

Editorials

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is the one American holiday which unites people of all religious persuasions as well as those with none. Even atheists should have reasons to be thankful although they have a problem in directing their gratitude.

We all need celebration in our lives and this special day certainly offers valid reason for feasting. Not only is it one of the oldest and most traditional of our national holidays but its validity lies in its purpose, thanking the Almighty for the bounty.

Only a Scrooge would risk dampening such spirit. Nonetheless it is important for we banqueters to remember that not all have been invited to the feast. Many are omitted, either by societal design, or by circumstances beyond their control. As we enjoy our holiday fare, we must also make some commitment to the uninvited, even if only through prayer. That is food for the soul and we are in need of it, too.

Generosity

The generosity of members of the Rochester diocese never seems to flag.

Witness two recent drives, the one for the Missions and the bishop's first annual Thanks Giving Appeal. Though final results are not in yet, both seem to have done remarkably well.

And, as John Glavin, chairman of the bishop's appeal, pointed out, these are not the best of times.

We can remember no instance in the past decade when diocesans have failed to respond to the needs of their neighbors or Church.

The Southern Tier flood elicited not only heartfelt concern but monetary assistance.

When this newspaper sought funds to provide water filters for impoverished Brazilian families, the return went over the top.

Campaign for Human Development, mission drives, special disaster appeals — the charity (spell that l-o-v-e) seems boundless.

With this edition, the Courier-Journal begins its 13th annual Christmas appeal, working in conjunction with Catholic Charities to help the neediest among our own diocesan family. The first such appeal in 1969 raised \$8,566, an amount which dwarfed previous totals when Charities conducted less publicized campaigns.

From that auspicious start, diocesans have increased their contributions each year until in 1980 they gave some \$52,000.

Sometimes in the whirl of everyday life, such magnificent generosity is overlooked. It shouldn't be. It is a shining example of the goodness of the human being, truly reflective of the spirit of Jesus.

Did You Know?

Statistics, so they say, make for dull reading. Still, we wonder how many Catholics are aware of the width and depth of their diocese.

Probably most would know that the diocese includes 12 counties but after that we venture to guess that most do not have much knowledge of, say, the fact that there are 159 parishes in the diocese. Or that there are 24 mission parishes.

The secular press is fond of featuring what has become known as mini-quizzes. Here's one: How many Catholics live in Monroe County? How many Catholics live in our diocese? Are there more Hispanic people or Asians?

Many such facts and figures have been provided for us by the diocese and were presented at the recent Diocesan Pastoral Council Convocation, under the title, "People — Our Greatest Resource." We agree, and though cold figures are no match for the warmth of our humanity, they can at times be interesting.

Answers to our mini-quiz: Catholics number 225,767 in Monroe County, almost a third of the total population. In the 12 counties of the diocese, there are 369,748 Catholics. We are blessed with 22,837 people of Spanish descent and 14,139 Asians.

and Opinions

Refugees Send Thanks

Editor:

Since the day our country fell into the hands of the Communist Party in 1975, our people have had to live under the stress of the communist government. Thousands of Vietnamese have left and are still leaving their country for all corners of the world to look for freedom.

We, some of the lucky people, have been enabled to settle in Rochester through the charity of your organizations.

On the occasion of Thanksgiving, on behalf of the Vietnamese refugees in Rochester, we would like to thank all of you for your helpfulness. May God bless all of you.

Kiem Van Nguyen
chairman
Vietnamese Community of Rochester

Column Did Disservice

Editor:

I feel compelled on behalf of the Sisters Council of Rochester to respond to the Oct. 21 article written by Father Paul Cuddy entitled, "Attacking Women

Religious." I have read letters in the Courier-Journal that have corrected mistaken information in that article and am happy that the proper facts have been made known.

My concern, however, lies in another area. From the title of the article to the content itself I find attitudes and statements that are of great disservice to the hundreds of women religious who in a variety of ways and styles are laying down their lives for the Church and for the wider community. One of the beauties of women religious is that the vast majority of us have come to understand the principle of unity in the midst of diversity. We have come to know that there are a variety of gifts and the same Spirit, and that God's people can and indeed are being served in many different but beautiful ways.

One of the facts about the life of Jesus Christ is that he combined the energy of active ministry with the depth of contemplation. And so for Father Cuddy to say that many Sisters have substituted activism for the supernatural in religious life attacks the very core of what we know to be true about the women religious of this diocese.

I would hope that Father Cuddy would be able to take the time to visit and share ministry with so many of our Sisters in the diocese who, in their active lives, are making

great efforts to bring the fruit of their contemplation to their service.

My hope is that his future articles would contain material that builds up the Body of Christ and that celebrates the lives of so many women and men who love the Church, the community, and who through their ministry make present the active/contemplative Jesus Christ to this world.

Sister Barbara Moore, RSM
President
Sisters Council of Rochester

Literature Needed

Editor:

Readers may like to mail their used Catholic pamphlets and magazines direct to the foreign missions.

If those who wish to do so will please send me self-addressed envelopes. I will give them the addresses of missionary priests and nuns who need Catholic literature.

Mary Conway
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Nation Needs God's Help

Editor:

Today America is facing one of its gravest crises ever. Its moral decay and economic collapse is very imminent and must be attributed to its failure to meet the spiritual needs of all her people.

Only one thing can save America from its present crisis and that is for it to get back into the good graces of God. As Americans we should and must return to God to achieve the peace and prosperity that only He can give us.

The responsibility rests on all of us and we should get prayer groups started all over America. What a glorious day that will be to see Americans praying in earnest to God.

America needs true men of God who are sincerely dedicated to praying to Him with determination and to setting an example for many Americans who have turned away from God.

We all know that we have the best nation in the world and we all most certainly want to be able to keep it that way but we also have to realize that we are definitely drifting further away from God every day.

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Dissenters Seen Traitors

Editor:

There are two conspicuous Catholics walking about these days that go under the titles of liberal and conservative. Although these characters do actually exist, it is not at all appropriate to ascribe to them labels which belong exclusively and evidently to the political arena. The appropriate titles deserving of these individuals are traitorous and loyal. And we, each one of us, are inescapably one or the other.

To the clear thinker, it is obvious that a loyal Catholic is one who renounces his self and readily accepts the teachings of the Church and puts into practice. Dei Gratia, that which she preaches without hesitation or reservation. For he correctly recognizes that it is not the Church that gives him God's Truth and Supernatural Life, but literally it is God who gives him His Truth and Life through the Church. Just as the God-Man, Jesus Christ,



"I CAN REMEMBER WHEN DAVE SANG IN THE CHOIR."

taught, governed and sanctified through His human body, so too does He continue His redemption by doing the same things through His other body, His mystical body, the one, holy Roman Catholic and apostolic Church. The loyal Catholic's only response to any utterance from the Church on any matter pertaining to faith and morals is "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening."

The traitorous Catholic will look for every loophole and excuse imaginable to evade acceptance of this or that particular doctrine. With childish and animal-like cunning, he raises the ruinous banner of dissent which is a simple variation of Satan's war cry, "Non-Serviam" (I will not serve). Whether cognizant or not of this vice, he invariably shares in the work of the prince of this world and the diminution of Christ's truths. He looks not so much for the kingdom of Heaven as for the kingdom of earth, a utopia conforming closely with the one envisioned by the Marxist-

Leninist ideologies. Thus, his actions and assertions will be aligned entirely with the social doctrines and not the spiritual doctrines. His response to the magisterium's teachings will be "Quiet, Lord, your servant is about to speak."

At this Christmas season, it is most appropriate for all of us to spend some reflective moments on this question: Which label best portrays me as a Catholic? Looking about the world today one can see a polarization in the Church: Those for Christ and His vicar, and those against Christ and His vicar. The line is drawn and the Lord is finding out who are with Him and who are against Him. And in the last book of the New Testament (Rev. 21:8). He leaves a message to help us make up our minds: "As for the cowards and traitors to the Faith... their lot is the fiery pool of burning sulphur, the second death."

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