

Editorials

Hate's Legacy

War and bigotry are blood relatives, both rooted in hatred.

Often they work together, sometimes they are complementary. In the recent case of the postponed visit of Pope John Paul II to Great Britain, war accomplished what bigotry couldn't.

No man is an island, John Donne wrote. And in this small world of ours, no flicker of bitterness or violence is insulated. A confrontation in the south Atlantic affects European relations and thus the world.

What may have been an irenic, healing mission has been erased. Hatred survives unto a new day.

Reason Needed, Not Revenge

And closer to home, another of hatred's brood may be sprung loose on New York State — capital punishment.

The latest death penalty bill has passed the Senate and is due for Assembly debate. Proponents feel they have enough votes this year to override Gov. Hugh Carey's sure veto.

The bill would provide as a cure for certain murders — those committed during the course of another felony, such as murders of witnesses, multiple murders, murders for hire and murders by those who "knowingly or recklessly created a substantial risk of death of many persons."

The Assembly version will include an amendment that the jury may at its discretion give a life sentence without parole to such offenders. Regardless, the main import is the restoration of death as a means of punishment.

The New York Times pointed out editorially that the bill is logically faulty. For instance, a murder committed accidentally during a robbery would be punishable by death while premeditated murder would not be.

But rationality is only incidental to the crux of the issue. The drive for capital punishment is a rush for vengeance. It represents mob mentality. Its popularity has precedence in lynch mobs. And those elected officials who submit to such rule are neither paying themselves or society any respect.

There is still time for reason to replace revenge. Unfortunately, that would take more courage than many of the politicians in Albany have evidenced up to now.

and Opinions

Bible Always Relevant

Editor:

This is in reply to the woman who wrote to Father Hohman to say that she was uncomfortable with some of the readings from scripture read at Mass.

She said that when Paul wrote his letters, they were quite relevant to the needs of that day. However, she intimated that they are not relevant today.

As someone who believes that the Bible does not only contain the word of God but is the word of God, it upsets me to read such statements. I think that trying to pick and choose what is relevant and what is not relevant in the Bible is the most dangerous thing we can do, Satan just loves it when we decide that we know more than the inspired men who wrote the Bible. Shall we all just ignore the things that we don't think apply to us? In 2 Tim. 3:16, Paul said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." And what does Paul say to study? Some scripture? No — 2 Tim. 3:16: "All scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness."

Father Hohman was right about one thing — it is wrong to take passages out of context, because the rest of the chapter discussed in the article in the Courier (1 Cor. 7:25-35) needs to be read in

order to get the overall picture of what Paul is saying. Paul said in Gal 1: 10-12, "For do I now persuade men or God? Or do I seek to please men? For if I yet please men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you brethren that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, for I neither received of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." This lady suggests that readings from the recent Vatican council be substituted for the word of God at Mass. Nothing should ever be substituted for the inspired word of God as written in the Bible.

Peter also said in 1 Peter 1: 19-21, "We have a more sure word of prophesy, whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: knowing this first, that no prophesy of the scripture is of any interpretation, for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man but as holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

Father Hohman said that Paul evidently believed that the world was coming to an end, therefore the state of total concentration on the Lord was the best possible state. Then he went on to say that this does not apply in our time. Why not? Paul and the other apostles were expecting the imminent return of Jesus, and how much nearer his return is now than it was then! Titus 2:13: "Looking for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of the great God and our savior, Jesus Christ."

The apostles were expecting Jesus then, and we had better be expecting him and be ready.

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No Woman Priests

Editor:

Bishop Clark's pastoral letter on women in the Church shows his deep concern for women who feel they have been "left out" of the power structure of this divine institution. It may surprise the bishop to know that many of us women do not feel left out at all and never did. However, perhaps in their acceptance of the pastoral letter as "another step forward" toward the priesthood, these women, led by the Women's Ordination Conference, should be reminded of several facts. First, the Sacred Congregation of the Faith declared in 1976 that women can never be ordained to the priesthood because Christ did not ordain women. Our Holy Father had to reiterate this when he came to the United States and was confronted by a "suffering" nun who not only challenged his authority and that of the Church, but also dared to appear before him in secular dress.

Secondly, for those who interpret the bishop's letter as an open invitation for women or any lay person to read the Gospel or give the homily at Mass (the Liturgy of the Word and the Eucharistic Liturgy), this is forbidden as stated in the 1980 "Instruction from the Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship on Certain Norms Concerning Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery."

Thirdly, the NCCB Committee that made the Courier-Journal's headlines (May 12) is composed of only five bishops out of over 300 bishops in this country. A mere handful of bishops on a committee who condemn "sexism" and "clericalism" in this country is hardly from the American bishops to pressure the Church for women priests. Even if the American bishops of any one of them "ordained" a woman, that ordination would automatically be null and void.

I suggest that all the suffering, aspiring priestesses look to the most revered, important, powerful person in the Church after the Blessed Trinity: The Blessed Virgin Mary holds this revered position even though her own

Son did not ordain her. If these women truly love the Church, they will listen to the biblical reaffirmation she gave us at Fatima — "Pray and do penance or you will likewise perish." Perhaps they, as well as the rest of us, can offer our obedience to the Church, painful as it sometimes is, as sacrifices in the spirit of penance and reparation for sins.

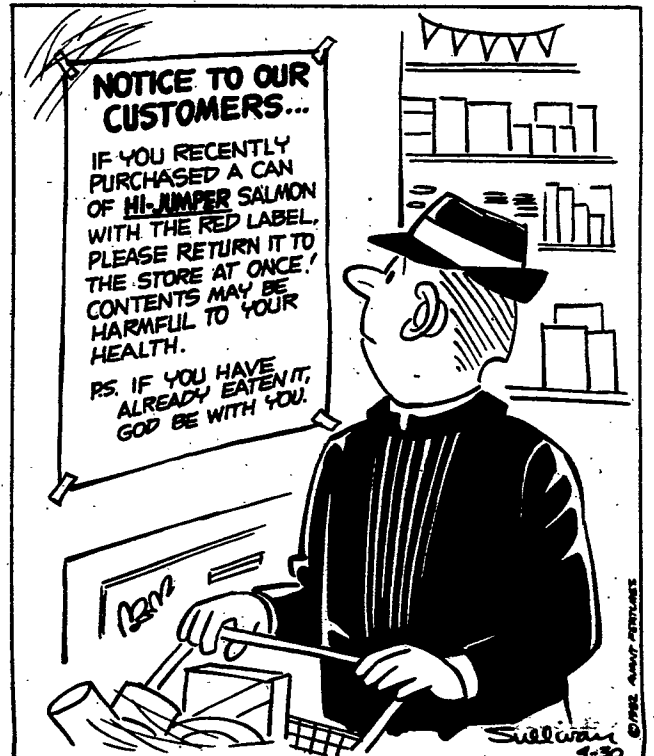
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Editor's Note: It should be pointed out that Bishop Clark's pastoral letter explicitly stated the Church's position on woman priests: "... the ordination of women is excluded because Jesus, in choosing the Twelve, did not choose women ... and the Church in choosing their descendants, must remain faithful to that original pattern ... "As for women's present role in the liturgy, Bishop Clark stated, "Two years ago, in obedience to the reaffirmed liturgical norms of the Church governing the matter, I directed that only ordained persons should preach the homily at the Eucharistic Liturgy."

Poisoning Cumulative

Editor:

The actual contamination of our world is not alone a matter of mass spraying. Indeed, for most of us, this is of less importance that the many small-scale exposures to which we are subjected day by day, year after year. Like the constant dripping of water that in turn wears away the hardest stone, this birth-to-death contact with dangerous chemicals may in the end prove disastrous. Each of the recurrent exposures, no matter how slight, contributes to the progressive buildup of chemicals in our bodies and so to cumulative poisoning. Probably no person is immune to contact with this spreading contamination unless he lives in the most isolated situation imaginable. Lulled by the soft sell and the hidden persuader, the average person is seldom aware of the deadly materials with which he is surrounding himself; indeed, he may not realize he is using them at all. So thoroughly has the age of poisons become established that anyone may walk into a store and with no questions asked buy substances of far greater death-dealing power than the medicinal drug for which he may be required to sign a "poison book" in the pharmacy next door. A few minutes in any supermarket is enough to alarm the most



stouthearted customer — we learned more about provided he has even rudimentary knowledge of the chemicals presented for his choice.

If a huge skull and crossbones were hung above the insecticide department, the customer might at least enter it with the respect normally accorded death-dealing materials.

This includes the chemicals in glass containers within easy reach of a child's exploring hand.

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Retreat Or School?

Editor:

I have just had the privilege to be a participant of a Jeremiah Retreat. It was in the beautiful Notre Dame Retreat House on Canandaigua Lake, under the direction of Father Dave Mura.

At first, I had mixed feelings about going on the retreat. I didn't know what to expect and I was extremely nervous. Somehow I made it through the registration period. At one point, I hadn't the slightest idea of why I went.

However, I was to be greatly comforted. Before the night was over I made new friends and really got into the retreat. I couldn't get over the many things I had done the first night. The second day was even better. Everyone was part of a big family. We did many things, discussed and shared a lot. I have to say,

we learned more about ourselves that day than anyone did in years. I found what I deeply wanted which was to feel a peace of mind and body and to be spiritually uplifted by the Lord. I was. Everyone was fantastic. There was a lot of love, learning and sharing. We really gave God prime time in our lives. By the end, the staff and participants were sad to see it end.

I recommend Jeremiah Retreats with deep sincerity. I'm positive anyone who makes one will get much out of it.

After this terrific experience, I felt new and took my new spirit to school. My spirit met a terrible letdown at school. Even though I had told the three highest authorities at Aquinas that I'd be going on retreat, and the principal thought school was more important and gave me an illegal absence, I was told when I came back that I had 10 detentions. To be honestly true, I broke down and cried when I met my mother. The only thing keeping me together was to take what I learned from the Jeremiah Retreat and use it.

The reason I was illegally excused was that my school had set up retreats in school already. True. These were informative but I did not experience Jesus Christ.

I firmly support Jeremiah Retreats and am looking forward to the Genesis and Teen Seminar retreats. I must say, if I had to do it all over again, I most certainly would. God bless.

Brian Waldmiller
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