

Editorials

Fitting

Fitting indeed it is that Bishop Matthew H. Clark has chosen the weekend of July 4 for the collection to help the Haitian and Cuban refugees who have declared their independence from despotic governments in their homelands.

Much as our own forefathers, they have risked their all to seek to breathe free air. It is at once an insult to Duvalier and Castro and a compliment to the United States of America, still the land of the free to oppressed peoples around the world.

We know that another collection is difficult. We will not try to avoid the fact that there may be some uneasy feeling about bringing more jobless people into our midst.

We know that many of our own are hurting financially right now.

We know that Fidel Castro has done a masterful job of characterizing those who have turned their backs on his Communist rule as "criminals."

But we must remind all that the weekend collection goal is a modest one — \$35,000, about 35 cents per family in the diocese. Think of what a mere \$1 per family could do!

The community at large will be asked to supplement this Catholic contribution with an additional \$15,000. In addition, community leaders, including Mayor Thomas Ryan and others from industry and business, will help in job development and placement, in finding sponsors, resettlement. It is a big job but there are many hands.

As for Castro's smear campaign, the U.S. Catholic Conference Migration and Refugee Services reports: "A very small percentage (about 1 percent) were prisoners in Cuba. However, many of these were political prisoners, priests and other religious, and others persecuted for their beliefs. Those refugees identified as true criminals will be detained and processed appropriately. But accounts of the number of prisoners within the ranks of the refugees have been greatly exaggerated by the media."

A plus factor in the problem of resettlement is the great expertise of the Catholic Family Center. It has been performing such service since just after it helped the refugees then called DPs (displaced persons). It has helped the Hungarians fleeing Soviet tanks, Indo-Chinese, and "even some (Ugandans,") victimized by Idi Amin, according to James Maloney, CFC director.

But more than purely economic factors are involved. Although Cubans consist of both blacks and whites, all the Haitians are black. Thus we must face the painful fact that bigotry will play a role in their fate. As Catholics, dioceses must lend their full support — moral, spiritual and material — to see that such prejudice is overcome.

It would be platitudinous to recount the humanitarian considerations involved. As a matter of fact, it may be unnecessary because Americans in general and Rochester diocesans in particular have always responded generously to the needy and the oppressed.

Still, the Word of God is edifying.

Exodus: "Do not mistreat or oppress a foreigner . . ."

Deuteronomy: ". . . He (the Lord) loves the foreigners who live with our people and gives them food and clothes."

Isaiah: "Remove the chains of oppression and the yoke of injustice and let the oppressed go free. Share your food with the hungry and open your homes to the homeless poor. Give clothes to those who have nothing to wear . . . if you give food to the hungry and satisfy those who are in need, then the darkness around you will turn to the brightness of noon."

Yes, it is written that those who follow those commands will enjoy the Lord's blessings. That has been the history of this land in the past. May we continue to merit the same.

July 4, 1980. A new opportunity to rekindle the fire of freedom, of independence from oppression. A chance to recharge, rebuild. To enlarge the family. What a blessed opportunity! We must not, not let it pass.

and Opinions

Give Pope Fair Chance

Editor:

In regard to Rich Agnello's letter (6/18/80):

He said, "His Holiness should be reminded, however, that undoing 18 years of Vatican II could alienate still another Church constituency — the 18-to-30-year-olds. Fifteen to 25 years of John Paul II could sow such seeds."

Where are the 18-to-30-year-olds now? We have empty pews and very few confessions now. If we don't have Pope John Paul II for the next 15 to 25 years we won't only have empty pews and no confessions we just won't have a Roman Catholic Church. So if you don't want to obey the Pope, then form a church of your own and leave us poor orthodox Catholics alone.

I am beginning to think that we have been taking a heck of a fooling for the past 1,200 years. I remember the Roman Catholic Church has four marks: it is one, it is holy, it is catholic and it is apostolic.

I would like to say a few words about why it is one. It is one because all members profess the same Faith, receive the same sacraments of God and the Church, receive the same sacraments and, last but not least by any means, obey the same supreme head, the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, the successor of St. Peter and the visible head of the Church.

Christ is the invisible head of the Church, so that makes our Holy Father Christ's representative here on earth, because he is the successor of St. Peter. He has the authority which Our Lord conferred on the Prince of the Apostles, St. Peter.

Now who are we to question our Holy Father, John Paul II? We have been doing our own thing for the

past 18 years. With what success? Let's give the Pope a fair chance. What have we got to lose?

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Columnist Criticized

Editor:

The Rev. Louis Hohman offered S.M. and C-J readers fruitless counsel and despair. He is out of tune with the Church on Baptism of infants (Open Window, 6-11).

S.M. and other parents, who are sick to their stomach with apprehension about the loss of the souls of their children who've lost their Catholic Faith, are not comforted by Father Hohman's advice. "The problem you have is a rather frequent one in this day and age," "for which there is no solution" increases their burden by suppressing hope and confidence in Our Lord.

Can parents who believe that Jesus speaks through His Church Magisterium be convinced that their children who reject the truth of His teachings are not necessarily moving away from Him and on the road to loss of their souls? While such divisive counsel is not compatible with the nature of Catholic Faith, it is a basis for establishing another non-Catholic religion.

Father Hohman incorrectly states, "There is not the same kind of urgency to have the child baptized." The 1980 Catholic Almanac reads, "Infants should be solemnly baptized as soon after birth as conveniently possible. In danger of death, anyone may baptize an infant." The Catholic Catechism by John S. Hardon, SJ, (1975) and The Teaching of Christ by Ronald Lawler, OFM, (1975) also affirm that post-Vatican II Church teachings on the

Baptism of Infants are substantially intact as they were "from earliest times." "The Church insists that . . . infants are baptized promptly."

The most obvious solution to the "frequent problem" is the conspicuous need of humble service to Our Lord by the bishops, priests and religious: Their rejections of the Magisterium and failure to present Church teachings has destroyed their credibility in having the truth which Our Lord offers us.

Our Lord's counsel to us is, "Come to me all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me for I am meek and humble of heart." The Sacred Heart of Our Lord bears the burden of pain which parents like S.M. bear.

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Editor:

Last year when our Holy Father spoke to the bishops of the U.S. in Chicago, he told them that the faithful have the right to have the Faith proclaimed to them in its pure and undiluted form.

Unfortunately, distortions have arisen in the "Open Window." Father Hohman writes that "there is not the same kind of urgency to have the child baptized as there was just some years ago." He then continues with the denial of Limbo (which St. Thomas Aquinas proved rather convincingly) and something or other about waiting until the child gets older and can make a commitment. I hope Father Hohman understands that I find it terribly difficult to understand what he expects his readers to understand. Mountains and mountains of thinking and doctrines and saints and Doctors and Fathers of the Church and Popes and councils since the time of Our Blessed Lord have urged the necessity of infant Baptism, and now it was all for nothing. Blood has flowed over the issue from the time of the pagans to Pelagianism to

Protestantism, and now we, in the great enlightenment of the 20th Century, see it all as "superstitious."

What is the authority or reason for such an astounding and earth-shaking statement? I can fill the Courier-Journal from front to back with written documentation supporting infant baptism. Can I not, as an avid reader of the "Open Window," expect something other than mere assertion against so great and gargantuan testimony? If I asserted that the part was greater than the whole, the onus of proof would surely rest on my shoulders. Father Hohman denies not the preposterous assertion, but the onus of proof. Modernists have no trouble with reason; it is one of the obvious essentials they have learned to live without. One other essential not adverted to appears to be the concern for the rights of others to hear the truth.

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Fatima Tapes For Parishes

Editor:

Interest has been focused on communication through the electronic media. There is available seven hours (14 half-hours) of videotaped documentary type discussions on the Fatima apparitions, their message, and continuing events since 1917 in regard to the Fatima message.

These videotapes are available free to parishes for their viewing. Call Mary Kelly at 586-1664.

As the Fatima apparitions have been approved by the Church it would seem we should try to make known the message given through them. Pope John Paul I has said the time for doubting the message is past.

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"TELL FATHER WILKINS I'D LIKE TO SEE HIM."

A Good Spirit of Worship

Editor:

I would like to reply to the letter of Sharon Crist (6/18/80) who claims that the recent Vatican statement on the liturgy "stresses separation of laity," and "reduces them to participation in silence." I do not believe that a careful reading of either the letter of John Paul II (2/2/80) or the Statement on the Eucharist (4/3/80) should give this impression, and Ms. Crist should rest assured that we certainly are not returning to a time when the "faithful are a passive audience."

A good spirit of worship is generally achieved when everyone fulfills his/her own role in the liturgy. While everyone cannot be celebrant or server, or lector or cantor, or a member of the choir at any given liturgy, there is certainly ample opportunity for the active participation of the people.

The recent Vatican statement has not altered any of this, and it is hardly accurate or fair to suggest that the people have been reduced to participation in silence.

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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.