

Editorials

Church Leaders, Reagan Should Meet at Summit

"Hoye Hits Reagan Budget for Failing to Provide for Tuition Tax Credits."

"Reagan Disputed on Notice That Salvadoran Situation Shows Rights Improvement."

"Churches Join Coalition against Plan to Resume Production of Nerve Gas."

"Reagan Defense Proposals Draw Fire from Churchmen at Meeting in Washington."

"Catholic Bishops Ask Congress to Overrule Reagan on El Salvador."

"Catholic Bishop Asserts It's Wrong to Buy Arms Amid World's Poverty."

All of these are suggested headlines from Religious News Service in recent days on its stories concerning religion and Reagan. We have seen none reflecting any agreement between mainstream religious groups in the United States and the current administration.

By no means does this mean the president hasn't maintained his popularity with the electorate which put him into office, at least for the time being. But, along with constant friction between religious-oriented groups on one hand and Reaganomics on the other, there is indication of serious rupture between our nation's leaders and those striving to bring Christian and other moral persuasion to our national life. We reiterate when we speak of religion in this context, we refer to mainstream bodies, excluding the so-called Moral Majority which has its own relationship with the administration.

The gap is frightening. We must wonder why is it that in almost every single case the administration position — whether on budget cuts, defense spending, El Salvador, the arms race — is at odds with those

charged with nurturing Gospel values in our nation. We live in violent times, on the brink, so to speak. Our very lives are in jeopardy every second of every minute with the possibility of nuclear holocaust at our fingertips. On the other hand, we see our systems of morality crumbling — families disintegrating, resorting to violence and death gaining pre-eminence, abortion and euthanasia accepted on an increasing basis.

Obviously a rapprochement is vital right here within our national walls. The administration must begin to learn to discuss positions that defend the moral views of our religious leaders — discuss and listen and perhaps change. The various Church organizations must be more sensitive to the precarious and highly charged air with in which national leaders must act.

Frankly, we do not begin to have any idea how such compromise might be achieved. Perhaps the president should take the initiative and call a summit meeting — a serious and sincere meeting — with leaders from the world of religion. They should stress possible areas of agreement and show the nation that even when they disagree they are capable of maintain cordiality and mutual respect.

and Opinions

Reader Can't Support Hatch

Editor:

Giving support to the Hatch Amendment is a very agonizing decision to those of us who have been closely following the development of this situation.

As I understand it, re: proposed Hatch Amendment "states that abortion is not a constitutionally established right and that laws restricting abortion may be enacted by Congress and the states..." (Page 1, Feb. 13, 1982, Courier-Journal, article by John Dash).

If I view abortion as the taking of innocent life, i.e., murder, I understand this amendment as saying "...murder is not a constitutionally established right..." Isn't this an already established fact? We already have laws on the books to cover murder. Wouldn't it be more logical to establish personhood for the unborn? Why not opt for the Human Life Bill which only needs a majority right now. This bill would establish personhood to the unborn. This is the knowledge the courts said they lacked — they did not know when life began which resulted in the liberal abortion rulings which has caused so

much death and destruction to the unborn.

The Hatch Amendment needs 67 votes in the Senate for passage. One of Hatch's own aides, Steven Markman, admitted in his now famous memo that only 55 to 60 votes will be forthcoming — some 7 to 12 votes short for passage in the Senate for the Hatch Amendment. It would seem more reasonable to push for the Human Life Bill and or afterwards, if necessary, due to court action, work for an amendment which all pro-life people can support. (President Reagan has indicated his support of the Human Life Bill.) Everybody knows that it often takes years for an amendment to get passed and some never make it.

Some say that the Hatch Amendment is a first step in the right direction. Since amendments are rather rare for passage this may be our last step. Is the direction we wish to take for a pro-life amendment — one that as your own editorial of Feb. 24, 1982, says will "restrict abortions but not necessarily ban." The Hatch Amendment would also allow each of the 50 states to pass laws for or against abortion. If some states favor and some don't, those that favor abortion can become the abortion mills in the United States.

We must not allow our-

selves to fall into the trap of semantics. If one considers abortion synonymous with murder, the Hatch Amendment seems useless. As I said above, we already have laws against murder.

Pope John Paul II (Dec. 7, 1981) said, "The life of every person, including that of those conceived and not yet born, deserves absolute and unconditional respect." (Lifeletter No. 1, Jan. 11, 1982).

Josephine B. Churey  
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Trappist Lauds RapAround

Editor:

There exists an increasingly notable nonchalant attitude, on the part of contemporary society, towards young people in general. This is reflected by the youth themselves. In my past dealings with young people, they have conveyed to me an attitude which seems to be suggestive of their feeling that they are merely tolerated by society. They have the impression that "adults" would rather not be bothered with their problems and concerns and, therefore, they look for other ways of fitting in. These "other ways" are all too well known to us — drugs, prostitution, violence, cults, etc. What has happened to society that our young people feel so displaced and unimportant? We blame government; we blame Church institutions; we blame educational systems; we blame everyone and everything but OURSELVES! This cold truth stares us right in the eyes and condemns us, but we would rather choose to look in the other direction.

It is with this attitude in mind that I wish to thank and commend the Courier-Journal for its genuine interest in youth. Each week, without fail, you proclaim to all of your readers that young people are very much a part of society and the Catholic Church. This recognition is so important that its value goes beyond words. I enjoy reading your section entitled RapAround. It provides me with fresh and sincere insights which come from the teenagers who contribute to your features "Speaking Out" and "Equal Time." Indeed, we are very much reminded that it is the young in heart who are the true prophets of our day and age!

My hope is that we will all accept the challenge of reaching out to the young where they are, and not to where we would rather have them be. First, however, let us learn to accept ourselves for who we are, then we will be able to accept others for who they are.

Brother M. Aaron, O.C.S.O.  
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Redemptorists Commended

Editor:

I would like to extend publicly a great big thank you to the good fathers at Our Lady of Victory Church. They are very special in their own unique way and their presence among us is a great blessing to our diocese.

For those not familiar with the Redemptorist Fathers, a trip downtown to early (7 and 8 a.m.) noon (12:10 p.m.) or late (5:20 p.m.) Mass would prove very rewarding and enlightening. Their schedule of novenas and devotions meet the varied lifestyles of the whole community. The Wednesday novena to Our Lady of Perpetual Help is so popular that there is an extra service at 11 a.m. to take care of the overflow. On Mondays, during Lent, the Stations of the Cross precede the noon Mass followed by a holy hour of preparation to the hearts consisting of rosary and an informative and captivating sermon by Father Patrick Magnier. The rosary is also recited every afternoon before the 5:20 Mass. The novena to St. Anthony is held each Tuesday before the noon Mass, the novena to St. John and St. John Neumann on Thursday and Friday respectively. There is also, a holy hour for priests on Friday after noon Mass for any interested.

There is exposition of the Blessed Sacrament every day as well as confession before every daily Mass and on Saturday afternoons.

Mrs. Robert Leahy  
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Sees Hope In Closing

Editor:

The closing of St. Agnes High School will be a loss to



"I'M MAKING YOU ANCHORPRIEST AT ST. LUCY'S."

our community. While it is sad and disappointing, the women who had the courage to make this difficult decision are to be commended. Reading the signs of the times is often obscured by emotion, sentiment and resistance to change. No one enjoys participating in death.

The inconvenience, and perhaps even hardship this decision will cause for the present student body, the faculty and staff is unfortunate. As a member of the Class of '58 it is not easy to bid farewell to our loved school. But the present and projected population of Rochester cannot support seven Catholic high schools. If the closing of St. Agnes can help to bring a consolidation of efforts among the remaining Catholic high schools to ensure the continuing opportunity for Catholic education on the secondary level, it will be worth the loss.

Ruth Meier  
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A Sister Shares Her Joy

Editor:

Since I first became aware of my religious vocation when I was at home in Rochester, I want to share a very recent happiness with your readers.

On Feb. 13, I had the deep joy of celebrating the 25th anniversary of my religious profession in the Society of

the Sacred Heart. It was a most significant day for me and the ceremony was magnificent. I renewed my vows, made 25 years ago, just before I received Holy Communion. It was a solemn moment. The congregation included more than 100 Religious of the Sacred Heart; 18 of my family who had braved the elements to arrive on time; several priests and many, many friends. Everyone contributed to the singing and put their whole heart into the prayers of the Liturgy.

Of course, such a day in anyone's life calls forth memories of the past, all of which, in my case, filled my heart with gratitude to God. The spirit of the Society of the Sacred Heart is an interior spirit, and our life is one of contemplative prayer and apostolic action. Whatever my apostolate has been — always service of the community in one way or another — the love of the Heart of Jesus, dwelling within me through the Holy Spirit, has been at work, and had, I hope, touched many hearts. Words really can't convey the depth of spiritual joy one experiences in religious life. It calls for great faith because it isn't always easy to follow the Lord along His way, but the hundredfold He promised is a reality.

Sister Julia Micciche, RSCJ  
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Educational Programs On Hatch Amendment

March 14 — St. Mary's Ontario, 7:30 p.m.

March 21 — St. Mary of the Assumption, Scottsville, 3 to 5 p.m.

March 31 — St. Jerome's, East Rochester, 8 p.m.

Lenten Regulations

Today, Ash Wednesday, is a day of fast of abstinence from meat. Good Friday is the only other day of both fast and abstinence.

Other Fridays of Lent are days of abstinence from meat.

The fast is defined as one full meal a day, with two lighter meals. It is required of those 21-59 years of age.

The prohibition against meat on Fridays applies to those 14 years of age and older.

A Catholic should not lightly excuse himself from these practices.