

Editorials

From Us to You

Merry Christmas,

From Groden and Robischon, our two Mikes,
And Joan Smith to all of her tykes,
From Joseph LoGiudice who's wishin'
You success in your every mission.

Southern hospitality from our Toombs, Marty
And Barb Nicolazzo hopes your life's a party.
Your good health is toasted by Gary Ayers,
And Bonnie Migliore keeps you in her prayers.

The cream of the cream from Anthony Costello,
Ditto from John Dash, a most happy fellow.
Terry Brennan's developing your fondest dream,
And your happiness is Tom Decker's scheme.

From Jimmy Michaelsen a prosperity that's boom'in',
And that wish is duplicated by Scott Schuman:
From Carm Viglucci the merriest of days,
And a happy new year from Nancy Hayes.

Melvin Miner's message is one of goodwill,
And Pete Fraver hopes your problems are nil.
To the salt of the earth, sugar and spice,
And keep the faith, is Father Hohman's advice.

And collectively from all of us here,
A most holy Christmas and a Good News year.



The Courier-Journal Family

and Opinions

Christmas Remembrance

Editor:

During this holy season I seldom listen to a concert of sacred music without remembering the dedicated nuns who taught me at St. Paul's Academy.

The beautiful music of Christmas not only fills me with the joy of the season but also with gratitude for the religious who spent many hours preparing ordinary voices to sing in harmony to the Lord.

I remember, too, all the Christmas plays these nuns directed, in addition to performing their daily teaching duties.

May I thank all of you for what you added to the Christmas seasons then and now. You truly helped many school children — and adults — keep Christ in Christmas.

May all the good you put into so many lives come back into your own.

Peggy Walpole Finucane
284 Canterbury Road
Rochester, N.Y. 14607

Proving That Jesus Is Lord

Editor:

I wish to express thanks to three divisions of the media for their consideration of Jesus of Nazareth. Thanks to Theater Cine 2 for showing the film, "Jesus." Thanks to the obvious professionalism of David Lee Miller for Channel 13 News for his objective series, "Faith Healing." Thanks to Josh McDowell's book, "Evidence That Demands a Verdict." These media together with the Christmas season have prompted me to rethink about a question concerning Jesus. Was he a liar, or b. lunatic, or c. Lord, as he claimed?

a. Jesus claimed to be the

Son of God, equal to God. If he knew his claim were false, he would have been a liar. He also would have been a lying hypocrite because he taught others to be honest. He also would have been a lying fool because he was crucified for his claim. Such a deliberate misrepresentation, however hypothetical and foolish, would have made him an unqualified liar. But

How could he have been a liar in light of his moral purity and dignity, as evidenced by his words and works? How could he have been a liar with a character so original, so complete, so uniformly consistent, so perfect, so human, and yet so high above all greatness? Would it not require a character greater than Jesus' to have invented Jesus? How could he have been a liar who consistently maintained from the beginning to the end the purest and noblest character in history with the most perfect air of truth and reality? How could he have been a liar who successfully carried out a mission of unparalleled beneficence, moral magnitude and sublimity? How could he have been a liar who sacrificed his own life for all he said?

b. Jesus may have been sincere but self-deceived in his claims about himself. Suppose he were wrong, sincerely wrong. Then he would have been suffering from the worst delusions of grandeur, claiming to be the Son of God, equal to God, but sincerely wrong. A paranoid, a lunatic, out of touch with reality! A self-deluded madman! But

How could he have been mad with such an intellect, clear and sound in all respects? How could he have been made who never lost the even balance of his mind? How could he have been mad who sailed serenely over all his troubles and persecutions. How could Jesus have been made who always returned the wisest answers to tempting questions? How could he have been made who calmly and deliberately predicted his death on the cross, his resurrection the third day, the

outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the founding of his Church would endure, and the destruction of Jerusalem — predictions literally fulfilled?

How could he have been made whose character was distinguished by calmness and self-possession? How could he have been mad whose benevolence, singularly earnest and deep, was composed and sincere? How could he have been made who never lost his self-possession in sympathy with others? How could he have been mad who did good works with the tranquility and constancy which mark the providence of God?

Is madness detected in the calm authority of his teachings? Is madness detected in the mild, practical, beneficent spirit of his precepts? Is madness detected in the unlabored simplicity of the language with which he unfolds his high powers and sublime truths?

c. Jesus could not have been a liar. Jesus could not have been a lunatic. Therefore, Jesus is Lord. Therefore, I do not reject Him. I accept Jesus as my own personal Lord and Savior. Everyone should. Thank you, media, for causing me to rethink through to this conclusion.

Joseph Viggiano
245 Avondale Road
Rochester, N.Y. 14622

Mission Aid Gratitude

Editor:

To the mission-minded people of Rochester, it is with deep gratitude that I acknowledge your generous gift of \$19,000 for our missionary endeavors in Santiago, Chile.

The Sisters of Mercy are grateful that we are able to continue serving the poorest of the poor in South America because the people in our diocese have responded so generously to the Diocesan Mission Appeal.

Our missionary apostolate in Santiago is shared with all

of you who have contributed in supporting our endeavors in the Third World. Your love and concern will touch the lives of many people through the hands of our missionaries.

In the name of the Sisters of Mercy, I thank you for listening to the cry of the poor and those who are unable to help themselves.

May God, our Father, match your generosity with His richest blessings.

Sister M. Judith Heberle
Sisters of Mercy
of Rochester

Collar Doesn't Make Priest

Editor:

I would like to comment on the recent surge of letters condemning priests who dress as "regular people" and "come down" to the laity level.

It's been my experience that those priests who dare to be seen without their Roman collars are those who are best loved by their people. They are the ones who are there to hold your hand and to pray with you when most needed. These men are the approachable ones; those to whom you don't hesitate to say, "Father, I need to talk to you."

These priests have realized that they are persons and priests. They are a gift to us. They are not untouchable, they are human, just as Jesus was human.

These men are out in the world with their people, sharing good times and bad, sharing sorrow and joy, just as Jesus was out in the world during his life on earth. What better way to share the faith and spread the Good News than to be there when needed as friend and as priest.

It's time the "old church" realized that a man's Roman collar doesn't make him a priest. His prayerfulness, his spirituality, his life style and his availability to his people are what make him truly a priest of the Roman Catholic Church.

Pat Albrecht
97 Cayuga St.
Clyde, N.Y. 14433

SSJs Thank Contributors

Editor:

On behalf of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester, I would like to express our deep gratitude to the people of the Diocese of Rochester for their continued support of the missions through contributions to the Diocesan Mission Collection. The missionary works of our Sisters in Brazil and Selma, Ala., are possible because of financial help received through these contributions.

We pray that they will be richly blessed for their generosity and for their willingness to sacrifice for the less fortunate.

Sister Jamesine Riley
Superior General
Sisters of St. Joseph
of Rochester
4095 East Ave.
Rochester, N.Y. 14610

Advent Be Prepared

Editor:

The sole purpose of this life, wrote St. Thomas Aquinas, is to get to the next. And just as Advent should be a preparation for the celebration of the first coming of Christ, so, too, should our entire life be a preparation for the second coming of Christ (in miniature) at our death. "Just as it is appointed that men die once, and after death be judged" (Heb. 9:27). Hence at this Christmas season there should be a reflection on our failings and shortcomings and when remembered, the great Sacrament of Reconciliation be taken advantage of which Christ established for our use.

For when speaking of heaven we know only too well that "nothing profane shall enter it" (Rev. 21:27). And as Archbishop Sheen noted, "The only unforgivable sin is the denial of sin, because, by its nature, there is now nothing to be forgiven."

There are two extraordinary people whom I think have a vital Christmas message for us all. Pope John XXIII wrote, "It is here in the Sacrament of Penance that God's mercy will at last win the victory over human wickedness. It is here that men will be cleansed of their sins and reconciled to God. We condemn the theory that the frequent confession of venial sin is not a practice to be greatly valued." And G.K. Chesterton wrote in his autobiography (p. 329), "When people ask me, 'Why did you join the Church of Rome?' the first essential answer is 'To get rid of my sins.' . . . When a Catholic comes from confession, he does truly, by definition, step out again into the dawn of his own beginning and look with new eyes across the world to a Crystal Palace that is really crystal. . . . He stands, as I said, in the white light at the worthy beginning of the life of a man. The accumulations of time (sins) can no longer terrify. He may be gray and gouty, but he is only five minutes old." So let's always be prepared, for at any moment at the strike of the next second we may be called and suddenly find ourselves standing at the judgment seat of God, much as John Lennon was the other day. Are any of us really ready for such an encounter?

Richard Hussar
340 Jordan Ave.
Rochester, N.Y. 14606

Guidelines

Letters intended for publication must be addressed to Opinion, Courier-Journal, 114 South Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607.

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.