

Editorials

The Mission: Hope

Our missions in Latin America have always received warm and generous diocesan support. This year there may be even more reason to let them know that although they are out of our sight, they are indeed not out of our hearts and minds.

Two assassinations unfortunately have served to focus added attention on all missionaries serving in Latin America. Both Archbishop Romero of San Salvador and Father Luis Espinal of LaPaz were murdered because of their service to the poor — the essence of Christianity.

Archbishop Romero had been an international figure and his slaying drew the attention of world leaders. Father Espinal, on the other hand, was not

that widely known and, like many others of his station who have suffered the same fate, stands the chance of having died in vain as far as this world goes — unless we and thousands of others across well-off nations such as our own remember him in our prayers and with material help to those pursuing his work.

Of course, we of the Rochester diocese have extra cause to remember Father Espinal — he worked shoulder to shoulder and soul to soul with our own Padres de Rochester who established the parish of San Jose Obrero in LaPaz.

We all should never forget that our diocesans on the job in Brazil and Chile and our brothers and sisters who have assumed local direction of San Jose Obrero all run the danger of Father Espinal's fate.

They have literally offered their lives to helping the poor and to establishing Christianity in our world.

Many may still have difficulty responding to the

needs of the poor in Latin America because they seem so remote. The murder of Father Espinal should teach us that they are as close as our own diocesan missionaries on Christian call there.

Naturally they need our prayers, moral support and remembrances first. But they also need the tools to do an effective job. The Mission Sunday collection gives us all the opportunity to join in the blessed effort.

Father Joseph F. Reinhart, diocesan missions director, explains, "What we do is the work of the Church which is the work of Christ."

"Maybe we can sum it all up in these words written about Archbishop Romero of San Salvador: 'I like to be called a man of hope. I believe this is my mission. I have tried to sow hope, to maintain hope, among the people.'

"There is a liberating Christ which has strength to save us. I try to give my people this hope."

and Opinions

Sacramental Guidelines Advice

Editor:

It is with great interest that we have been listening to priests, religious education staff members, and parishioners, evaluate the present Sacramental Guidelines of the Diocese of Rochester.

Much time and effort is being spent obtaining opinions and data as to how and when the sacraments are presented in the parishes of our diocese.

It is our hope that those in charge of the sacramental programs realize that our diocesan guidelines should be in accord with those of the National Catechetical Directory for the Catholics of the United States, and references to "Sharing the Light of Faith," which received approval from the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy in 1978, should be included in our new Diocesan guidelines.

Robert Baumann, St. James Parish Education Committee Chairman, Sister Mary Dominic, St. James School Principal

Editor's Note: The letter also was signed by Mrs. Robert Bauman, Mr. and Mrs. Jack DiPolito, Mrs. Bodo Kretschman, Mrs. Ralph Miller, Mrs. William Rife, Mrs. Walter Smith, Mrs. Daniel Walsh and Mrs. Michael Williams.

Let's Follow Guidelines

Editor:

It was a pleasure to attend the sacramental guidelines evening at Annunciation and listen to sincere, dedicated laypeople express their views concerning preparation for the sacraments. Particularly noteworthy was their awareness of the value of training and example found within the home and their sympathy for the special problems of single parent families. Most inspiring was their evident willingness to share and to learn.

The team conducting the meeting welcomed us warmly and made us feel comfortable. A problem did arise, however, in that the religious and the other members of the team spoke as if there did not exist Vatican guidelines. They did not seem to remember that our Holy Father had urged our New York State bishops to be in compliance with the guidelines. In 1977, Pope Paul VI pleaded for the practice of first confession before first communion. He repeated his request in 1978: "The faithful would be rightly shocked that obvious abuses are tolerated."

Individual confession was presented in a very negative fashion. Yet Pope Paul VI, in his talk to our bishops, repeated the words of Pius XII: "Not without the inspiration of the Holy Spirit was this practice introduced into the church." Just a month ago, Pope John Paul II wrote in his Holy Thursday

talk: "... necessary to continue to actuate a new and intense education, in order to discover all the richness contained in the new liturgy."

It was apparent at the meeting that this education will have to start with those responsible for training workshops. Unless leaders really believe in the teaching authority of our Holy Father, the laypeople will be deprived of the richness of their faith.

Joan M. Rand, 68 Sansharon Drive, Rochester, N.Y. 14617

Could Kodak Be Right?

Editor:

Re: Kodak to Face South African proposal again — page 2, Catholic Courier-Journal, Feb. 27.

Who is this Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility that presumes to represent me and 99 per cent of others who don't know of the existence of the pseudo-entity? And what does it know of South Africa, a sovereign nation, which they are trying to crucify with their sanctimoniousness? The same syndrome engendered the Gogtha tragedy. Did it ever occur to these people that

South Africa and Kodak are right? I think so!

But as long as they are in the lynching mood, I suggest that they forget the corruption and immorality in their drunken spendthriftness of their elected and unelected officials, our selling our country to our enemies, the killings, the rapes, the drugs and the drunks, the ills of society. Go on — rave! Your heart is in South Africa!

I will say a prayer for you, because I feel sure that you don't know its history or are prone to read spurious history or distort it. You don't seem to have learned even the last lesson: the tragedy of Iran, where 50 of our people must submit to the stupidity of the so-called students for such interference going under the misnomer of "human relations."

Again, who is this Interfaith thing whose tears are raising the Chemung River to flood level?

Michael M. Miller, 67 Gorton St., Corning, N.Y. 14830

Non-Violent Activism

Editor:

God, through Moses, told us, "Thou shalt not steal." We



May Is Mary's Month

A detail from The Annunciation by Stephan Lochner in the Cologne Cathedral.

understand the law to be a general condemnation of all theft, so we do not cry out to God, "Why didn't you say, 'Don't steal Mr. Smith's wallet, or Mrs. Jones' purse?'" We are expected to apply the general law to specific cases ourselves.

It is said that the peace groups have said nothing about Afghanistan, Cambodia and the many other atrocities in the news. They have, some specifically, others, generally, as they have done for years, even centuries. They cry out against all unjust wars, all aggression, all crime against man. Once again, we are expected to apply the general to the specific.

Mr. Bart (April 16) said that he doubts that just war is possible today. He is correct. But while my position is not a popular one, it is not exceptional. In the Democrat and Chronicle (April 12), there was an article stating that a number of Catholics and theologians believe that just war is no longer possible. During Vatican II one of the major debates was whether to condemn the use of nuclear weapons (which they did) or to ban war outright. As far back as 1948, before we even developed the hydrogen bomb, Cardinal Ottaviani of the Vatican said that just war was no longer possible.

I do not, however, advocate that we sit back and do nothing about Afghanistan, et al. We frequently confuse pacifism — eschewing violent action — with passivity — doing nothing. We, as Catholics, can be pacifists, but not passive. To avoid confusion, perhaps we should call Christian pacifism non-violent activism.

During World War II, the occupied countries of Europe tended to be passive while the Nazis exterminated 6 million Jews — but not one Danish Jew was killed. The Danish adopted non-violent activism when the Nazis rounded up the Jews; the entire nation went on strike. Shipyards closed. Trains ceased running. Stores were shut. The Germans gave in and spared the Jews.

We are called to follow the Danish people's courageous example, to resist, but non-violently. In response to Afghanistan, I agree with the Olympic boycott, the refusal of one scientist to take part in cultural exchange programs, economic sanctions, etc.

We cannot sit back passively, but even more, we cannot risk a senseless war.

Lee Strong, 242 Meigs St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607

DeSales Seniors Are Praised

Editor:

I am writing to express publicly my gratitude to nine DeSales High School seniors for witnessing their faith in the Lord Jesus both by word and action on a retreat day for our eighth grade Confirmation class. There is no way to measure the impact of their caring attentiveness, their leadership in small group activities and their willingness to speak before the large group of 80 people about the Good News of our Catholic faith.

I felt deeply privileged to see their donation of themselves for the benefit of the eighth (and some ninth) graders and to hear from them that they would feel honored to come back and celebrate with us the joy of Confirmation on May 20.

My thanks, then, go to Tony Cannuli, Patty Dendis, Tim Driscoll, Fausto Gentile, Debbie Hickey, Carla Stajura, Chris Weber, Alison Venuti and Rose Ann Consolic. I praise God for them and for all he will continue to do through them and through all young people who lovingly follow Christ.

Sister Chris Lloyd, Youth Minister, St. Patrick's Church, 93 W. Bayard St., Seneca Falls, N.Y. 13148.

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.



"PLEASE HURRY BEFORE HIS MOTHER GETS HERE."

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