



Honoree

Michele Calabria, daughter of Joseph G. and Rosemarie Calabria of Holy Ghost Parish, a volunteer worker at Highland Hospital and a student at Churchville-Chili High School, receives a medallion of the City of Rochester from Mayor Thomas Ryan signifying her representation of the city in a commercially-sponsored contest.

Fr. John Reedy



Looking for the Lord

Problems For Bishops' Pastoral

Two big problems face that gestating pastoral statement on war and peace.

First, it will be tired news long before it reaches its moment of birth.

And second, it is bogged down in the concepts, language and distinctions of traditional Catholic moral theology.

The first draft, which was supposed to be confidential, is just a bit less available than the telephone book. It has already been subjected to a wide variety of published comment.

The second draft will be circulated, probably in September. This will lead to a second round of news reports, then a second wave of criticisms, with more news reports about the criticisms.

The bishops will then offer further suggestions and amendments at their November meeting. Final approval and publication will come no earlier than spring or autumn of next year.

By that time most readers are going to be either bored with all the arguments or thoroughly confused by their vague recollection of what was reported about the various drafts.

Given the subject and the process, I don't know how this problem could be avoided. It's just a fact that is going to lessen the public impact of the final document.

NFP Plans 4 Info Sessions

Four information sessions have been scheduled by Natural Family Planning of Rochester:

Sept. 10, 7:30 to 9 p.m., Main Conference Room, Rochester General Hospital; Sept. 13, 7:30 to 9 p.m., Kearney Building, St. Mary's Hospital; Sept. 22, 7:30 to 9 p.m., Lakeside Hospital, Brockport; and Sept. 24, 7:30 to 9 p.m., Thompson Hospital, Canandaigua.

At the same time, I recognize that the whole process is contributing to the public awareness of the danger and moral problems involved in the threat of nuclear war and the stockpiling of nuclear weapons. Though relatively few people might read and study the final statement, there is value in this increased public sensitivity.

The second problem has to do with the appropriateness of the concepts and language of the first draft for the audience and purpose intended.

Catholic teachers, scholars, clergymen are familiar with the concepts and language of a long, specialized tradition of moral theology. It deals with things like the nature and gravity of sin, mixed intentions, multiple effects of actions.

Many of the published criticisms of the first draft have been based on these concepts of moral theology. For example, there's a technical debate on the conditions required for situations in which the evil effect of an action might be tolerated, not intended.

But is this way of thinking and speaking an effective means to communicate with the audience they wish to address?

I assume that they wish to speak: (1) to the Catholics of the United States; (2) to all Americans who are concerned about the danger of the arms race; (3) to those public officials who must make policy decisions for the nation. They want to convince these officials that they must find some way to halt the escalation of the nuclear arms race and to negotiate effective nuclear disarmament.

To achieve this purpose, you don't resort to the language and categories of moral theology.

The committee consulted theologians, government officials, military experts. I wish it had also brought in some poets or novelists or — forgive me — even an expert on advertising copy. These are the kinds of people who might help draft a statement of hope, vision, motivation.

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Guild meeting

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