

Editorials

Refugees

The parish collection for the Cuban-Haitian refugees has gone over the top, thanks to generous diocesans who again and again come to the aid of those in need.

All the parishes who participated also deserve a word of thanks for raising some \$40,000 to help the refugees. But the job has only just begun. Individuals can send assistance to the fund office at 123 East Ave., Rochester, 14604.

The long, arduous work of placing refugees in our diocese, under the aegis of Catholic Charities, is also just beginning. Sponsors will be needed. Individuals or parishes interested should contact Charities.

Much has been written about the refugees — most of it salutary; some of it misguided. For instance, many have fallen into the propagandistic hands of Fidel Castro, who, embarrassed by the defection of thousands from Cuba, tried to smear the refugees as criminals. His ploy worked in some quarters.

But the U.S. Catholic Conference Migration and Refugee Services puts the lie to such claims. Cuban refugees being resettled in the U.S. are not criminals but "survivors," says John E. McCarthy, migration and refugee services director.

Noting that much has been made about "the criminal records of the refugees," McCarthy says that "perhaps one percent have any real criminal activity in their records." He wrote the nation's bishops that some were so desperate to leave Cuba that they signed statements "confessing" that they had been prisoners.

Others, McCarthy said, had been in jail "for political or religious convictions." He also denied reports that large numbers of the refugees are homosexuals.

While the Cuban refugees labor under such smears, the Haitians have an even more difficult problem — they all are black. And, like it or not, it must be admitted that black people are still subject to bias on the part of many in the white community, including, unkindest cut of all, Catholics.

So, not only financial support is necessary. Living space is needed. So are muscles, minds and hearts. Offer them in the name of Christ.

Oldtimers Reunion

Tommy Holmes. The name may not mean much to any but diehard baseball fans. But for them it prods the memory to recalling the 1940s.

The Boston Braves, Spahn and Sain and pray for rain. Tommy Holmes who led the league in homers in 1945 — that great getting out year for many of the game's superstars who served in the big war. Tommy Holmes who set the league consecutive game hitting streak until a modern-day star named Pete Rose broke it.

And Tommy Holmes is just one of about a half-hundred sports celebrities who will be at the Oldtimers Reunion, Saturday, Sept. 13 at the Mapledale Party House.

John W. Molinari and John "Doc" Herring head a committee that has arranged for the most stunning list of sports celebrities to gather under one roof perhaps anywhere.

The Oldtimers are not only doing the community a major league service but also are fashioning a strong message to all — senior citizens are as capable, perhaps in many ways more capable, as any age group in our nation.

Congratulations to all concerned.

and Opinions

What About Soviet Nukes?

Editor:

Mark Carver in his letter of 7-30 criticized both nuclear weapons and nuclear technology.

However, I would remind Mr. Carver that without nuclear weapons and nuclear technology the United States would have no defense against Soviet imperialism.

Notice that Mr. Carver's criticism of nuclear weapons and technology is limited to the United States. No mention at all of the increasing number of Soviet nuclear weapons or the almost 20 per cent increase of nuclear energy in other countries outside the U.S.

I'm quite sure the Soviet Union would be overjoyed if we scrapped all of our nuclear weapons. There would then be no obstacle for them in their drive for world conquest.

Americans who are concerned about freedom should be wary of peace groups that advocate unilateral disarmament and oppose registration for the draft.

It should be remembered that anti-war radicals like the Berrigan brothers were responsible for the loss of Indochina to the Communists.

The result of that loss was the murder of some 4 million Cambodians and the exodus of thousands of "boat people."

The 4 million Cambodians, by the way, were killed without nuclear weapons.

Ironically, the "peace groups" were virtually silent about that bloodbath; just as they are silent today about events in Afghanistan.

The genocide in Cambodia and other countries where the Communists have taken over clearly indicate what our fate would be if we allowed ourselves to be conquered by the Soviet Union.

So let's not kid ourselves. We need both nuclear weapons and nuclear technology to avoid Soviet annexation.

The peace groups that continue to protest U.S. power, nuclear or otherwise, are not being realistic.

Robert Bart
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Amused Or Disgusted

Editor:

I don't know whether to be amused or disgusted by the 1984 doublethink exhibited in the Courier-Journal of July 30.

"Officials of the Diocese of Kansas City/St. Joseph are dismayed to learn that a church recently sold will be used by followers of rebel Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre"

The article goes on to say that the church was willingly sold to the "Crusaders Church Corporation," headed by a "Bishop Arveus Penn."

The diocese was perfectly happy to sell a Catholic Church for use by an inner city Protestant group of unknown theology, but is dismayed that it in fact sold the church to a group of traditionalist Catholics whose dispute with the official church is one of discipline.

We are told that the post conciliar church is a church of spiritual freedom and that the liturgy created during the reign of Paul VI is a manifestation of this freedom. This post conciliar church is so free that the traditional organic Roman Rite codified by Pius V was forbidden except to older and infirm priests who could only offer it in private. For the laity, who loved this Roman Rite, it was totally forbidden.

The new rite has had time to garner an entire generation who know no other, and there are apparently many older Christians who say that they prefer it. Isn't it time for the church administrators to put aside administrative convenience in favor of charity? If the spirit of Vatican II is spiritual freedom, then surely the rights of older Catholics who would prefer to return to the celebration of the older Roman Rite should be respected.

It is the gravest form of injustice that these people are often forced to choose between what to them is a serious spiritual need and obedience to an administrative church rule. In the name of charity, it's time for the ban to be lifted; it's time for spiritual freedom to be a reality.

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of Vatican II states, "The use of the Latin language is to be preserved in the Latin Rite." This ruling of the Council is finally being obeyed in a few churches which offer an occasional Mass of the new rite in Latin.

The added directive, that Gregorian Chant "be given pride of place in liturgical services," could be implemented more completely by lifting the ban on the older rite.

In any event, it is clear that the people of God should not have to choose between administrative law and spiritual need. The ban must be lifted.

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Original Child

Editor:

1. In the year 1945 an Original Child was born. The name was given to it by the Japanese people, who recognized that it was the first of its kind.

41. Since that summer many other bombs have been "found." What is going to happen? At the time of writing, after a season of brisk speculation, men seem fatigued by the whole question.

These paragraphs are the first and last of "Original Child Bomb." Thomas Merton's version of how the Bomb came to be dropped on Hiroshima. In this piece, he drew a parallel between the coming of Christ and the coming of the bomb. Merton's story compels Christians to try and "give reason for their faith" in the "original child" they claim as the Messiah. Today, 35 years after Hiroshima's Original Child, the continuing failure of Christians to imitate Jesus' spirit of redemption and our confusion between faith and nationalism have effectively maintained the Lordship of the Bomb rather than Bethlehem's Child. The coincidence of Hiroshima and the Feast of the Transfiguration should be a clear warning about the idolatry involved. Perhaps a reading of "Original Child Bomb" or of Pope Paul's (who died on Hiroshima Day 1978) statement on the arms race would make an appropriate homily during the first weeks of August.

Following are quotes which apply to our situation:

"The American vanity as a nation has, since the origins of America, been Babylonian-boasting, through presidents, often through pharisees within the churches, through folk religion, and in other ways, that America is Jerusalem. This is neither an innocuous nor benign claim; it is the essence of the doctrine of the anti-Christ." — William Stringfellow.

"All our talk about peace and the weapons of the spirit are meaningless unless we try in every way to embrace voluntary poverty and not work in any position, any job, that contributes to war, not to take any job whose pay comes from the fear of war, of the atom bomb." — Dorothy Day.

"At 8:15 on Aug. 6, 1945, we could still work and sing and love. At 8:16, everything came to an end. Those of us who survived were transformed into people whose daily food is pain, whose constant company is fear. Tell everyone you know — simply to use their imagination." — Fumio Nakamura.

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If Jesus Visited You

Editor:

Thoroughly enjoyed your editorial on "What If Jesus

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.

Came to Dinner?" Perhaps you would follow up with the enclosed article.

If Jesus came to your house to spend a day or two —

If He came unexpectedly, I wonder what you'd do?

Oh, I know you'd give your nicest room to such an honored Guest.

And all the food you'd serve to Him would be the very best.

And you would keep assuring Him, you're glad to have Him there.

That serving Him in your own home is joy above compare.

But when you saw Him coming, would you meet Him at the door?

With arms outstretched in welcome to your heavenly Visitor?

Or would you have to change your clothes before you let Him in?

Or hide some magazines and put the Bible where they had been?

Would you turn off the radio and hope He hadn't heard?

And wish you hadn't uttered that last, loud, hasty word?

Would you hide your worldly music and put some hymn books out?

Could you let Jesus walk right in, or would you rush about?

And — I wonder — if the Savior spent a day or two with you.

Would you go right on doing the things you always do?

Would you go right on saying the things you always say?

Would life for you continue as it does from day to day?

Would your family conversation keep up its usual pace?

And would you find it hard each meal to say a table grace?

Would you sing the songs you always sing and read the books you read?

And let Him know the things on which your mind and heart feed?

Would you take Jesus with you everywhere you'd planned to go?

Or would you, maybe, change your plans for just a day or so?

Loretta Wright
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Archivist Seeks Material

Editor:

The archives of the Rochester Diocese would welcome the gift of copies of the Rochester Diocesan Synod of Dec. 12, 1934, convoked by Archbishop Edward Mooney and published in 1935.

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"THAT WAS EMBARRASSING, FRANK, BUT IT WAS A NICE SYMBOLIC GESTURE OF GIVING."