

## Editorials

# Now... More Than Ever

The present Washington administration's policy that the government has little or no responsibility toward the plight of its less fortunate citizens has placed a heavy burden on Americans. The ancillary to such a philosophy is that private organizations and individuals should tend to the needs of impoverished citizens.

Add to this policy burgeoning inflation and joblessness, and it is little wonder that the good people at Catholic Charities are reporting the most and earliest requests for aid from the annual Courier-Journal Christmas Fund.

Annually, as part of the campaign, the Courier describes the 100 "neediest" cases in the diocese to give readers an idea of the kind of problems in our midst. The newspaper always comments that these cases are only a small part of a much larger number of destitute situations.

This year, it seems, even that number is growing, as attested to by the numbers of folks walking into various Charities offices in need of help at Christmastime.

The great bulk of these people are in trouble through no fault of their own. Many have been victimized by the aforementioned tight fiscal philosophy in Washington. Others have lost their jobs through situations in which they have no influence. Others have simply been born into poverty. And there are also

those whom society has somehow left alone — and lonely.

Unhappily, poverty has been a chronic illness within this diocese. The Church has set up many agencies to deal with it on a continual basis, in an attempt to bring material assistance and spiritual balm to its victims.

It was in this philosophy that the Courier-Journal Christmas Fund was instituted 13 years ago with the hope of at least alleviating the hurt at this holy time of the year.

The need has always been there; these days it has been aggravated.

Now, more than ever, it is up to such organizations as Catholic Charities and to all of us as caring individuals to come to the aid of our suffering neighbors.

## and Opinions

### Padre Pio Cause Pushed

Editor:

I would like to share with readers of the Courier-Journal information about Padre Pio — the priest who bore the visible wounds of Our Lord for 50 years. My husband and I were privileged to be able to see him and be present for his Mass (at San Giovanni, Italy) several days before he died. Padre Pio was called to his heavenly award on Sept. 23, 1968.

The preliminaries for the Cause of Beatification and Canonization were begun in November 1969. The process has been given Apostolic Approval.

Padre Pio was known for his fervent Mass celebration, his ministry in the confessional and his mystical gifts. According to an article in the National Review (October 1968), Padre Pio received 5,000 letters a week by the 1960s and about 1.5 million visitors a year. There is much testimony by sane, well-educated, unprejudiced people to the effect that he was gifted with an odor of sanctity, that he was often reported in two places at the same time, that he continually, but especially in the confessional, displayed intimate knowledge of the secret thoughts, sins, prayers, temptations and devotional lives of the people he spoke to. Many have received spiritual conversions, physical cures and other favors from God through Padre Pio's prayers. He was also known to help childless couples.

Thousands of spiritual children of Padre Pio are all over the world. It is still possible to become Padre Pio's Spiritual Child. For in-

formation on this or for books or the magazine "The Voice of Padre Pio," readers may write to The National Center for Padre Pio, Vera Calandra, Director, 11 N. Whitehall Road, Norristown, Pa. 19403.

Books or the magazine would make very good Christmas gifts. For children, there is a comic book style story of Padre Pio.

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### Courier Called Not Objective

Editor:

I was shocked to note in the Nov. 19 Catholic Courier that no mention was made of Veterans Day. No doubt your pacifist attitude led to the oversight.

I would like to remind you that millions loyally served these United States in time of conflict and hundreds of thousands have been killed and wounded. Without these sacrifices there would not be a Catholic Courier or a Catholic Church as we know it today.

The barbarous treatment of Poland, Afghanistan and billions of other people is only prevented from engulfing these United States by our strong nuclear capability (whether you like it or not) and through the dedication of our fine servicemen and servicewomen.

I also noted in a recent Catholic Courier that the Vatican supports nuclear generation of electricity but the story was buried on Page 18. With your negative attitude on nuclear energy and obvious bias, it seems this

story in the interests of objective reporting should have been on Page 1, or is objective reporting too much to ask of the Catholic Courier?

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### Bishops Great On Nukes, But

Editor:

The Office of Black Ministries strongly supports the courageous stand of the U.S. Catholic Bishops pastoral on nuclear weapons and an end to their proliferation. The posture of the bishops forms the kind of unpopular moral leadership the Church must assume in addressing political and social issues, and offers to religious leadership of all faiths a progressive model to emulate.

OBM, however, is not satisfied with our bishops' stand on nuclear weapons only because we wish that this might signal the beginning of spiritual daring that will lead the bishops to utter decisive and uncompromising statements on condemnation of all acts of human injustice shrouding our world including South African apartheid, and the United States support of that immoral system; white racism in the Catholic Church; exploitation of the poor; the oppression of women; maltreatment of immigrants, refugees and migrants, and the barbaric destruction of Lebanon, for openers. When this is done and when other American religious institutions respond in kind, perhaps the illusory solidification of international human justice for all peoples will begin to take shape.

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### 'Upsy Daisy' Seen as Lesson

Editor:

In my current survey of representative Catholic women, 100 percent of them responded that they would eagerly climb up a wall — "Upsy Daisy!" like the Sisters in Avila — to see the Vicar of Christ. (Upsy Daisy! photo, C-J 11-10-82). None of these perceptive women was able to generate feelings of outrage and indignity to women as communicated by the author of "Photo Seen in Poor Taste"

(C-J 11-24-82). In further contrast, those surveyed do perceive the photo as a communication "to promote dignity and uplift the spirit of a world in need."

To a superlative degree, the photo of the Carmelite Sisters illuminates many paths to elevate souls to God and to the supernatural world.

The "Upsy Daisy" photo can be seen as the prelude for hearing the joyful, grateful hearts of the sisters shout, "Hosanna! Blessed is he, the Vicar of Christ, temple of the Holy Spirit, who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest."

In obedience to Our Lord's magisterium which requires religious, who profess Catholic faith, to wear garb that readily identifies them as religious, the Sisters of Avila communicate the presence of God to the world with credibility. Though the sisters improvised with the top of a wall instead of a housetop (Matt. 10:27), they let their light shine before men, giving glory to Our Father (Matt. 5:16).

From "The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World" (Familiaris Consortio, Pope John Paul II): the liberated hearts of the religious "burn with greater love for God and all humanity" and "bear witness that the Kingdom of God and His Justice is... the only definitive value. It is for this reason the Church, throughout her history, has always defended the superiority of this charism to that of marriage." Christian couples, therefore, have a right to expect... a good example and a witness of fidelity to their vocation until death."

Those surveyed pray with the author of "Nice to See Nuns in Habits" (C-J 10-24-82): "May St. Teresa of Avila look down on the American nuns and intercede and pray for them."

In our supernatural world (the real world) the surveyed women see a primary need for the American bishops to get their house in order; to exercise leadership against the spiritual warfare, starvations and decimating spiritual holocausts within the Church, as a prerequisite for credible communication with the temporal world on such matters as potential nuclear holocausts (Luke 12:4-12).

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"THE FIERY OUTRAGE HE USED TO FEEL FOR THE DEVIL AND ALL HIS WORKS SOMEHOW SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN DEFLECTED TO THE LOCAL GAS COMPANY."

### Jesus Was Dreamer, Too

Editor:

Stephen Fesh (Dec. 1) certainly doesn't like the bishops' letter on war and peace or the input of "Bishop Aloysius Dreamer." As your editorial pointed out, the bishops sought out advice from many sources: scientific, medical, biblical, ethical, military, including former and current government officials.

I'm glad they did that but they really didn't have to. It would have been sufficient to follow the voice found in the New Testament, a voice that instructed his followers not to resist evil. "Whoever slaps you on the right cheek, turn and offer him the left. If he sues you for your shirt, let him have your coat as well... Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, only so can you be the children of your heavenly Father who sends his sun and rain to good and bad alike."

In discussing "the peace issue" with others I'm often reminded that Jesus once said he didn't come to bring peace, but the sword. But very few people realize that "the sword" was for his followers, and for them it was the cost of discipleship, the cross of Christ. We bear the cross of Christ when we are wronged, when we are persecuted for justice's sake.

John Howard Yoder, in Sojourners, put it this way: "The cross of Christ was the price of his obedience to God

amidst a rebellious world; it was suffering for having done right, for loving where others hated... God's overcoming evil with good. The cross of the Christian is no different; it is the price of our obedience to God's love toward all others in a world ruled by hate."

Many people find Jesus a dreamer, too. But Jesus was no dreamer. He was no dummy either. He knew full well the cost of his unlimited love, the suffering it would mean for himself and his followers. Yoder writes, "When the Christian whom God has disarmed lays aside carnal weapons it is not in the last analysis because they are too dangerous, but because they are too weak."

What a novel idea! Nuclear weapons — inadequate because they are too weak! And they are. They can never do what we are counting on them to do, bring peace. Only Christ can.

I have often wondered what would happen if Christian people everywhere took the gospel seriously and really lived it. The Sermon on the Mount provides us with a model of life based on infinite love. Perhaps, as some fear, it would lead us to the side of the crucified Christ on Calvary. But just possibly it might lead us to his side in a Kingdom based on justice, peace, brotherhood and love.

But that's another dream. In either case, we would be at the side of the Master.

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## Guidelines

The Courier-Journal welcomes your opinions. Letters must bear the writer's signature, full address and telephone number. They should be sent to Opinion, Courier-Journal, 114 S. Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607.

Opinions should be brief, typed, double-spaced, no longer than 1 1/2 pages.

We routinely condense letters, edit offensive words and libelous statements, and reserve the right to reject letters. Generally speaking, however, only limited grammatical corrections will be made and the letters will reflect the writer's own style.

Because submitted opinions exceed the space for letters, we publish only original letters addressed to us. We will not use poetry, open letters, or copies of letters sent elsewhere. To ensure diversity, we limit each writer to one letter per month.