

Editorial

Jan. 22, 1973, The Fight Goes On

Not many dates signal events so catastrophic or notable that they assume an identity of their own. In our nation, three spring to mind: July 4, the country's birthday; Dec. 7, 1941, most likely because President Roosevelt declared it a date "that will live in infamy." The third also lives in infamy -- Jan. 22, 1973 -- when the highest court of the United States to its everlasting dishonor legitimized abortion on demand. Now 1.5 million babies are exterminated each and every year in a country that still boasts of its open arms for the poor, oppressed and neglected.

Jan. 22, 1973. How long must we live with the

nightmare? Even if the nation should experience a sudden moral turnabout and the court's ruling abolished, too much damage has been done. The nation's psyche probably has been harmed irreparably. While George Orwell's "Nineteen Eighty-Four" was overzealous in its predictions for this year, the pro-lifers who foresaw ominous developments emanating from the Jan. 22, 1973, ruling have been closer to the truth.

Movements persist for euthanasia. Fetal experimentation is with us. Disregard for life abounds in almost every sphere of national and international life -- the death penalty, nuclear arms, sidewalk mayhem, terrorism. Abortion and its deadly cousins are making gains across the earth.

Yet it might be worse if not for those who have dedicated their lives to the pro-life movement. They have lost battles, to be sure; but they have won some. They have slowed down the tide of destruction, thus

always preserving the hope that someday it will be stemmed. Because they have persisted in the face of society, they have been branded outcasts or members of the lunatic fringe. To save the life of even one unborn baby, they have accepted ridicule. Out of love, they have accepted hate. They have endured because their cause is just.

They, however, are also human. They need support, encouragement and inspiration. And they need bodies. Perhaps it would make this Jan. 22 more meaningful if anyone feeling kinship for the cause, join the effort. The annual march on Washington is more effective when the greater is the number of demonstrators. But, even more important, for the long run, people who care for life are needed to stand up to be counted and also to do the work involved in keeping the cause alive.

If enough accept the challenge, it could be perhaps called the Jan. 22 Movement.

and Opinions

Meese Defense Answered

EDITOR:

In this week's Courier-Journal (Jan. 11), Mr. John Brankacz Sr. defends Mr. Meese, saying many young women are getting pregnant so they may go on welfare.

Did Mr. Brankacz ever try to get on welfare as I have and as many friends of mine have? I was unemployed from May 1982 to September 1983.

I had no income from June

1983 to October 1983 yet I could not get welfare or food stamps.

About five years ago, I started helping at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality. We had about 35 to 50 people every Saturday. In the winter of 1982, the man I went with was in Florida. I took this time off.

When he came back in the Spring, I was sick and could not work. A few weeks ago, I went back and was surprised to find that two settings of about 150 each were needed. These men are not there for

food. They come to have lunch and to have someone who will help them say prayers so they can get back to work or the older people pray so they are not always sick.

They also pray for each other and like to have someone lead them in the rosary. On many occasions they also come for Mass.

There are very few who are not truly needy.

At present, I myself am living on a net income of \$80 a week and food donated by the church. I would have neither of these if it were not for the kindness of Father Thomas Wheeland and Father Reno LaDelfa of Holy Cross Church.

Bob Miller 2 Goodger Park Rochester, N.Y. 14612

Relatives Sought

EDITOR:

We are in the process of looking up my husband's family background and find it to center around Rochester.

We have in our files the marriage papers from St. Mary's Church, Rochester, on Dec. 23, 1874, of my husband's grandparents -- William Henry O'Connor and Frances Orrs Terwilliger. We know they left at that time for California but left the rest of the family in Rochester.

What we are looking for is the death of William Henry's father -- John. We think it

was in 1859 or 1860. And the family of John Joseph who should still be in the city of Rochester. In 1946, at the death of Susan, the last child of John, there was a niece, M. E. O'Brien living in Rochester. All would have been part of the Catholic Church. John's wife, Elizabeth Allen, was born in St. John's, Newfoundland, where he had gone to build the basilica of St. John the Baptist in 1841, and where he met and married her.

Any information that you or your readers have would be appreciated.

Mrs. Robert Duensing 2641 Granite Way Sacramento, Calif. 95821

Hehir Role Questioned

EDITOR:

Father Bryan Hehir apparently played a major role in formulating the bishops' pastoral on nuclear freeze. In fact, he was hailed at a conference as the priest who told bishops what to think. They seem to need somebody to tell them what to think, but I don't think it should be Father Hehir.

For the pastoral contribution, he received an award from the far left Institute for Policy Studies, which even the liberal New York Times called a "think tank of the left."

He was scheduled to help teach a course at IPS titled, "Matthew, Marx, Luke and John." One can only speculate on the socialist

The Pope on Mary

Vatican City (NC) — Here is the Vatican text of Pope John Paul II's remarks in English at his weekly general audience Jan. 4:

Dear brothers and sisters, I welcome all the English-speaking visitors who are present at this first general audience of the new year. In the name of the savior of the world I greet you all.

After having drawn our attention to Jesus in the celebration of his birth at Bethlehem, the church wishes to begin the new year by directing us to Mary in the celebration of her divine motherhood. When God the father chose Mary to be the mother of his son, he bestowed on her the greatest dignity ever accorded to any creature. He invited her to cooperate freely in the salvation of the world by consenting to be the mother of the redeemer. In this mystery, Mary helps us to understand the wondrous love of God, not only for her but for us all. The dignity bestowed on Mary in a most singular way is an eloquent sign of the dignity which God wishes to bestow on every human person, the dignity of cooperating in God's work of salvation.

As we begin this new year, let us turn to Mary with confidence and love. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us to Christ your son. Lead us to the joy of eternal life.

slant given in this course. I can hardly wait to see what role he may play in the bishops' forthcoming pastoral on economic systems. Scrap free enterprise demo-

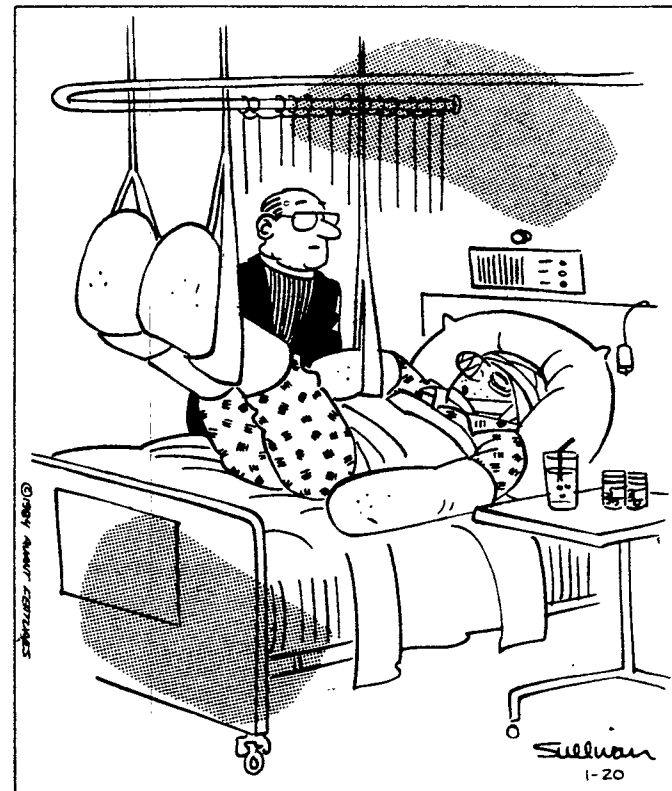
cratic capitalism. Its pro-blem? It works. John F. Starkweather 1840 Middle Road Rush, N.Y. 14543

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.



SEE IF YOU CAN GET THE NURSE TO STOP SAYING "JUST LET A SMILE BE YOUR UMBRELLA."

Is Ecumenism Getting a Second Wind?

Week of Prayer For Christian Unity Jan. 18-25

Washington (NC) -- The annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Jan. 18-25 comes amid signs that the ecumenical movement may be getting a second wind.

"Never before in the history of the ecumenical movement have we stood at a point of such opportunity and responsibility," declares the 1984 week's advance guide, jointly prepared and distributed internationally by the World Council of Churches and the Vatican's Secretariat for Christian Unity. Theme of the week for 1984 is "Called to Be One Through the Cross of Our Lord."

The guide cites "evidence of striking theological convergences on the nature of Christian unity, on baptism and Eucharist, on the church's ministry and authority." It also cites evidence, from a recent survey by the WCC, of "increased interest" in unity week observances and increased "common action and understanding" among local congregations around the world.

"Yet, at every turn," the guide comments, "our lack of generosity and courage, our selfish insistence on our own programs and concerns, threaten to frustrate our efforts. It is a moment in history which more than ever demands our perseverance in prayer for unity."

Prayer or "spiritual ecumenism," which ecumenists insist must be at the heart of the movement toward Christian unity, is the central focus of unity week. But there has been continuing progress, with some notable breakthroughs, in the other major areas of ecumenism -- common witness and action on social and moral issues, theological understanding and doctrinal agreement, and serious moves toward organic reunion.

On social issues, Father John Hotchkin, executive director of the Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, said that the U.S. recession and high unemployment of recent years have led to increased ecumenical cooperation in many places to meet such basic social needs as the distribution of food supplies and clothing.

Other forms of local cooperation, from regular clergy meetings to interfaith summer Bible schools and interfaith services on a variety of annual occasions have become commonplace in many areas, he said.

Last year's war and peace pastoral by the U.S. Catholic bishops caused what some observers have called an "unprecedented" ecumenical interest in the area of common social and moral witness.

The National Council of Churches, a coordinating body for Protestant and Orthodox churches in the country, did a study guide on the Catholic pastoral letter for use by its member churches. Theologians of the Catholic and Reformed churches are currently engaged in a dialogue on nuclear war as part of a series on ethical issues in which they seek greater understanding not only on ethical

conclusions but on their methods of addressing ethical questions.

The pastoral has led to uncounted interfaith discussions and seminars at the local level around the country. In Iowa, spurred largely by the Catholic pastoral, 16 church leaders issued a statewide joint pastoral letter at the end of the year condemning nuclear warfare and the concept of nuclear deterrence.

In doctrinal discussions, the U.S. Catholic-Lutheran dialogue issued a landmark statement of agreement on the doctrine of justification, marking the first time that Catholics and Lutherans had reached such a common understanding since their churches had divided over the issue in the 16th century.

Also in the United States, the Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue completed a study of Christian anthropology which it offered as a new context for interpreting and perhaps overcoming divisions between Catholics and Episcopalians (Anglicans) on a number of difficult questions.

In addition to that hoped-for agreement and the planned international Catholic-Lutheran document on ways to reunion, Father Hotchkin said that there may be other significant ecumenical events to look forward to in 1984.

One key one, he said, could be a visit by Pope John Paul II to the headquarters of the World Council of Churches during the pope's planned visit to Switzerland in June. If a WCC visit is included on the papal agenda, it will be the first papal visit to that world center of other Christian churches since 1969 and only the second in history.