

Editorials

Bishops' Task Just Beginning

By and large, the bishop's pastoral on war and peace was favorably received by the big city newspapers, perhaps the most notable exception being the New York Times which opined that "mankind does have to learn how to live with it (the bomb) and manage the problems it poses. There's no place to hide, even in morality."

However, many other metropolitan newspapers took more positive views. One of the most cogent appeared in the Boston Globe which reminded the bishops that "they can't simply sign this pastoral letter and go home. They must hand-deliver the underlying message. Their real work is beginning."

The Church in Rochester is prepared to take up this challenge both on the diocesan and parish level. It is to be hoped that the spirit is nationwide.

Another big city newspaper, the San Francisco Chronicle, said that the challenge of the pastoral "will not meet the approval of all Catholic laymen," but that "many non-Catholics will 'seize on the pastoral heartily . . . It is a philosophy for our nuclear times . . . it will be interesting to see how the spokesmen for the Reagan government (not to mention the Andropov government) attempt to deal with them, to minimize their powerful challenge and to dismiss their implications."

In Philadelphia, the Inquirer said that the bishops "have supplied immense credibility and institutional authority to the goals of a movement that is growing

around the globe. Where President Reagan would dismiss or question the patriotism of those opposing his hang-tough arms control strategy, he now must explain away the vote of 238 Catholic bishops. Nothing, not oil, not liberty, not grain, not territory, not riches, not power, not religion, nothing justifies risking the destruction of the planet, of in the bishops' words, God's-creation."

While the secular media expressed their opinions, some of the bishops not particularly pleased with the document also spoke out.

Bishop John J. O'Connor, one of its framers although considered of mixed emotions partially because of his membership in the military ordinariate, said he wished he could have had more of an impact on the preparing committee and on the bishops as a whole. He said he objected to the inclusion of specific strategic and political proposals but he stressed that "I don't agree with those who say the bishops pulled the rug out from under the defenses of the U.S. and the free world. The bishops did not say they were in favor of unilateral disarmament, for example. And they went to great lengths to point out that they did not call for a nuclear freeze."

A less balanced opinion, however, came from Archbishop Philip M. Hannan of New Orleans, one of the nine to vote against the pastoral letter. He said that "Catholics are free in conscience to disagree" with the document. His objections are that the pastoral "is very confusing. It will appease a great number of people, pacifists, and it will, in my opinion, deter disarmament negotiations." He also fears that it will be "divisive" among Catholics.

Prayerfully, that will not be the case. But the

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archbishop's quick implication that Catholics should not pay attention to the carefully prepared and stated opinions of 238 of their bishops does not aid the cause of conciliation. Nor does his use of the word "appease" which is a red flag to many Americans, as the archbishop should well know

The Boston Globe may better have recognized the gist of the document. It editorialized: "This document is not about freeze votes or Pershing missiles or 'decapitation' plans. It's about the formation of the individual conscience and it's new for the Church in that it challenges rather than directs. Individuals are no more told to think what bishops think than to genuflect before the priesthood of nuclear strategy. Rather, citizens are told that they must ponder the teachings that are handed down, whether just-war doctrines or Pentagon defense guidances, and weigh them, question them."

and Opinions

Still Finding Her Role

EDITOR:

Re the letter written by Dorothy Prinzi May 4. My first question is, who said God did not choose women to be priests? For me, that's an open-ended question, not an absolute. It's been my experience that both men and women can nourish, teach and love and mold, if they choose to. As far as motherhood or fatherhood choice role, that would depend on individual choice or perhaps taste. There are many levels of both and I, for one, cannot limit it to the biological level only.

I don't worship tradition, I worship our Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Tradition may be fine as a guideline, but not as letter of the law for me. And as far as the so-called traditional roles of men and women changing, that is not really new. You can take almost any era of time/history and find changing roles of men and women taking place in some degree. Even in the history of obstetrics, where at one time women delivered babies, the men eventually got into the act and took over. And at

one time, they really created a danger for both mothers and babies, simply because they hadn't learned to wash their hands between delivering cattle and human beings. They were in fact transmitting lethal germs from one field of operation to another. I only bring this up to show that once again, we are dealing with human beings and ongoing growth.

If the traditional patriarchal culture was so great what happened that it declined? Or could it be that it was only necessary for a period of time? What constitutes the so-called patriarchal culture? Do we have absolute proof that only the 12 apostles were present at the Last Supper? Is presence limited by physical bodies? What was Jesus' intent at the Last Supper? To continue the patriarchal culture as it existed then? Why did it have to be redeemed?

What does the word "head" mean? Does it mean "leader" or "servant" or "source" or "mind"? What does the word "heart" mean? Could it mean the physical organ, the subconscious mind, the inner depths of a person, male or female?

Indeed a head without a

heart cannot survive. In fact, they need to be integrated for a person to become whole. I, too, have many roles -- wife, mother, grandmother, song leader, secretary of Parish Council, nurse, emergency squad technician -- however, none of these roles make me who I am. I am, first and foremost, a child of God. My parents are the Trinity, my family. The core of my being. They bathe me in their love and enable me to love my brothers and sisters, who are their children also. And these brothers and sisters include our children and grandchildren, our physical parents, as well as persons in foreign countries whom I have never met.

But it is only with time that I became more aware of who I am, time and the working of the Holy Spirit deep within me. I can take no credit for this, for all the credit goes to God. It is all due to the gift of His mercy. And so is the call to any woman to be ordained. However, since God is so merciful, I am sure that He is most understanding if in such cases where He is inspiring women to be ordained, and they are prevented from responding by their brothers in Christ and their beliefs -- so much so that God will probably wink at it all and say, "Well, they're just being boys!"

Perhaps the words of Gamaliel are apt: "And so my advice is leave these men (women) alone. If what they teach and do is merely on their own, it will soon be overturned. But if it is of God, you will not be able to stop them, lest you find yourselves fighting even against God."

Patti Federowicz
17 Clover Road
Apalachin, N.Y. 13732

New Parish Not Needed

EDITOR:

In the light of the great number of changes and in-

stability in the Church and the economy, I am both disturbed and confused by the recent announcement of the formation of a new Roman Catholic parish in the Pittsford area. The number of priests and religious is rapidly declining. We are just beginning to come out of a major recession. Local parishes are finding it increasingly difficult to raise funds. The new parish will draw off revenue from the existing parishes and will find it necessary immediately to raise funds to build or rent a facility for its services and a residence for its pastor.

The increase in population in this area, which I understand to be the bishop's main argument for the new parish, can easily be served by the existing parishes. Recently I have read a great deal about this and other changes in the diocese in the local press. I can see that the bishop has looked at all the pros and cons yet I fail to see the ultimate goal of his program.

Scott A. LaBounty
69 East St.
Pittsford, N.Y. 14534

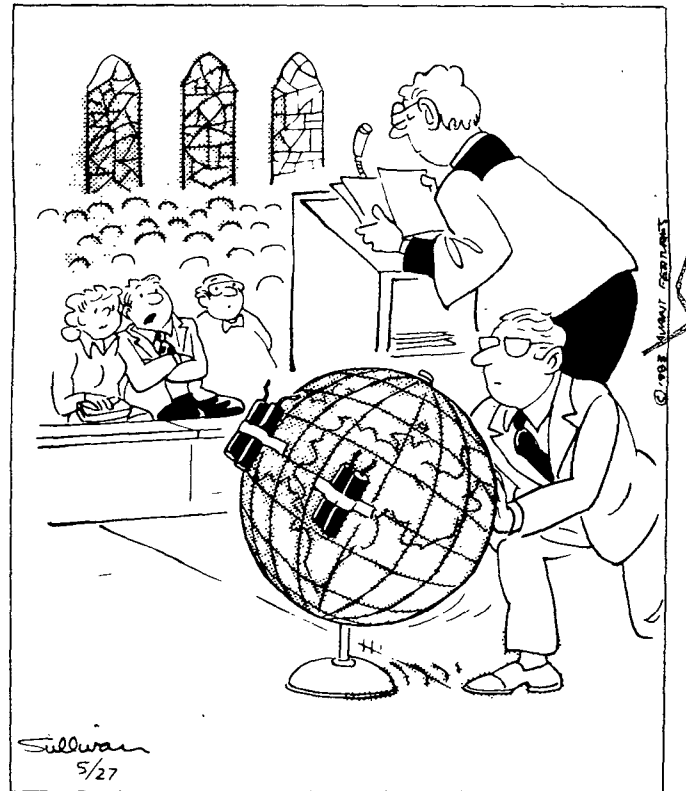
Sanger Choice Saddening

EDITOR:

I was amazed, angered and finally saddened by a response that I read in the Courier-Journal Equal Time feature in which a high school junior woman at Our Lady of Mercy responded that Margaret H. Sanger will be remembered as one of the most outstanding women of the 20th Century.

For the uninitiated, Margaret Sanger was the founder of Planned Parenthood. She detested motherhood, equating it with slavery. She also was an ardent racist, believing "inferior" people have too many babies.

For a young woman at a Catholic high school to praise Margaret Sanger is sad; for a Catholic paper to print such



"I'M NOT SURE I'M GOING TO LIKE THIS VISUAL AID."

an opinion is even sadder.

Is it not an obligation for Catholic school teachers and journalists to present alternatives to the contraceptive mentality?

Patrick J. Slattery
Times Review
LaCrosse, Wis. 54601

through the time and effort of the lobbyists spent in their world of fantasy.

M.M. Kane
697 Genesee Park Blvd.
Rochester, N.Y. 14619

Church Seeks Information

Editor:

St. Vincent Ferrer Church in Flatbush, Brooklyn, is celebrating its 60th anniversary. The parish is planning several events to mark this anniversary including a homecoming celebration in late Spring.

Many of our former parishioners have moved to your area. Anybody having any connection with St. Vincent's is asked to send his or her name and address to our Anniversary Committee. Also, anyone having pictures of school or church activities is asked to send them along to us with date and names on back.

Anniversary Committee
St. Vincent Ferrer
1603 Brooklyn Ave.
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11210

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.