

Fr. Louis J. Hohman



The Open Window

Troublesome Differences

Dear Reader,

I am troubled by a trend in our country today which is, I think, a dangerous and explosive one. It is the trend toward a "we" and a "they." It is a trend toward the "good guys" and the "bad guys." It is the Ku Klux Klan and the neo-Nazi and the Moral Majority and the small segment of those who think they are born again and everybody else isn't, of those who think that capitalism is coextensive with God's will and anything else (especially Communism) is coextensive with the will of the devil.

To me these things are symptoms of a desire to set

up an adversary situation, a rebuilding of the separatism that the Tower of Babel represents.

Certainly it is contrary to the will of God, whom we as Christians believe has a salvific will for all human beings wherever and whomever they might be.

If God wills the salvation of all human beings, then he also wills the means for their salvation.

This means simply that one doesn't have to be explicitly a Christian to be saved. Therefore people who never heard of Christ are just as truly candidates for God's saving power as those who are Christians. The difference for Christians is that it is a much more explicit and beautiful way and it gives them the obligation

of sharing Christ's saving power with others.

I'm reminded of Edwin Markham's poem: "He drew a circle that left me out/ Heretic, rebel, thing to flout/ But love and I had the wit to win/ I drew a circle that took him in."

It also reminds me of a group of people climbing a mountain. They all desire sincerely to get to the top. Some are good mountain climbers. Others have not mastered any of the techniques. Others are lame or blind or simply weak. The object is for each of them to get to the top of the mountain and if they can, and the weaker person so desires, they will help them. It's not a question of, "If you get there along with me that will take something away from me." It doesn't. I not terribly sure what is the nature of this perversity that makes human beings enemies one of another. But whatever it is, it is rampant in the world today, and I would appreciate anyone's comments on this particular matter. We are called to unity. Division is the work of Satan (the adversary).

Vatican Radio Indicates Death Penalty Opposition

Vatican City (RNS) — Entering a growing public controversy in Italy over applying the death penalty to terrorism, the Vatican said the Catholic Church opposes capital punishment.

Vatican Radio, commenting on an editorial by the Jesuit magazine "Civiltà Cattolica," said this was not always the Church's position but it added that the death penalty was inconsistent now with Church policy against abortion, euthanasia and "all forms of destruction of human life."

"The attitude of the Church, which in the past has been favorable to the death penalty, is today oriented toward its abolishment," the broadcast said.

The commentary added that arguments used in the past to justify capital punishment, such as protection of society, deterrence of major crime, and the need for re-

establishment of order, had lost their validity.

The comments came in the midst of a campaign by Italy's neo-fascist party, the Italian Social Movement, calling for application of the death penalty against condemned terrorists.

In response to MSI, several of the nation's other

parties have joined to oppose capital punishment. Representatives of the ruling Christian Democrat and Liberal, Socialist and Communist parties announced at a press conference in Rome March 6 the formation of a national committee to promote a campaign against the death penalty and "the barbarization of the state."

Rites To Commemorate Abp. Romero

An ecumenical prayer service will mark the first anniversary of the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador, 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 24 at Old St. Mary's Church.

The service is a joint project

of the diocesan International Justice and Peace Commission, the Rochester Committee on Latin America, Genesee Ecumenical Ministries and Rabbi Judea B. Miller and Temple Brith Kodesh.

Mueller to Head D'Amato Office

Mrs. Joan Mueller of Fairport, long active in community and civic affairs, has been named Sen. Alphonse D'Amato's regional representative for Rochester and Monroe County.

Mrs. Mueller has served on the Parish Council of St. John's of Rochester and with the Department of Justice and Peace of the Rochester diocese.

ME Group Sponsors Discussion

The Worldwide Marriage Encounter program for the diocese will sponsor a presentation given by Father Edward Murray, SM, titled "Marriage, An Untapped Resource," at 8 p.m., Thursday, April 9 at St. Agnes High School.

"Father Murray, a Marist priest from Lafayette, La., is the most provocative and engaging speaker we know in the nation on the subject of marriage," said John Boles, who, with wife Christine, are local executive couple for Worldwide Marriage Encounter.

There is no admission charge. All married couples, clergy and religious are invited.

Fr. Atwell Remembered

A Mass, honoring the memory of Father Henry Atwell, will be celebrated at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, March 26 at Holy Apostles Church, 530 Lyell Ave.

Father Louis Hohman, a classmate of Father Atwell, will offer the Mass. Music will be provided by the Gregorian Choral and the congregation.

Hearing Mass Together

The Parents' Association of Our Lady of Mercy is sponsoring a Mother/Daughter Breakfast at 9:15 a.m., Sunday, March 22 at the Motherhouse Chapel, 1437 Blossom Road. Father Vincent Panepinto, chaplain, will celebrate the liturgy.

After the Mass a breakfast will be served in the cafeteria. Mrs. John Tripp, a member of St. John of Rochester parish, is chairperson for the event.

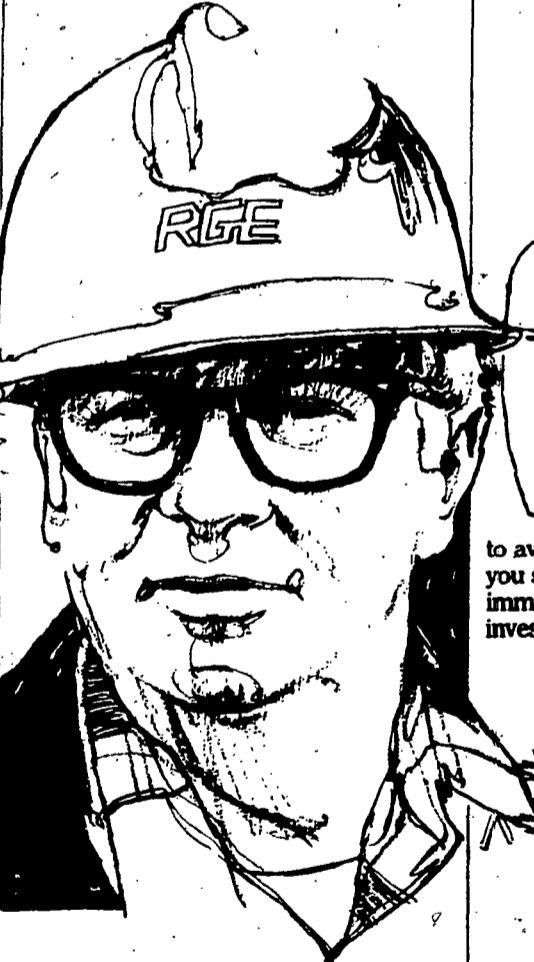
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