

Editorials

Popping Along Together

To be sung to the tune, with apologies to the author, of "Pop, Goes the Weasel" in the style of a dirge:

"Once we had a president,
 "His name was Abie Lincoln,
 "He was a very good president,
 "Pop, went Abe Lincoln.
 "We had another president,
 "His name was John F. Kennedy,
 "He was a very good president,
 "Pop, went John Kennedy.
 "Then we had a black leader,
 "His name was Dr. Martin King,
 "He sought civil rights for everyone,
 "Pop, went Doctor King.
 "John Lennon was a pacifist,
 "He also wrote some music,
 "He did not like violence,
 "Pop, went John Lennon."
 Gun control, anyone?

Mass of Tissue

A Missouri physician, Dr. Judy Parton, has objected to be being called a "murderer" because she performs abortions. In fact, she is suing the pastor of the United Baptist Church in Springfield, Mo., for so labeling her.

At question, of course, is a matter of semantics. The Rev. Thomas McGrath used the term biblically while Dr. Parton is suing on the basis of "murder" being a legal term and since abortions are legal, one cannot be guilty of murder in performing them.

The question will be up to the court. But somewhere along the way in the disputation, Dr. Parton referred to abortion as merely the removal of "a mass of tissue." According to Religion Today, Dr. Parton said, "I don't feel like a murderer or a killer... At six to 12 weeks it's just a mass of tissue."

Again according to Religion Today, Dr. Parton describes herself as "a religious person. I'm a Christian."

In that spirit, we ask the good doctor to reflect, particularly at this time of the year, on that "mass of tissue" that became Jesus Christ 2,000 years ago.

No Christmas

Last year during the Christmas season, we published an opinion lamenting the fact that there is no Christmas in Communist nations.

Sad but true: And things have worsened during 1980. Moscow has invaded Afghanistan and most of the world's nations stood by. Now the Soviet Union has surrounded Poland and by the time this editorial appears may have also invaded that proud country.

NATO has promised a more forceful response if that transgression does take place. We will wait and see.

In the meantime, let us all at least remember the millions of persons, Christian and Jew, being persecuted by Moscow-led nations. Every parish should mention them in their Advent and Christmas liturgical intentions.

and Opinions

Pro-Life Trip Planned

Editor:
 Pope John Paul II urged us to stand up for and protect the rights of the aged, the handicapped, the unborn. Here in the U.S. the unborn have lost their rights — abortion is accepted by too many people as "a fact of life." Already euthanasia doesn't seem so far from becoming grim reality.

I believe the same spirit is alive and well and working in the rest of our diocesan parishes. Maybe it's about time other parishes share their "good news" with us via the Courier-Journal.

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Editor's Note: How about it, other parishes? Let Opinion know what programs you have to help the needy.

It was on Jan. 22, 1973 that the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion on demand. Each year on Jan. 22, thousands of people from all over America travel to Washington to march, to rally, and to pray, and to talk with their senators and congressmen to protest the court's decision. Many area residents are unaware of this event because news media often give scant coverage to pro-life activities.

Does God Differentiate?

Editor:
 In answer to the letter published Nov. 26 referring to altar girls and "women strumming on guitars," I would like to say that God gives many gifts and he gives them to women as well as to men.

Anyone interested in participating in this annual demonstration should be aware that special transportation has been arranged from the Rochester area. For details, they may call me at 265-3069.

I cannot defend the decisions of the individual parishes for using altar girls, but I can say honestly that for the short time we have used them, they have done a superb job in serving the Lord. I wish this is what the Pope would consider rather than whether they are boys or girls, although I'm sure this is not the main reason.

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Let's Share Good News

Editor:
 Regarding a letter of Dec. 3 about Our Lady of Lourdes in Greece staging a bazaar and giving to the needy at Christmas time.

Now, I must speak in defense for the many women strumming guitars. Many women are called to the Music Ministry. They are called to give comfort, relate God's message, and enhance the Mass. If a musician is not talented and distracts from the Mass, he or she should not be playing.

Assumption of Our Lady in Fairport has been doing the same for more years than I've been in the parish (11½ years). Again this year we will be giving a generous check to the good Sisters of Mount Carmel, sending Christmas baskets to some families at St. Francis, helping the needy in our own area, donating to the Courier-Journal, Christmas Fund, etc., etc.

I have been in God's service as a singer guitarist for many years, being one of the pioneer guitarists and believe me it wasn't easy being accepted in my work, but I know now that everywhere I turned, God guided me back to the church and my gift became a sign to me that my music was needed in a time when our church was going through many changes. I am constantly being asked to sing all over the United States and last year in Rome, Italy. I'm sure that it never made any difference to the many people who wrote me letters thanking me, whether I was a man or

We also have baked food sales throughout the year and the profits are always used for the least of my brothers.

We have a lot of spirit in Fairport and we know the Son

is to use talented people who show respect, reverence, good taste and love for one another and our church, spreading the Word through song. Let's not get so hung up on these issues that we can't see the forest for the trees.

As I mentioned, God gives many gifts and He shows us where He needs them and He needs us the most in His work.

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 parishes (where I sing)

derstanding within the family should be completely forgotten but most of all forgiven. This is the time when everyone should turn to Jesus in love and appreciation but never forgetting the horrible death that he had to suffer for our salvation.

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Let's Pray The Psalter

Editor:
 With all the talk today from clergy, religious and laity alike about Pope John Paul being too strict in his shepherding, I came across a booklet by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Psalms: the prayer book of the Bible." It may be well for all of us to recall, as does the author, exactly what is the driving force behind the Law which the Pope is trying to nurture and revive. I quote from Mr. Bonhoeffer's booklet:

Christ's Birth Main Event

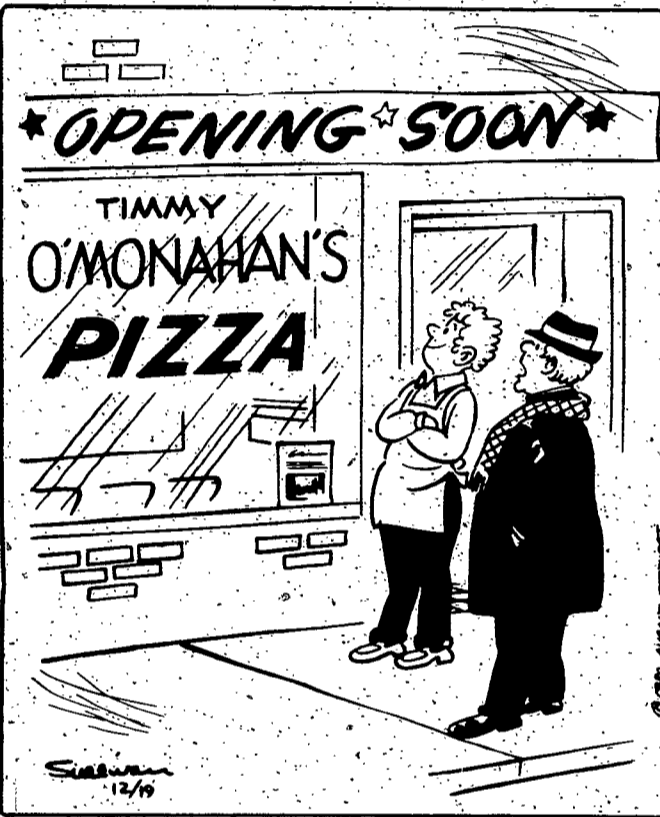
Editor:
 I am an inmate at Attica State Prison and with the approach of Christmas we should once again be reminded of our Lord's birth which should be the main event in our lives at this time.

For many of us, Christmas brings many memories of our families, school days and the numerous church activities that we should all be participating in. But most of all, we are brought back to happier days of being with our loved ones and of hearing the voices of little children singing carols on Christmas Eve.

The peace and joy of the world becomes very evident during the Christmas season. When for a brief period people can relax, speak and breathe much easier than at any other time. This all came about because of the birth of a little baby called Jesus who became savior of all mankind and was born to a Virgin Mother in a manger so very long ago in the town of Bethlehem.

I know that God could have chosen a more spectacular way to bring about salvation and peace but instead he chose to send his only son to be born in a home of human parents and to experience all the hardships of growing up and temptations of humanity. This was an act of divine love by God which should forever enhance the unity of families under his compassion and understanding.

This is the time of the year when family compassion for one another should be evident



"I WOULDN'T COUNT ON AN AWFUL LOT OF SUPPORT FROM ST. PATRICK'S PARISHIONERS, TIMMY."

for us to again daily pray the Psalter. I'd like very much to see some instruction for the set up for laity by each parish education committee. Let's not leave the duty of prayer of the Church up to the few who now use it. We can add a big boost to the "health" of the Church.

The booklet is available at Trant's.

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Likes Church The Way It Is

Editor:
 During this holiday season, it's a time of remembering and also thanks for a lot of things. Let me speak of the priest of today.

When I was a child growing up, the priest always had his back to me, spoke the sermons from atop his "pedestal," said the Mass in a foreign language, and never would you touch him... for he was a "Man of the Cloth." I'm glad that these are memories.

Thank God for the priest of 1980. He's a PERSON who faces me while saying Mass and can even smile. When he preaches he can come down to

at us. He speaks in English, although at times his English sounds tired... for he works from 6 a.m. till usually well past midnight. His job isn't easy — listening to problems, personal or financial, being the sounding board for people complaining, and just plain being there for someone who might need him. I'm not even mentioning the hospital calls, numerous meetings for committees, etc.

In 1980, I am very thankful for the "Men of the Cloth." They have chosen a career that has its rewards but also the pay is low, the hours long, and as evidenced recently in this newspaper, it's taking its toll on their lives.

The priests of today are definitely Christ-like. They are able to go out among the crowd not just at Mass but elsewhere and by extending a hand they can extend Christ's peace.

Perhaps if we all realized that these people with their white collars are humans, too, that they need support, we wouldn't be as quick to "stone" them with the memories of the "way it was."

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