

Editorials

The Media And Bias

We are not in the business of analyzing any survey, even one of journalists. Yet we cannot help but feel that the findings of a recent study of our nation's leading journalists are at least profoundly interesting.

Journalists with the most to say about what is reported in the national news media subscribe to a secular view of morality and seldom or never attend religious services. That is but a partial finding of a survey of key U.S. news media workers, as reported by Religious News Service.

The survey was conducted by Robert Litcher of George Washington University and Stanley Rothman of Smith College as part of a larger survey of elite occupations. For the journalism survey, they conducted interviews with 240 editors of the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal, Time, Newsweek, U.S. News and World Report, the major television networks and wire services.

Not only are we incapable of analyzing the findings

but we must also stress that we have no idea of the professionalism of the survey. Individuals were chosen at random and 76 percent agreed to participate. They, according to the researchers, "appear typical of leadership groups throughout society," describing them as predominantly white, male, in their 30s and 40s and members of one of the best educated groups in the nation. Only 1 in 20 is non-white, 1 in 5 is female. 93 percent have college degrees and 55 percent attended graduate schools.

Anyone interested in the coverage of religious and related events should be concerned by the findings. Only 8 percent go to church or synagogue weekly and 86 percent seldom or never attend religious services. Exactly 50 percent have no religious affiliation. Of those who do, one in five is Protestant, one in seven Jewish and one in eight Catholic.

As a group they strongly support women's rights, homosexual rights and sexual freedom in general.

"Large majorities oppose government regulation of sexual activities... uphold a pro-choice position on abortion... a majority would not characterize even adultery as wrong," the study reports.

Ninety percent think a woman has the right to decide for herself whether to have an abortion and 79

percent personally agree strongly with a pro-choice stance.

According to the survey, 54 percent do not regard adultery as wrong and only 15 percent strongly agree that extramarital affairs are immoral.

"Thus," the researchers state, "members of the media elite emerge as strong supporters of sexual freedom or permissiveness, and as natural opponents of groups like the Moral Majority, who seek to enlist the state in restricting sexual freedom."

The researchers caution that their findings, carried out in 1980, can "tell us only about the backgrounds and attitudes of journalists as individuals. They do not tell us about the content of the news they present nor, indeed, whether the content is affected by their personal biases at all."

We agree. In the absence of expert interpretation, the survey must not be taken out of context. Journalists, as all Americans, are entitled to their own opinions. Their professionalism is supposed to even the score in their reporting.

It, however, would be foolish not to admit that such statistics leave a lingering worry when it comes to entrusting to coverage of such a life-and-death issue as abortion to a group, 79 percent of which strongly advocates pro-choice.

and Opinions

She Missed Crucifix

Editor:

I don't know if the Grinch or several Grinches were responsible for the removal of the crucifix from the sanctuary in preparation for Christmas. Meditation before the Blessed Sacrament is inspired by the sight of the crucifix that normally sets just behind and slightly above the tabernacle at St. Ambrose Church.

When I came before the crib on Christmas morning, I cannot look upon the Babe

without a thought about the cross. This child Who came to redeem us, was born to lead us on the path to salvation. It is because of the cross that we rejoice at His coming — yet there is not a crucifix in sight as the Christmas trees, wreath and poinsettias bring "atmosphere" to the church.

As far back as I can remember, the crucifix has spoken silently to my heart. When trials, tribulations, pain, heartaches or worldly concerns assail me, I look upon the crucifix and rise above them all while I discover a closer unity to Christ in every accepted cross that I carry. Every joy in life

becomes a gift gratefully received because I know He is the source of my blessings.

God answers daily prayers and is the One Who bears me up (Psalm 68). "Blessed be the Lord. Our God Who daily bears me up." If the Lamb of God had not suffered, died and risen again, we would still be a people walking in darkness. I cannot imagine living in a world such as ours without the image of Jesus upon the cross to touch my heart in silent understanding, compassion, hope, love, forgiveness and above all to be with Him forever.

Barbara A. Fischer 77 Harwick Road Rochester, N.Y. 14609

Editor's Note: Father James Marvin, pastor, said that the crucifix behind the tabernacle, not canonically required in any church, was removed for "a couple of days," while the Christmas crib was on display. The crucifix on the altar, however, remained permanently on display, he said.

Not Sign Of Love

Editor:

Just read the item "With Love Like This Who Needs Enemies." All I've got to say is if the Baptist church's love for Roman Catholics was so sincere I should think they wouldn't have the so-called Christian Alberto Rivera step inside that church. Who are they kidding — not us Roman Catholics. We know the true faith. So I agree with you, Terrance J. Brennan, "With Love Like This Who Needs Enemies?"

Anna Maria Borkowski RD 1 (Monterey) Beaver Dams, N.Y. 14812

Editor's Note: It should be pointed out that it was not the entire Baptist fellowship which sponsored Alberto Rivera. Instead it was one particular Baptist church in Penfield. Indeed, the following week's Courier-Journal reported on an example of Christian cooperation between the Community Baptist Church of Greece and St. Mark's Roman Catholic parish.

William F. Schmitz 174 Cedar Grove Drive Rochester, N.Y. 14617

2 Parishes Send Thanks

Editor:

We would like to express our deep gratitude to all the individuals and parishes who were so generous to us and our people during the Christmas season. Your gifts of food, clothing, toys, money, time and the loving care with which you shared them brought much joy to all of us.

We ask our loving Lord to bless you for your thoughtfulness to his needy.

"Whatsoever you do the least of my brethren, that you do unto me."

The Staffs St. Michael's and Holy Redeemer parishes

Give Credit To Television

Editor:

I would like television to get proper credit where credit is

due. So much negative is said about television.

Merv Griffin had as his guests Carol Burnett and Charles Grodin one morning. They discussed living the golden rule in our everyday lives. Many examples were given as a starting point for making this a happier world in which to live.

Keep it up, Merv, because it was a great show.

Barbara Root 47 Buckwheat Drive Fairport, N.Y. 14450

Fr. Albert Shamon

Word for Sunday

Jesus: First a Teacher

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mk. 1:21-28. (R1) Dt. 18:15-20. (R2) 7:32-35.

This Sunday begins Catholic Schools Week. I am tempted to write an apologia for Catholic schools. But the liturgical texts lend themselves more to the teacher than to the school.

We might ask, what was the first form of ministry of Jesus? Preaching? I think not. Healing? No. Prophesying? Again, no. Comforting the afflicted? Still no. As prominent and important as all these were in the ministry of Jesus, none was foremost.

The first act of ministry by Jesus, according to Mark's gospel, was teaching. Teaching! After calling the first of His disciples (disciples means pupils, learners), Jesus went to the city of Capernaum, entered the synagogue, and "began to teach." After teaching, He performed a healing right there in the synagogue. But He did this simply to illustrate His teaching. The inference from the miracle was this: the unclean spirit obeyed Him; how much more ought we to listen to His words and keep them!



teaching in a spirit of authority.

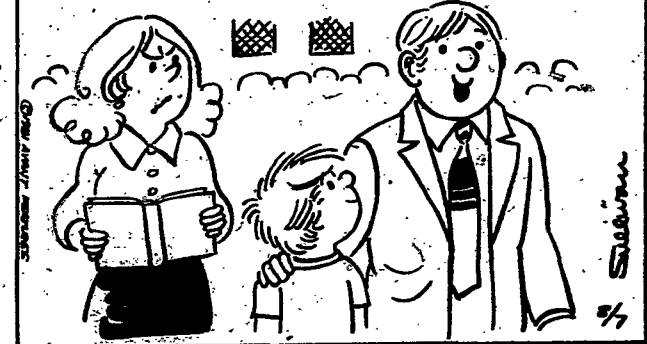
There is no need for the lack of discipline today in any school system — be it private or public. Authorities should exercise authority. Discipline is order for the sake of learning. A football game could never be played without the strict enforcement of the rules of the game. Nor can there be teaching, much less learning, in schools where there is no discipline. Unless discipline be restored in our schools, we shall continue to see the exodus of some of our best teachers from the field.

I would like to praise those unknown teachers — those wonderful Sisters and dedicated lay persons who have remained at their posts despite the difficulties. Great generals win campaigns, but it is the unknown soldiers who win the war. Famous educators can concoct new systems of pedagogy, but it is the unknown teacher who molds and guides the young. Books can impart knowledge, but only great teachers can transmit the love of knowledge.

For them no trumpets blare, no chariots wait, no golden decorations are decreed. THEY attack ignorance, awaken sleeping spirits, quicken the indolent, encourage the eager and steady the unstable. They light candles instead of cursing the darkness. Few persons deserve the accolades of the Republic as our teachers. In my book, they are enrolled in a democratic aristocracy — kings of themselves and servants of youth. God bless them all!



THAT FUNNY THING AROUND THE PRIEST'S NECK IS A MICROPHONE! HE USES IT SO HE WON'T HAVE TO SCREAM AT US.



"I'M GETTING ONE OF THOSE FOR YOUR MOTHER."

Backs 'Life' Collection

Editor:

There is an oft-spoken saying to the effect that the Lord is never outdone in charity.

Once again, however, on Jan. 30 and 31, we are being asked to support the needs of an important diocesan office not currently funded under the existing diocesan Social Ministry funding umbrella; i.e., the diocesan Human Life Commission.

The mission and work of this important office is an integral part of the apostolic life of the diocese. A vital, productive and effective Human Life Commission

plays a critical role in the pastoral work of any diocese, particularly with regard to the Church's teachings on the sacredness of life.

Compassionate, concerned and generous support for our diocesan Human Life Commission on Jan. 30 and 31 would be a wonderful expression of what it means to truly live our faith and share in the apostolic ministry for which our diocesan Human Life Commission is responsible.