

Editorials

Papal Message

If anyone doubts the oft-repeated position of Pope John Paul II on the arms issue, he or she should read carefully the papal Lenten message printed elsewhere in this newspaper.

"Christ suffers with those who yearn for an equitable and universal peace, while this peace is being destroyed or threatened by so many conflicts and by a senseless and excessive buildup of arms. Can we be allowed to forget that the world is meant to be built, not destroyed?"

Think of what he is saying. Christ suffers from an

excessive buildup of arms. The pope in Rome! Many American Catholics find it easy to ridicule this American bishop or that when he expresses a similar sentiment. Because so many American Catholics, through political differences, have forgotten their sensitivity to the teaching authority of the U.S. bishops, they tend to forget that the Vatican supports the same substantial position as regards the arms buildup.

"Christ suffers from a senseless buildup of arms." Not said by an American bishop or a spokesman for the U.S. Catholic Conference; but by the pope himself. How many Americans who so consistently call on the "magisterium" to support their own

image of church but who disagree with the American bishops on the issue of arms can avoid what the Holy Father is saying on this issue?

Implicit in the papal message is the reality that we are not doing enough for the hungry of the world because our means are being misdirected not only toward material goods but also toward manufacture of deadly armament. During Lent, the Holy Father asks that we may be converted, that we may experience that change of heart, as our own Bishop Clark so often urges, that will enable us to make the shifts which will channel our resources and our expertise and our spirituality to the benefit of those who so desperately need our assistance.

and Opinion

Support Life, Join Ranks

EDITOR:

Unborn children, condemned criminals and Russian citizens presently have much in common. All are seen, by many, as semihuman creatures whose lives ought quickly to be terminated by Those Who Know Better. All are perceived threats to a comfortable way of life we have carefully established and feel we richly deserve. To a person, their violent destruction is openly planned and sanctioned by large numbers of us.

It is for these and other reasons that "Seamless Garment Ripped" (C-J Feb. 8) and other reports of division among those committed to what is known as "sanctity of life" are so disheartening. We crucially need the unified vision and comfort of collaboration that Cardinal Bernardin and others are calling for.

Such expression as "respect for life" or "pro-life" or "peacemaker" are meaningless if used exclusively. A "respect" which is reserved for the innocent, the agreeable, the familiar is little respect. A "pro-life" legislator who seeks to protect the unborn while he supports the arms race and praises the might of nuclear weapons has made the term an embarrassment. A "peacemaker" who eloquently points out the obscenities of war while advocating the "choice" of doing violence to unborn babies and, ultimately, to women, is making anything but peace.

The various manifestations of our society's mindless infatuation with killing-as-solution are all really gestures of despair. The source of this despair is the deep spiritual emptiness of a culture which has long demonstrated its preference for microwave ovens to human beings. But believing that life is sacred means more than "choosing" life. It means serving it constantly in its myriad forms, with consistency and wholeness, not electing to serve one particular form or other.

If we are really for life, we nurture openness, willing to recognize our own best intentions even in the hearts of those we believe to oppose us; if we are peacemakers, we do the same, embracing compassion and nonviolence in all our relationships, not merely those we have idolized as deserving special attention. If we do see ourselves -- in truth -- as brothers and sisters, all valued equally by the One who prayed for our unity -- we cannot fail to be both.

Judith E. Kiehl 48 Lanvale Park Rochester, N.Y. 14617

President Right On

EDITOR:

President Reagan in his State of the Union message of Jan. 25 expressed his agreement with issues of concern to Catholics. He is opposed to abortion on demand. What practicing Catholic is not? He advocated tuition tax credits for private schools. What Catholic parent or taxpayer disagrees? He spoke out against nuclear war. So did the American Catholic bishops in their pastoral letter. He appealed for voluntary prayer in the public schools. What practical Catholic would deny a place for prayer in any school?

What past American president has ever urged the American people with its religious divisions to support Catholic issues like President Reagan? These issues demand a call for their adoption in November 1984 by the election of the man who first called for them Jan. 25, 1984.

John J. Overlander 201 Wimbledon Road Rochester, N.Y. 14617

Marian Consecration

EDITOR:

For those of us who know the Fatima message and have been praying the rosary daily for its fulfillment (in my own case, it has been nightly with Msgr. Cirrincione's radio Family Rosary for Peace for 35 years), it would seem as if our prayers are soon to be answered.

The pope has asked all the bishops of the world to consecrate the world, in union with himself, to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on the feast of the Annunciation March 24-25.

I would like to suggest that we fast and pray harder than ever between now and March 25 so that nothing will intervene to prevent the consecration from being made and made the way our Lord told Sister Lucy that it should be made.

Arlene O'Connor 214 Haddon Road Rochester, N.Y. 14626

'U.S. Church' Wrong Term

EDITOR:

I wonder how many shuddered, as I did, when I saw the Courier banner headline (2-15) "NYC, Boston Archbishops Seen Affirming U.S. Church."

U.S. Church! I always thought the adjective proper to our Church is Catholic. Paul, in his epistles, never speaks of the Corinthian Church, or the Philippian Church, but of the Church in

Corinth, the Church in Philippi. In the Book of Revelation, letters are to be written "to the seven churches which are in Asia" -- "the Church in Ephesus" -- "the Church in Smyrna," etc.

Wouldn't it be better to speak of the Church in the U.S., not the U.S. Church? Have we somehow become a branch different from the Roman Catholic Church?

Dorothy H. Polzinetti 108 Troy St. Seneca Falls, N.Y. 13148

President Defended

EDITOR:

I am writing in regard to the article "Southern Tier Catholics Blast 'State of the Union'" in your Feb. 15 issue. It is very unfortunate that your paper has to rely on title sensationalism to attract readers. I am a "Southern Tier Catholic" and I laud President Reagan and the marvelous job he has done improving our economy and helping our nation. I, like other Christians, deplore nuclear weapons, however, no one has been able to come up with a realistic plan to change the present complex world situation. Also, as far as President Reagan's ability to lead our nation is concerned, I feel he is the only candidate who can continue to lead our nation through these troubled times.

Edward Kornuszko 323 Park Lane Big Flats, N.Y. 14814

Editor's Note: We agree with reader Kornuszko that the use of the verb "blast" is too incendiary in this headline.

Remarried Need Support

EDITOR:

My husband and I were very impressed and pleased with your wedding supplement Feb. 1. Your multiple articles on remarriage made us feel that we are not a forgotten couple. My husband and I help conduct the New Horizons program in the Southern Tier and share a Separated and Divorced Ministry at St. Margaret Mary's of Apalachin.

We have come in contact with many people and the feeling that comes across again and again is that the pain of divorce is nothing compared to the pain of rejection a remarriage can bring by fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

The misunderstandings and confusion for the divorced and/or remarried Catholic are awesome. Some questions we hear: "Can we do the readings at Church?"

"Are my children illegitimized now?" People in divorce hear the same kind of old wives tales that pregnant women hear. Many times these hurts cause people to leave the church. We need to educate ourselves to the truths concerning divorce, annulment and remarriage. These people have so much to give and share with others. No one can say they did not hurt, they did to the very core of their being. This hurt though when turned around to the glory of God can give beautiful witness to the reason Jesus came ... to love, to forgive and to save.

Would any of us in the first days of spring trample a tender bud purposefully? We need to love, support and accept the remarried in our churches. Many times their own families have turned their backs on them and they are painfully and cruelly alone as one or your articles said. "You and me against the world." It doesn't have to be like that if more people would practice their Christianity. We ourselves have been extremely blessed with a community of Christians first and Catholics second and without this our "family" of God we could very well have been orphaned. Let us see and hear more about the divorced and remarried in our church, we need the education desperately.

Sandy and Ken Smith 316 Holmes Road Apalachin, N.Y.

Help Reagan End Abortion

EDITOR:

I have read Mr. A. d'Audiffret's letter of Feb. 22 and I am convinced that had he been at Valley Forge in 1777, he would have taken the position that although the charges made in the Declaration of Independence were true and correct and the American cause was justified, the Americans should give up the fight because King George III had no intention of mending his ways. He would have told his fellow patriots that they should be wary because, despite the fact that he had never told a lie, George Washington had never been heard to say that he personally believed that all men were created equal (or that women should be allowed to vote).

President Reagan is (or to quote Mr. d'Audiffret "says he is") in favor of prayer in public school and tuition tax credits. So am I.

Winston Churchill, when asked to justify his alliance with Stalin and the Communists, said that he would ally himself with the devil if it would allow him to defeat that monster Hitler. To which I say I am willing to



"SURE, THE END OF THE WORLD WILL PROBABLY COME IN OUR LIFETIME, BUT I THINK WE SHOULD KEEP OUR SENSE OF HUMOR ABOUT IT."

ally myself with President Reagan, (despite Mr. d'Audiffret's misgivings), if it will allow us to defeat the monsters who perpetrate the yearly butchery of 1.1 million potential Americans.

John J. Clark III RD1, Box 61 Wayland, N.Y. 14572

New Meaning For Eire

EDITOR:

Disheartened by the anti-Reagan rhetoric of Sister Mary Jean Smith, SSJ, of my childhood parish of St. Patrick's in Elmira (where are you now that we need you, Sisters Doloresa, Eileen, Regina, Sylvester, Loretta, Calista, Ursula, Felicitas, Fidelia, Inez, Corrairie, Joachim, Cecelia and Gregory?), (Courier-Journal, Feb. 15), but amused by Sarah Child's revisionist attempt to rework Gov. Cuomo's all-too-clear likening of Walter Mondale to "polenta," a bland, tasteless, farina-type mush forced on little children because good for them (Courier-Journal, Feb. 22), (Reagan symbolized to Cuomo a big piece of chocolate cake, topped with whipped cream and a cherry, looking good, delicious, but not good for you), I'd like to remind all sincere Democrats that the only pro-life candidate scheduled at his moment to appear on the ballot for New York State's voters in the presidential primary on April 3 is former Florida Gov. Reuben Askew. Mondale, Hart, Glenn, Jackson and, if for any reason they also appear on the ballot, McGovern, Cranston and Hollings are all committed to adding to the 15 million figure in the abortion holocaust which has disposed of about as many black babies as there were slaves in 1854, as many poor,

handicapped, female, individuals as there are in the entire Rochester diocese. What right do Sister Mary Jean, Father Bausch and Kathy Dubel have to speak for the Southern Tier Catholics maligned by your headline? Let a call go out to all the children of "Great and Glorious St. Patrick," the Italians, Polish, English, Middle Eastern, Vietnamese, German, Afro-Americans, etc., as well as the Irish, who have been blessed by the presence of St. Patrick's and its priests, religious and people in that neighborhood to stand up for the heritage of EIRE, -- Equal, Inalienable Rights for Everybody.

Can you honest, thinking, good Democrats (I used to be one myself) sincerely believe it is Reagan who is "robbing human beings of basic rights and needs?"

Marie Callahan Jessmer 225 Wyndale Road Rochester, N.Y. 14617 Editor's Note: Since reader Jessmer's letter, Gov. Askew has pulled out of the presidential race.

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.