

More Opinions

Let's Spread Good News

Editor:

Re: "Father Mura Accurate" July 22 Courier-Journal. I fully agree that Father Dave Mura has been given a special gift from God to work with young people. Although I did not have the opportunity to read Father Mura's letter July 8, I doubt that he spoke of division among Christians whether Catholics or Protestants. I'm referring to part of the statement — "so that we don't lose our youths to other religions..." Whenever I have had the pleasure of listening to Father Mura, his theme is one of love and unity.

In God's kingdom, life eternal, we will be sitting, walking and talking with all Christian members of the Body of Christ, regardless of race, creed, color or denomination and the banner over us will be, and is, Jesus Christ. He is the head of the Body of Christ, the Church, binding us all together in love. His holy Word states that the Kingdom of God begins now in each one of us. We are being made ready for the eternal life. We are being molded, shaped and trained now!

What is a Christian? A Christian is one who knows God's word and lives it daily. Not all Christians are Catholic and not all Catholics are Christians. Billy Graham, Oral Roberts and many people in our neighborhoods are beautiful Christians and are members of the universal Church, the Body of Christ. This Church is the one Jesus will soon be coming back for. A Church without spot or wrinkle. A people set apart as 1 Peter 2:9 says, "A chosen generation, a chosen priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." People who show forth the praises of God. People who love. People with their eyes fixed on Jesus. It takes spiritual vision to see the Body of Christ.

My profession is caring for the sick and dying. At various times, I, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, have brought a patient into the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. How ludicrous it seems that I should spend hours or days discussing doctrine with a dying patient. All Jesus desires is for that person to be filled with His saving grace, to repent of their sins and accept Him as Lord and Savior. The thief on the cross next to Jesus was not indoctrinated, the thief believed Jesus was to be part of His kingdom and Jesus responded, "Today you shall be with me in paradise."

Let us do the work Jesus asked us to do — spread the good news of the Gospel!

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Guidelines

The Courier-Journal welcomes your opinions. Letters must bear the writer's signature, full address and telephone number. They should be sent to Opinion, Courier-Journal, 114 S. Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607.

Opinions should be brief, typed, double-spaced, no longer than 1 1/2 pages.

We routinely condense letters, edit offensive words and libelous statements, and reserve the right to reject letters. Generally speaking, however, only limited grammatical corrections will be made and the letters will reflect the writer's own style.

Because submitted opinions exceed the space for letters, we publish only original letters addressed to us. We will not use poetry, open letters, or copies of letters sent elsewhere. To ensure diversity, we limit each writer to one letter per month.

On Death Penalty

Editor:

The Courier-Journal, being a religion-oriented paper, naturally attracts readers of a religious persuasion. They tend to see all problems and solutions in a theological or biblical context.

The problem of the death penalty is no exception.

I would like to, therefore, offer a secular, cynical view of the problem, leaving others to ponder the theological and biblical view.

The death penalty is admirably suited to law enforcement in an absolute monarchy or dictatorship. It is the monarch who makes the law. It is he who imposes the death penalty for violations of his law. While some people are deterred by the death penalty, others are not. Those who are not deterred are executed and a potential troublemaker is removed as a future troublemaker. Further, the king does not have to spend his money to feed, house and clothe his enemies, nor must he fear attacks from non or no longer existing individuals.

But the United States is not an absolute monarchy and what might work well for an absolute monarch might not work well in a federal republic with democratically elected officials but which operates most of the time as what Aristotle calls an extreme democracy.

Long term incarceration in a penitentiary is a religiously-backed approach to crime and punishment and presupposes repentance by the criminal if given sufficient time. It is the system which we have been trying to make work for about 200 years. It is a system similar to our welfare system. While installed and intended to aid the poor and misguided, it currently provides jobs — jobs — jobs — jobs for penologists, lawyers, judges, social workers, corrections officers, police, bookies, drug peddlers, organized crime bosses, writers, sociologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, editors, publishers, insurance companies, fences of stolen goods, and clergy (who preach against crime), etc. Not to mention politicians, legislators, governors, real estate brokers, prison construction contractors and laborers, and the purveyors of foodstuffs and living utensils.

Our crime and punishment system has become like our Social Security system — well-intentioned and, although we can't afford it, we can't do away with it either for too many people now (knowingly or unknowingly) depend on its continuation for their personal economic existence.

At Your Parish...

St. Patrick, Mt. Morris

St. Patrick's Church will hold its fifth annual church festival, Saturday, Aug. 15, the Feast of the Assumption, not the Immaculate Conception, as previously reported.

The event which opens at

noon will feature a chicken barbeque from 5 to 7 p.m., many booths, including crafts, plants, cotton candy, fried dough, and ice cream; a baked food sale, children's games, a dunking machine, and a teen street dance from 9 to 10:30 p.m.

St. John, Port Byron

A chicken/pork chop barbeque will be start at noon, Aug. 23, at St. John Church, Rochester Street,

Port Byron. Adult tickets cost \$4, children \$2 and children under 5 are admitted free.



St. Louis

Carol Boos, Marlena Mendola and Dawn Driesback pose with Father John Reddington, pastor of St. Louis Church, after ceremonies in which the Girl Scouts were awarded the special "I Live My Faith" medals. The girls are members of Troop 295.

Sister Barbara Moore, RSM



Viewpoint: Sisters Reflect

A Closing Thought

I love St. Paul! I believe he would just love the Sisters Council of Rochester. Why? Because he wrote to the Church in Corinth, "There is a variety of gifts, but always the same Spirit. There are all sorts of service to be done, but always the same Lord; working in all sorts of different ways in different people..." (1 Cor. 12:4-6) It is a privilege to chair the Sisters Council because it is like being immersed in the midst of that "variety of gifts" Paul speaks about. I have often felt the power and action of the Spirit during our meetings and come away with a deep awareness of the richness of ministry and service being done by the women who surround our table.

St. Paul goes on to say, "The particular way in which the Spirit is given to each person is for a good purpose..." (1 Cor. 12:7) The Sisters Council, representing close to a thousand women religious in this diocese, views its mission from a variety of perspectives. We see ourselves called to be a forum for issues which affect women religious as well as the wider Church of Rochester. We gladly offer our history and experience to the Church and to the Bishop and hope to facilitate the role of women religious in the policy-making processes of the diocese.

Later in the same chapter, Paul makes reference to the

Body of Christ, the Church. He reminds us that we are that body and each part is interdependent and essential. That is how I view the consultative process. The Pastoral Council, the Priests Council, the Sisters Council each bring to the whole their lives, their experiences and their gifts. When we are all drawn upon, the Church is richer.

The Sisters Council has made great efforts to be faithful to its purpose and its call. Some of our decisions have sparked controversy, some have been the source of wider proposals, but all of them spring from our conviction that as Daughters of the Church we have gifts to give to the Body of Christ.

I believe these gifts have been clearly evident in the fine articles written in this series, "Viewpoint: Sisters Reflect." I would like to publicly thank the Courier-Journal on behalf of the Sisters Council for publication of this column. And may I take this opportunity to thank the women who wrote the articles and express to all the Sisters of the Diocese of Rochester that we, your representatives, will continue to speak for the needs of the Church, for justice, and for the truth that "there is a variety of gifts, but always the same Spirit."

Sister Barbara Moore, RSM, is President of the Diocesan Sisters Council and Executive Director of the Rochester Interfaith Jail Ministry.

St. Josaphat's

The annual Ukrainian Arts and Crafts Festival will be held August 13 through 16 at St. Josaphat's Church, 940 Ridge Rd. East. Featured during the four-day event are live music for dancing, Ukrainian foods, arts and crafts displays and

sales, and demonstrations of such skills as egg coloring, embroidery and ceramics. The festival opens at 6 p.m. on Thursday and Friday, at noon on Saturday and at 1 p.m. on Sunday.

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