Lord Jesus, step by blessed step. Here is a priest who spent a lifetime pleading with Catholics, with all Christians, and with all men that Jesus is the only way to our Father, and that we should stop wasting our lives for a few pieces of silver.

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(Editor's Note: According to the Catholic Encyclopedia (1913), "Bruno was not condemned for his defence of the Copernican system of astronomy, nor for his doctrine of the plurality of inhabited worlds, but for his theological errors, among which were the following: that Christ was not God but merely an unusually skillful magician; that the Holy Ghost is the soul of the world, that the Devil will be saved, etc.")

### Kung Defense Not Justified

Editor:

In his recent letter, Msgr. William H. Shannon stated that it is a pity that the Church refuses to listen to the fruits of the reflection of the theologian Edward Schillebeeckx. The monsignor was referring to what he called the "trial" of Father Schillebeeckx in Rome. Rather than calling the meeting a trial, it would be more honest to call it a "series of talks," as the Vatican did.

The Vatican felt a need to question this learned scholar on his views on whether or

not Christ personally gave orders to found the Church, and whether Christ actually rose from the dead. If these are the views and teachings of Father Schillebeeckx, they are obviously at odds with the Church's teachings.

Msgr. Shannon stated that the one bright spot in the picture is the courageous defense of Father Schillebeeckx by a high-placed churchman, Cardinal Jan Willebrands, primate of Holland and chancellor of the University where Father Schillebeeckx is professor. Perhaps the defense by Cardinal Willebrands of his professor is reflected in a recent poll in The Netherlands which shows that only 47 percent of Catholics there think Christ is the Son of God.

At the conclusion of his letter, Msgr. Shannon quotes a statement made by Roman Catholic theologian Father Hans Kung. This is the same Father Hans Kung who was censured because he has publicly questioned or denied outright the belief that Christ is eternally "one in substance" with God the Father, the belief that the Church is based on apostolic succession, and the sacrificial nature of the Mass. To paraphrase Father Kung, it is teachings like Father Kung and Father Schillebeeckx that contribute towards making the Church less believable in the

eyes of the world and of men in general.

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### Pattern Emerging?

Editor:

Since the visit of Pope John Paul II, Father William Callahan, SJ, has been ordered by his superiors to stop advocating the ordination of women and to leave his activist community near Washington, D.C. For Father Callahan this means an end to his ministry of justice with Priests for Equality and the Quixote center. In a recent release from Quixote Center, Father Callahan shares his dilemma with us: to comply with those directives and thus proclaim his unwillingness to suffer for his own beliefs, or to resist and thus to lose the Jesuit priestly ministry which he deeply loves, and to reject the Jesuit obedience which he accepts and respects.

This brings to mind the plight of another Jesuit, Father John McNeill, who slightly over two years ago was ordered not to speak publicly about homosexual-

ity or sexual ethics. Father McNeill, at that time, issued a statement which concluded, "I would like my silence in some way to symbolize the defenseless silence through the centuries, and even today, of hundreds of thousands of gay Catholics. I am absolutely confident that this represents only a temporary setback in the cause of justice for gay Catholics."

One begins to wonder how temporary setbacks in the cause of justice for all will be, and to hope that the current investigations into the works of Schillebeeckx and others are more geared to clarifying concepts, rather than to squelching ideas and curbing ministries.

Many believe that the basic issue is fundamental rights in our Church: the right to open and robust debate, responsible dissent and the right to due process of law in a system where judge, prosecutor and jury are not one and the same.

While Father Callahan has declined to make any further comments about it, an official of the Quixote Center called the Jesuit action "a pattern of harassment to get priests out of it, to allow the women's issue to be suppressed and marginalized."

We can only hope (though

it appears dimly) that, evidence to the contrary, such action is not becoming a pattern, and that the Church will take seriously its own 1971 Bishops' Synod insight that the credibility of its teaching on justice depends on its vigor in acting justly in the life of the Church community.

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### Finds Report Interesting

Editor:

I was interested to read about the Mindszenty Report in the Dec. 26 issue of the Courier-Journal. I was curious to know what other magazines were studied, and the results. I hope this information will make all of us think more carefully about what magazines we read and bring into our homes, and also what we are supporting when we buy these magazines.

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### More Letters On Page 5

### 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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I THINK HE'S NEW AT IT, AND I'D LIKE TO TALK TO HIM AFTER YOU MAKE THE ARREST!