

Editorials

Wrong Message

"Think God," the bumper sticker read. Another message on the same bumper had the call letters of a Christian radio outlet. Nothing startling; everyone has seen such messages on autos.

But in this case the car was moving at an exceedingly slow rate in the fast lane of an expressway — as slow as 35 at times. The driver stubbornly refused to move to the right and as car after car had to pull around him, it is almost certain that each of the other drivers had his or her own thoughts concerning the deity and the road hog. And none of them proper.

It is one thing to spread the Good News, as we are all charged to do, but it must also be kept in mind that a courteous act probably does more for Christ than all the bumper stickers in the world glued end to end. Satan himself couldn't have generated more ill

will if he had been at the wheel of that car which was endangering the safety of many as well as contributing to ulcers. Ditto those car owners who affix bumper stickers ordering, "Honk, if you love Jesus!" To do so can be downright dangerous in traffic.

And as might be expected in this coarse world, others have parodied that motto into pornographic nonsense.

All of which leads up to the thought that disseminating the Good News calls for something other than cheap bumper stickers especially for those who have not yet translated Christian teachings into their own driving behavior. Better to display some anonymous courtesy than rudeness in the name of the deity.

A Special Place

How many have noticed that Pope John Paul

never misses an opportunity to promote recognition of the Blessed Mother? It seems that no matter the occasion, he makes special note of Mary, perhaps most dramatically when he called on her help at the time of the attempted assassination.

Thus it is only natural that special plans concerning Mary are built into his visit to Poland next month. Among other things, the pope will crown six Marian statues honored by his countrymen because of miracles attributed to Mary's intercession.

Obviously, there is good reason for such adulation, particularly during May, Mary's month. And perhaps only God and Mary know if the pope also has a very private reason for his fervent respect for Christ's mother.

In any case, it is always time to pay loving respect to Mary. Those who recommend special prayers for peace and release from nuclear threat to Mary are right on target. God knows, it won't hurt.

and Opinions

Already a Day For Bishop

EDITOR:

The suggestion in a recent Courier-Journal letter that Bishop Clark be accorded a special day prompts me to relate for your readers the story of Bishop Clark Day celebrated here at St. James parish.

The bishop was to be with us to administer Confirmation in the evening of Nov. 9 last year. He called to inform our pastor, Father Foy, that he would be here earlier in the day in order to be at the service of the parish. An invitation was extended to him to visit St. James School. The occasion was designated "Bishop Clark Day at St. James."

What a DAY it turned out to be! What with proclamations, presentations, banners, balloons, a serenade to the bishop by our parochial school children. It was a most happy time, enjoyed by all — especially, it seemed, by Bishop Clark who declared it "an historic occasion. I have never before been given my very own day!" And the media coverage! Reporters not only from our Valley area

but also from Towanda and Elmira gave most generous printed and pictorial coverage to the event.

However, as St. Francis of Assisi so wisely said, "It is in giving that we receive." While we gave Bishop Clark a day, he gave us much more — a part of his life and warmth by spending the day visiting the sick, giving consolation to a parishioner whose husband had just died, meeting with the school children, their teachers, addressing them as well as parents, other parishioners and Valley dignitaries, including Mayor John Winkelman and Waverly High School Principal Joseph McGuire.

Through this busy round of activities, the bishop moved with ease and joyous grace as the time proceeded toward the fitting culmination, the confirming of a class of 31 young men and women in a church filled, it seemed, with most of St. James' people, many of whom had been present at the earlier festivities.

In these times — the ailing 80s — when a bishop is compelled to face a host of problems which seem to run about three to one, at least, ahead of solutions, it was most pleasant to observe our bishop able to be, as he said, "a parish priest for the day among a warm and caring people." To us at St. James, his presence with us on his day was truly a benediction and has infused new fervor into the phrase we hear daily in the Eucharistic Prayer, "Lord, remember Your Church throughout the world, together with John Paul, our pope, Matthew, our bishop..." We plan to offer for him our supportive and grateful prayers on May 27, the anniversary of his ordination as bishop, on June 26, commemorating the blessed day when he became our bishop, and, of course, on Nov. 9, Bishop Clark Day at St. James!

Loretta Hayton Principal St. James School Waverly, N.Y. 14892

Finds Letter Disturbing

EDITOR:

I felt sad when I read that the New York State Catholic Conference recently wrote a letter to all New York Assembly people urging them to oppose Assembly Bill A2480 which would prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment and housing.

As a member of the Families and Friends of Gays of Rochester, I believe God

loves everyone of us including the 10 percent of His children who are gay.

Janet Kenny 80 Sprucewood Circle Geneva, N.Y. 14456

Editor's Note: Following are some excerpts from a letter written to the members of the State Assembly by J. Alan Davitt, executive director of the State Catholic Conference: "This conference has previously sent to the members of the Assembly two legislative letters dated March 10 and 14, expressing our opposition to this bill. Some question has been raised as to whether or not that position properly reflected the views of the Catholic Church here in New York State... The New York State Catholic Conference is the vehicle whereby the leadership of the Catholic Church in its eight New York dioceses act collectively on issues of common concern in the public forum... (the conference) has indicated the position of the bishops of New York State. That position reflects the teachings of the Church in the moral order, and there can be no doubt that homosexual activity is specifically prohibited. Some may erroneously think that this opposition is diluted or changed by the Church's concern for the homosexuals. Ever sensitive to the conscience of the individual and a person's spiritual and psychological well-being, the Church has spoken on numerous occasions in a concerned and loving fashion for the homosexual. While caring for such people, the Church has consistently held that homosexuality expressed in interpersonal sexual activity is morally unacceptable and totally inappropriate for this legislative protection. It is the view of the State Catholic Conference that enactment of this legislation would endorse homosexual activities as a proper way of life to be both protected and fostered. The bottom line of such legislation would not simply be the protection of the homosexual from prejudice and ridicule, but the establishment of homosexual activity as something as natural as race, creed, ethnic origin, gender or age..."

Church Unfair To Women

EDITOR:

Dorothy Prinzi's interpretation of "The Fire in the Thornbush" (May 4) shows how poorly she is informed! The majority of women today are not looking for greatness position or power in society or in the

Catholic Church. If this is their objective in life then they are just as "phony" as the egotistic married deacons! Today's women, be it in the Catholic Church or society, are looking for "fairness" so they can develop and use their God-given talents. Our dear Lord took the appearance of a man... Yes! Yes! because can we imagine what life was like at the time of Christ? What would have happened to women or His Church if He took the appearance of a woman? Men were the leaders, the travelers and the decision-makers. Jesus Christ was all powerful and all holy! He wasn't stupid! He proved to us at the age of 12 to be brilliant! His Church was meant for the world! All people! How far could a woman get in those days? After all these years, women barely get by today.

She is partly right when she said, "... society has prompted the glorification of self!" This sure fits the married deacon — "glorification of self, for men only!"

Her description of Catholic women "allowing themselves to be influenced by the secular humanistic idea that greatness comes with position and power" seems to fit men more than women. These are some of the qualities that make us human. None of us is without desires or sin! However, position, power or authority should be earned fairly. Not because we are male or female. How the Catholic Church justifies a married man over and above our most sacred religious nuns to serve the Catholic people or deacons just because they are men is just plain "unfair."

Priests and nuns are the only ones that earned the position to bless, to serve and to teach the word and works of the Lord. Without this devoted group, the Catholic Church is nothing! We don't need a different interpretation of the Holy Bible, a new way to worship, or married deacons! Every one of us that believes in God, has been baptized, made First Holy Communion and are confirmed fits into the "married deacon" group. Especially if you know how to read and write. This does not mean that we belong on the altar! Nuns, priests, also the very young and single young adults (not married people) belong on the altar.

I am a Catholic woman. I believe in my faith and I am very disappointed to think that the direction of the Roman Catholic Church is toward married people.

There is nothing wrong with a religious woman being

ordained. Just another beautiful way for Mother Teresa to serve her people! The Church is without good sense or wisdom to she can't be ordained because she is a woman!

Loretta Cappucci 574 Robinson St. Elmira, N.Y. 14904

Editor's Note: Perhaps it should be noted that Mother Teresa does not wish to be ordained.

Bethany House Needs Staffers

EDITOR:

Bethany House has a special need that we hope people in the Rochester community will be able to answer — the need for full and part time staff. In order for our ministry to continue to exist we must call upon your generous response.

Bethany House is a Catholic Worker house which serves the needs of homeless women and children. We shelter, feed and clothe women who come from experiences of eviction, abuse, imprisonment, rape, illness of both body and mind — experiences which radically deny love. Daily we are invited to receive each guest as Christ.

Prayer is vital to our service to God's brokenhearted. At the very core of Bethany is an opportunity to practice the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. The Catholic Worker principles (hospitality, advocacy, voluntary poverty, pacifism and personalism) provide a framework for our ministry.

The most important quality needed by a staff person is a loving, caring heart. Such a person should be open to relating to various personalities and flexible in meeting the changing events each day offers. Workers are needed in different capacities, for example: meal preparation, house maintenance, indirect counselling, coordina-

tion of volunteers, public speaking, upkeep of correspondence and finances. Workers are provided with room, board, medical insurance and a \$10 weekly stipend.

Linda Scibilia Bethany House 169 St. Bridget's Dr. Rochester, N.Y. 14605

Consultation Seen Lacking

EDITOR:

I read an article in the May 4 Courier-Journal headed "Bishop Reveals Plans for New Parish."

In this article Bishop Clark states: "These decisions have not been made in isolation or without devout prayer and careful study, but rather they have been made after consultation with those affected, as well as key diocesan advisors."

In the case of St. Jerome's Parish in East Rochester there was no "consultation with those affected," only a meeting to reassign the pastor and to inform him of the decision which had already been made. There was no discussion with our staff until after Bishop Clark had sent letters to announce the change. There was no meeting of our Parish Council or with our people. How can this be "careful" study or "consultation with those affected?"

The manner in which the transfers have been handled at St. Jerome's is totally against the Second Vatican Council. I invite you to read the "Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church" from this document.

Mary Kay Parrone 149 W. Ivy St. East Rochester, N.Y. 14445

Editor's Note: Similar letters were received from Margaret M. Richards and Sara Ross, both of East Rochester.

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.

Lobbying Tips
Lobbying in Albany
Doesn't have to be a
futile job. A thoughtful
lobbyist can make a
difference. Here are some
tips to help you get the
most out of your time in
the state capital.