

Editorials

Good Friday And Easter

Sometimes it seems that there are two extremes of Catholics that become evident at Eastertime — those who are hardly aware of Good Friday and those who think that all of life is an extended Good Friday.

One group, either out of ignorance or out of trepidation, escapes the import of Good Friday. The other group seems to miss the point that Good Fridays are necessary because they lead to Easters.

It might be well for those who eschew Good Friday to stop and take time to reflect between noon and 3 p.m. on the tremendous impact the death of one man had on history right down to this very April 1, the year of our Lord 1983.

The other extreme might do well to consider that first Good Friday. There was no Resurrection and thus

the fears of the faithful were perhaps more legitimate 1950 years ago. But such is no longer valid for us today — the Resurrection has happened and must be acknowledged by those who would be known as Christians. Two thousand years of Easters should have taught us something.

The Bible is rife with instances of the same pattern — first, the tribulation, then the success. Lent must be kept in that perspective — before the great waking up morn must be the dark night. Thank God, the circumstance is not reversed.

Remember the anguish. Remember the joy.

Lenten Reflection

Thousands of people in the diocese learned firsthand last week what it is like to be without heat in their homes as storms felled numerous power lines.

Uncomfortable to be sure. But many of those affected will tell you that there also was a sense of adventure or fun about the whole thing. Family restaurants did a land-office business as folks made the

most of a bad situation by eating out. Local donut outlets also did well as people bent dietary rules with a perfect excuse.

And even though the annoyance lasted a mite too long for some, even they would admit that they knew a happy ending was assured. Thus, the cold fingers of fear never got a grip.

And now that the lights are on again, it may be wise for everyone touched by the power-out to reflect on the plight of thousands of other dioceses for whom the situation is chronic. And these folks cannot see the light at the end of the tunnel. Their children go to bed nightly in their winter clothes. And they have no hope that the situation will change. The lights are not going to go on suddenly tomorrow morning or afternoon.

For them, even the fast food restaurants are luxuries. There are no fun "nights out" to dispel the gloom of dark and cold homes.

The brief encounter with adversity many experienced last week may serve as a Lenten blessing if we can turn it into a productive reflection. For those of us with all the comforts of home, it may be a proper time to consider those with none.

and Opinions

Rosary Key To Peace

Editor:

I have followed with compassion the bishop's exhortation to priests in the Courier-Journal. Perhaps he is not personally acquainted with the great efficacy of the Holy Scapular of Mount Carmel, in overcoming habits of sin. I have known the grace of the scapular to:

1. Break an entrenched habit of masturbation.
2. Help a couple give up "The Pill" and follow Humanae Vitae.
3. Lead a lady away from an affair with a married man.

4. Help a divorced Catholic forgive her erring husband and stay faithful to the Church while remaining unmarried.

In one of the recent revelations of Our Lord, He refers to the rosary and the scapular as "major sources of grace." The book, "The Secret of the Rosary," reads like a hair-raising thriller with stories of overcoming all types of sin.

Concerning nuclear war, I was deeply grieved at a new letter of support for Salvadoran guerrillas, even though they recently hatched a plot to kill the pope (C-J 3-16). When will we ever learn that although oppression of the poor is one of the four sins

that "cry to heaven for justice," that the answer is not to join atheistic communism — a political system that destroys God? Those who cry for us not to send arms to El Salvador do not send similar requests to Russia. The Russians, according to Alexander Haig, were even sending tanks to El Salvador, and the atrocities done by Salvadoran guerrillas were equally as horrifying as those by U.S.-supported government forces. Our Lady stated at Fatima that the peace of the world was entrusted to her and only she could obtain it. War is a punishment for men's sins, she said. She insisted on the rosary and scapular, to overcome. Recent revelations worldwide also state: "no political system will bring peace." How many of you anti-nuclear war propagandists and guerrilla supporters are willing to use means Our Lady insisted upon? Do you wear your scapular and say your rosary for peace?

The Blue Army has asked that each bishop consecrate his diocese and everyone in it, and each pastor his parish, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Our Lady showed Father Gobbi the country of Poland in a vision and said, "This country is faithful because every Catholic is consecrated to me and lives that consecration." Let us put our effort behind this worthy cause and sign petitions for our bishop to begin this consecration!

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Don't Make Children Wait

Editor:

I cannot keep silent in the face of Father Louis Hohman's expressed attraction for delaying the Sacraments of Initiation until some vague age when individuals would be able "to make the commitment personal." (C-J 3-16)

I wonder if those who so easily advocate delay have ever as children longed for union with Jesus in the Eucharist. I longed for the Eucharist for 14 long years — until my Protestant family thought I was "mature enough" to make the commitment to the Catholic Church. In real truth, I testify that my faith in Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament was just as

firm at 7 as at 14 as at 21. I knew Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament was to be found only in the Catholic Church, although other good people said they loved Him.

It is very probable that this faith was granted me through an effective Episcopal baptism (as an infant) enriched by exposure.

Pope St. Pius X, who enabled young children to receive Jesus, may have known the longing as a child, but more importantly he may have been given to understand the longing of the Lord to enter into the closest union with His open-hearted "favorites" (as Pope John Paul II often refers to children) to feed them, fill them and transform them with His whole Self.

2. In today's world, it seems that wherever there is the possibility of a "mature commitment," there is also the possibility of a "psychological inability" to make the commitment. Perhaps this isn't discovered for several years. Will we need a new Rota and tribunals to handle this commitment to Christ?

3. To be serious again, something is askew when commitment is forced to be a prerequisite to the Sacraments of Initiation rather than to be enjoyed as their fruit unfolding in the developing individual as He responds to the Divine Person of Jesus in the sacramental life, the center of the life of the Church.

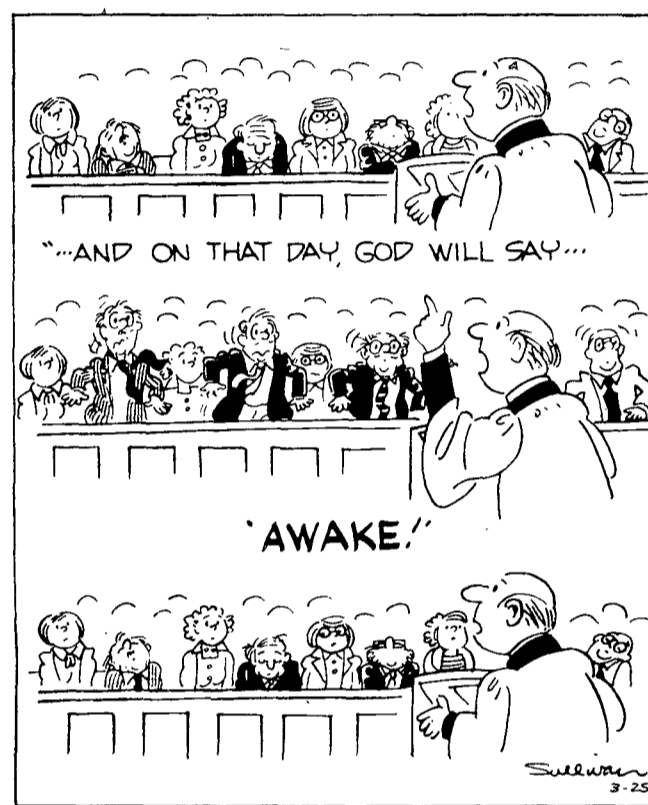
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Lenten Reflection

Editor:

Today, the simple kind gesture of the human being who politely held open a door for me woke me up to the realization of how lucky so many of us are. For the most part, we can direct our own destinies. We have the mind, coordination of our bodily functions, spirit, will power. For these we should thank our Lord every day.

But we procrastinate. If only — etc., etc. We complain about a headache, which sometimes is just an excuse for not motivating ourselves. We become cold, selfish, distant, uncaring. What happened to the word LOVE?



...AND WE WILL RISE UP, AND OUR BODIES WILL BE CHANGED."

If there is no love then nothing of ourselves is let out. Why are we afraid to show feelings, when we are BORN out of feelings?

The young man with the big smile who held open the door for me was with a group of retarded youngsters, leaving a bowling hall where they had possibly the happiest early morning treat.

He had a big smile and only one arm.

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Publications Available

Editor:

Pope Paul VI pronounced a solemn profession of Faith. It is called "The Credo of the People of God." According to our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, the Credo "brings together the essential elements

of the Catholic Faith, especially those that presented greater difficulty or risk being ignored."

This is what it states concerning infant baptism:

"No. 18. We believe in one Baptism instituted by Our Lord Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Baptism should be administered even to little children who have not yet been able to be guilty of any personal sin, in order that, though born deprived of supernatural grace, they may be reborn 'of water and the Holy Spirit' to the divine life of Christ Jesus."

Both of these fine publications are available at Trant's and at other Catholic book stores: "On Catechesis in Our Time," Pope John Paul II, 10/16/79; and "The Credo of the People of God," Pope Paul VI, 6/30/68.

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Lenten Regulations

Good Friday is the only remaining day of both fast and abstinence.

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.

Gabriel

THE AVERAGE MAN'S ARM IS 30 INCHES LONG; THE AVERAGE WOMAN'S WAIST IS 30 INCHES AROUND — ISN'T THAT NICE



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 S., 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.