

Editorials

Capital Punishment

In an ancient tradition in a remote part of the world, the deceased are dumped into the ocean. This, naturally, attracts sharks into the waters. This, in turn, makes the beaches and water hazardous for those wishing to pay respects to the dead, to fishermen, for bathers, or any others engaging in such normal pursuits.

Many are killed or maimed by the sharks. In vengeance, the people catch sharks, stuff prickly, poisonous sea urchin fish down their throats and then release them back into the sea. This accomplishes a two-fold purpose: It kills the shark after about a week but in the meantime the creature suffers excruciating pain. Of course, it does nothing to end the hazard for, given the set of situations, the sharks continue to abound.

This cycle has become necessary for a variety of reasons: The people will not take the laborious means necessary to change the situation, such as giving up

their traditions or taking measures to keep the sharks out of the area. Of course, they cannot change their day-to-day pursuits.

Thus, the vicious cycle continues. The resistance to change, the violence, the retribution. Primitive.

Are We Dishonest In Finding Blame?

The United States recently accused several nations of repressing religion before the United Nations Social Humanitarian and Cultural Committee and in so doing may have been guilty of rank political hypocrisy.

This is not to claim innocence for Nicaragua, Vietnam, Ethiopia, the Soviet Union and Iran -- the five nations charged. Without doubt, the Soviet Union and Iran particularly are guilty of being bitterly anti-religious and/or bigoted. Moscow suppresses the Jews, Christian practice of religion,

among other reprehensible policies. Iran openly conducts a bloody purge of the Baha'i faith, a continuing travesty frequently noted in this newspaper.

What is transparently political in the U.S. accusations is the fact that the five nations named just happen to be avowed enemies of this nation. What about the persecutions and murders in El Salvador? How about England and/or Northern Ireland and their treatment of Catholics? What about the Philippines?

Picking and choosing among despots, a practice which this nation regularly employs, may be pragmatically excusable. But it is also blatantly deceitful when we look the other way at the acts of nations friendly to us.

Does it strike anyone as strange that not one of our present political buddies, from South Africa to South Korea to, yes, even Communist China does nothing to suppress humanitarian or religious freedoms? Gloryosky, Zero, what wonderful nations!

Or, on the other hand, could it be asked: With friends like these who needs enemies to pillory?

and Opinions

Celibacy Upheld

EDITOR:

Celibacy is becoming a big issue in the Catholic Church. Celibacy has been practiced for centuries and should remain for Catholic priests because of economical and social reasons and the tradition on which the Church was built.

Although priests today may be living comfortably on the money they receive, married priests would find it different. They would need another occupation to provide for their families. Problems would be created if the priests were unable to find a job. If the priests had another occupation, their families and the churches would suffer a loss of husband, father and priest. Emotionally and physically, the married priests would not be able to handle all the demanding needs of both family and Church.

Many problems would arise socially if priests marry. The married priests would not have enough time to spend with their family to participate in social activities that are needed to keep a family strong. Priests who married would be forced into two different life styles and images that they would find hard to live up to. Married priests could easily forget their roles as priests because of being pulled in two directions. Soon they would become resentful.

Catholic beliefs and practices have been around for centuries and it has been believed that the priests are to

resemble Jesus. Traditionally, Jesus and His apostles gave up everything to preach God's word, as the priests should. Priests need their freedom to work at keeping the community strong. Most people are reluctant to change tradition, especially the older generation because of what they expect from the priests. Men have a choice to become priests and be celibate or to get married and have families. It takes a special person and a special calling from God to become a priest. If He intended priests to be married it would have been so from the beginning.

Helen Dunning
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Still Time To Pray

EDITOR:

Americans have been protesting various issues since the seventies and Washington really hasn't paid any attention. Neither has God because we haven't asked Him to intervene.

The queen of heaven gave us all the guidance and prayers we need when she appeared at Fatima. The sorry mess of the world is the result of not having listened to or acted upon her counsel.

I would say it's time we all did some serious praying. A few prayers and a rosary a day doesn't take much time. We can only hope and pray we are not too late to change world conditions.

Mrs. William Cox
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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.

Father Wiant Sends Thanks

EDITOR:

Having just celebrated Thanksgiving and preparing to celebrate Christ's coming, I am very thankful to the Rochester Church for this sabbatical time. It has been a time of refreshment, prayer, study, exercise and recreation. I have experienced the ever-growing life of our church and the renewed life of personal growth. The generosity of diocesans in the Thanks Giving Appeal has made this possible. I am especially thankful to the Weedsport church for understanding and patience. God has come to us: He lives with us in "graced humanity." Thanks to all for sharing Him.

Father George Wiant
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Soviet Aim Is Domination

EDITOR:

Many peace advocates who have been staging their protests around the country apparently never learned the ultimate aim of the Russian Communists. They planned to dominate the world with Communist rule and it didn't matter if it took 100 years. That aim was well-publicized in the years following their takeover of Russia in the 1917 revolution. They certainly have made much progress in two thirds of that 100 years in Asia, the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Cuba, parts of Central America and who knows where else. They have nuclear missiles aimed at Western European countries but object to any being deployed against them. They can now aim them at our country from submarines close to our shores. Consider a speech made by Dimetry A. Muanuilsky at the Lenin School of Political Warfare in Moscow in 1931. It was recorded in the Congressional Record June 14, 1955, as follows:

"War to the hilt between communism and capitalism is inevitable. Today, of course, we are not strong enough to attack. Our time will come in 20 to 30 years. To win we shall need the element of surprise. The bourgeoisie will have to be put to sleep. So we shall begin by launching the most spectacular peace movement on record.

There will be electrifying overtures and unheard of concessions. The capitalistic countries, stupid and decadent, will rejoice to cooperate in their own destruction. They will leap at another chance to be friends. As soon as their guard is down we shall smash them with our clenched fists."

Congressman Alvin O'Konski of Wisconsin, who recorded that item in the Congressional Record at that time, made the following comment: "This is the same Manuilsky who presided over the United Nations Security Council in 1949. The Reds sure know what they are doing. They play the tune and we dance to their music."

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Gays Need Church Help

EDITOR:

I was very saddened by Father Faddoul's recent letter in which he lamented the fact that a nun would speak in favor of the human and civil rights of an oppressed people (i.e., gay persons).

The Gay Alliance went to City Council seeking a human rights ordinance to protect people from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations. Many times irrelevant personal factors such as race, religion, sex or sexual orientation are used as the basis for unjust discrimination. The nun attended out of a deep conviction to live out the Word of God, which is love, compassion and justice for all people. She was also demonstrating her conviction to one of the purposes of her order, which is to serve one's neighbor "without distinction."

The good sister rightly recognizes that support of basic human rights for all persons makes no moral judgments about that person. Legislation to protect people from discrimination based on sexual orientation does not approve of homosexuality (or heterosexuality) any more than protecting people from discrimination based on religion gives specific approval to Catholics, Lutherans or others. Such legislation merely recognizes that discrimination exists and that people deserve legal recourse.

I, too, pray, in Father Faddoul's words, that "the Holy Spirit enlighten us so that we know clearly what we



"IT'S A TERRIBLE THING WHEN YOUR OWN CLERGYMAN TRIES TO MAKE YOU LEAVE THE CHURCH."

must do or must omit to live holy lives." I assert that we must omit fear and prejudice of our brothers and sisters and we must do justice when they are being wronged. The sister at city council is gifted with this enlightenment from the Holy Spirit. I pray that other sisters, priests, bishops and diocesan officials receive the blessing of this enlightenment. After all, if our Holy Mother Church and her representatives do not stand up for justice and the rights of her children, who will?

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U.S., Soviet Must Relate

EDITOR:

A recent letter to the Courier-Journal advocated an anti-missile defense system. By knocking out incoming missiles in space, it is argued, such a system would defend our country without threatening others.

The flaw in the idea of a defensive anti-missile system is that such a system would make it possible for us to use our offensive weapons

against the Soviet Union without fear of retaliation: it would neutralize their deterrent. The Soviets would not see such a system as defensive, but as threatening, and would respond by developing more sophisticated weapons to counter it.

Some see missile defense as a way to avoid the need to reduce the tensions between our two countries; invulnerability would make it unnecessary to work out better ways of relating. But in an atmosphere of continuing tension, a missile defense development program would lead to a dangerous arms race in space. The theoretical situations in which a missile neutralization system might add to security -- for example, development of such a system jointly by the U.S. and Soviet Union for operation by an international agency -- would presuppose that a degree of cooperation be achieved first.

Achieving such cooperation is the difficult and unavoidable task to which we must commit ourselves. The Christian vision challenges us not to build better walls, but to build better relationships.

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