

Editorials

Hope Is Not Lost

No one can claim any direct connection but it is interesting that just days after John Paul II spoke against the death penalty, asking clemency for those on death row, the U.S. Supreme Court would intervene and stay one such execution, as prelude to what many feel may be a new and major juridical position on capital punishment.

Of course, the highest American court would have so acted even if the pope had not talked on the topic so recently to diplomats from around the world.

However, while no direct link exists, it is entirely possible that the continuing dialogue on the sanctity of life is having influence even on secular institutions. It is not likely that courts would continue to ponder such questions if those opposing the death penalty had remained silent.

In the same context, the ongoing educational efforts by such groups as the National Conference of Catholic Bishops on the dangers of the nuclear buildup has some effect on national policy. Faced with such contention, the government must continually reconsider and explain its position to the people.

And in like manner, as long as those who believe in life continue the struggle against liberalized abortion, that issue will not die. The ultimate victory has not been grasped but progress can be seen in several concrete anti-abortion bills to be debated in the highest halls of legislation in the land this term.

Indeed, a president appears to be part and parcel of the anti-abortion fight.

None of these advances would have been possible if concerned citizens merely accepted the status quo imposed by such as Gov. Rockefeller and the 1973 Supreme Court.

Good Try . . . But

The efforts of the Toronto archdiocese to attract vocations to the priesthood by using outdoor advertising is commendable for several reasons but it is doubtful that it will fulfill its ultimate purpose.

As an archdiocesan official pointed out, the billboards probably do heighten awareness of the Church and they probably do act as a reminder of the ongoing need for priests and it is encouraging to see the Church employing modern means of communication.

And the billboards, at least the one pictured by NC News Service, are visually well-done.

The innovative and energetic attempt by the archdiocese is also laudatory. It is to be hoped that the venture succeeds. However, it is unlikely that very many who are enticed to the priesthood through a billboard ad will make the grade in such a serious and all-consuming vocation.



The Toronto billboard. (NC Photo)

and Opinions

Return Religion To Schools

Editor:

It's sad to hear of the controversy that is presently going on in our courts and legislative bodies, trying to prohibit the reading of the Bible in American schools and the reciting of prayers in class.

I know for a fact that our courts and state officials have too easily given in to efforts to ban religious teachings from the American schools. I deeply feel that America has carried the business of separation of church and state much too far, because I surely realize that the writers of the Constitution truly meant freedom of religion and not freedom from religion, as it is now being practiced in our schools.

Already, I know that the trend has been carried too far and I truly feel that, in time, the American public will react to all this and demand that religion be once again allowed in our schools and become a part of the lives of their children once more, as it should be.

should be.

You only have to sit down and read the First Amendment to know that it was never meant to outlaw religion from the American school system — especially when you hear that students in some parts of our country can't even sing carols at Christmastime in school. This surely demonstrates to all of us the moral decay that is today taking place and undermining the spiritual lives of our youth in schools.

I know that it was definitely a sad decision when the Supreme Court of the United States outlawed mandatory school prayers. I also know that it's going to be a long hard struggle to clear up all the misinterpretations of the decision and how it's just gotten completely out of hand.

I sincerely know that at some point in the future, the decision surely has got to go back before the Supreme Court, once again, for their clarification and I pray that this time around they will surely make the right decision and allow the American youth in our schools to get to know a great God who dearly loves all of them.

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Column Said Deficient

Editor:

Sister Estelle Martin (Courier-Journal, Jan. 19) wrote quite perceptively on the Liturgy of the Eucharist as a continuity, an evolution or progression of the presence of Christ rather than a single "magic moment." Such has been one of the themes of the liturgical renewal (Euchar. Myst. 1.9: III II. 55). Yet at the same time this reader noted some grave deficiencies which marred her efforts.

Omission and ambiguity. Sister does not take any pains to incorporate the doctrine of transubstantiation in her article. She quotes St. Mark's Last Supper account without commentary, earlier refers to Christ as "present in bread and wine," and His "active presence among us" or "sacramental reality," whatever these mean. There is

no clear profession of Catholic faith whereupon consecration there is "a change of the entire substance" (Vat. I. Prof. of Faith) of bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ: for that which "had been made Eucharist . . . is both Flesh and Blood of Jesus Who was made flesh" (St. Justin Martyr, 1st Apol.). Thus as Christ dies a bloody death no more (Rom. 6, 10), by reason of incarnation and human nature, He is present wholly as God-Man, no such deformities such as copresence with the mundane, presence by sign alone, "spiritually" . . .

Ambiguity is also evident in her remark that "the faithful repeat the same story . . . just as Christ and his apostles did . . ." There is no way in which we are able to know if she intended (even in context) a historical recollection or retelling, as opposed to re-living or a "doing" this in memory of. "The priest . . . reproduces (what) was accomplished when Christ instituted the Sacrifice for His Apostles." (Severus of Antioch)

Misplaced emphasis. Sister stressed the real aspect of the Eucharistic Liturgy over sacrifice almost to the latter's exclusion. We are reminded "the Sacrifice and Sacred Meal belong to the same Mystery — so much so that they are linked by the closest bond. For in the Sacrifice of the Mass Our Lord is immolated . . . (while) participation in the Lord's Supper is always communion with Christ offering Himself for us as a sacrifice to the Father." (Euchar. Myst. Intro. 3b)

Finally, there is the overemphasis of the presence of Christ in among us rather than on the integral presence of Christ, that is, as He is in Himself (in the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the Blessed Sacrament). The Blessed Sacrament of Holy Eucharist alone is afforded the title of "Real Presence" as It is presence "par excellence" (Euchar. Myst. 1, 9; Muster. Fidei) "in modo singulari." (Euchar. Myst. III. II. 55)

"If God" is more than Nature. Theology claims a place among the sciences (Cardinal Newman — The Idea of a Univ. I, II). As such it should be respected with clarity and decisiveness. And in the realm of the Holy Eucharist these have been hardly stifling to such persons as St. Theresa of Avila, Faber or Merton. The mystic and physicist both seek truth stripped of ignorance and

prejudice, as it is in itself and in relation to other truths. There is no place in theology for an agnostic attitude.

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Kolbe More Than a Saint

Editor:

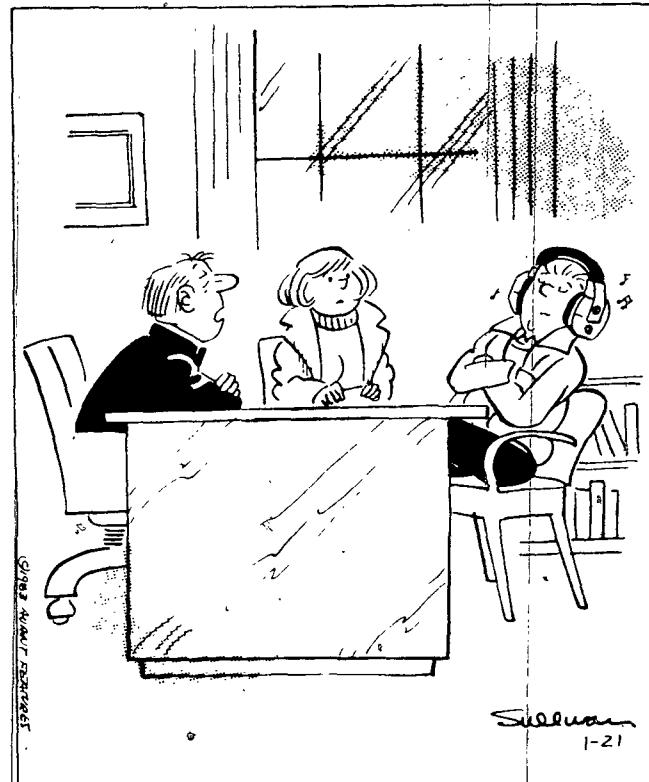
Recently Pope Pius XII, Pope John Paul II and St. Paul have all been falsely and unfairly branded anti-Semitic. Compounding this trend of Catholic-baiting was the column by Richard Cohen appearing in the Finger Lakes Times (12-14-82). "Was Father Kolbe Really a Saint?"

A proper reverence for the Old Testament would demonstrate St. Maximilian's outlook as being more authentically Jewish than anything that emanates from Zionist spokesmen. This great saint was instrumental in bringing thousands of souls to Jesus of Nazareth, the descendant of Abraham — the one Isaiah saw as a lamb led to the slaughter in reparation for the collective offenses of mankind.

It was St. Maximilian who owed all his allegiance, body and soul, to Christ, the awaited Messiah prophesied by Micah, whose pierced hands and feet were foretold in King David's Psalm (21:17). St. Maximilian also raised devotion to the Jewish Mother of God, the Blessed Virgin Mary, of whom it was said, "She shall crush the head of the serpent" (Genesis 3:15), to new heights in the Catholic Church.

This Polish priest's devotion to the consecration of the world to the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Immaculata) is a cognate theme of Sister Lucia, the living seer of the miracle of Fatima (Portugal). Sister Lucia has stated that the pope's recent consecration to Mary at Fatima last May 13 meets the condition set by Mary Immaculate for the conversion of Russia. It will have its greater or lesser effect according to how we live up to this consecration.

When atheistic Russia is converted it should be more appreciated that St. Maximilian and his message of penitential love of the "Immaculata" makes him, indeed, not only a saint, but a



"ASK YOUR HUSBAND IF HE REALLY WANTS TO BE HELPED."

saint for our times.

others with him!

It is dangerous to suggest that the action of the priest is other than something only he can effect at Holy Mass. If we claim that the Eucharistic presence is not really different from that presence of Christ promised when two or three pray together, then we do not really need the priesthood nor the Mass.

Column Questioned

Editor:

There are unacceptable implications in Sister Estelle Martin's column, "Liturgy of the Eucharist" (CJ 1/19/83). Sister Estelle seems to deny the reality of Transubstantiation, whereby the whole Christ — Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity — supplants the substance of bread and wine, making Christ present in a sacramental way beyond that of the pervading presence of God throughout the universe. A mystery is in the fact, but the fact remains. Christ in the Eucharist is to be adored so long as the accidents persist.

It is the priest (rather than "presider" — why do some prefer not to use the term "priest"?) who through the power given him by ordination effects or confects the change. Our Lord Himself wills this. He commanded that His priests do what He did so that the Holy Sacrifice would be continued until the end of time. The priest does not have to have a congregation — he can and may offer the Holy Sacrifice all by himself, although it is better to have

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All Catholics — especially those whose work it is to teach and those who profess themselves to be dedicated to religion (like all religions) — need to be especially careful to know the constant teachings of the Church and to profess these. We all have a great deal to answer for to God if we mislead others, and we should pray not to do so even inadvertently. It behooves us all to pray daily to the Holy Spirit to preserve us in the fullness of the True Faith, for otherwise it is all too easy to deny the Faith in favor of old errors which are misnamed new insights. These "insights" are too often mere rationalizations developed to make "reasonable" the mysteries of our Faith.

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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.