

Editorials

Dependence Day

Independence Day. The nation, much as individuals are wont to do, prides itself on being independent.

But, if we are to be honest either as a nation or as individuals, we must admit that neither the United States nor each of us as individuals is truly independent. The reverse is much closer to the truth; we are all dependent, often even on strangers or on those with whom we share little affection.

Even while winning independence from England we were dependent on such foreign nations as France and on such individuals as LaFayette, Kosciusko, Pulaski, and Von Steuben.

From the start we were dependent on our mothers for sustenance and later our families, if we were fortunate to have one.

We are all depending on Moscow not to drop a nuclear bomb on us.

We are dependent on strangers, from furnace cleaners to the unseen people who service the airplanes we use.

The nation depends on industry, management and workers — and on banks.

Catholics depend on priests and religious for spiritual direction.

We depend on plumbers, dentists, bus drivers, trash collectors and presidents of the United States all to perform their duties honestly and effectively.

We depend on a proper combination of good soil, sunshine and rain and on our farmers to feed us — and on those who work on the trucks and trains which bring the harvest to us.

We depend on movie actors and baseball players and singers and our next-door neighbors.

On our co-workers and policemen and firemen and doctors and nurses. In the urgency of crises, the dependency becomes even more acute.

We depend on inanimate objects — automobiles, elevators, wheelchairs, umbrellas, clothing.

We depend on the sun to come up every morning.

We depend on God.

We celebrate July 4 as our independence day. We should celebrate every day as dependence day.

'Industry of Death'

"A million dollars is being spent every minute for arms, so that, while people are lacking bread, each inhabitant of the earth is being assured a package of almost three tons of explosives."

Please, dear supporters of the arms race, before you denounce the Communist or dupe of Moscow who may have said that, consider that it is a pronouncement of Fides, the news agency of the Vatican Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples.

Fides said that 40 million people, including 14.6 million children, die each year from sicknesses caused by malnutrition. And, it adds, another 300 million young people under 15 do not have sufficient nourishment and "thus their physical integrity for adult life is compromised."

Don't think Fides was merely zeroing in on the superpowers, it also criticized Third World nations for not being "exempt from this industry of death."

The essence of this is more than faintly reminiscent of many statements by Pope John Paul II which fall on deaf ears as the rush to arms in this world continues unabated. A similar fate probably awaits the Fides declaration.

and Opinion

Bishops Wrong On Nicaragua

EDITOR:

At the risk of terminating a brilliant church career and being banished to some ecclesiastical Siberia for speaking out of turn, let me play Paul speaking a word of historical reality to Peter. As I see it, the Nicaraguan bishops have made a mistake. The people in our Nicaraguan mountain parish when I invited them to reflect on the bishops' Easter message, developed a consensus that the bishops' reading of the present situation is inaccurate. The people, about 20 of them, are parish activists, middle-of-the-roaders. They are not the sort who will angrily storm out of the Church as many Americans did dissenting *Humanae Vitae* in 1968.

And not only our people dissent. At best, it's a small minority of the clergy who are willing to back the bishops. Significant has been the dissenting documents of the Jesuits and the Dominicans because what they say add up to 21 percent of all priests working in Nicaragua. Many other priests, either diocesan or Religious, have not taken a formal dissenting stand for fear of reprisals but have communicated their thanks to the Jesuits and Dominicans for speaking up for them.

Understand that much of what the bishops said is good and appropriate. The Jesuits explain where their message limps (selected themes on my part):

Unconditional dialogue with those who have taken up (U.S.) arms against the revolution; overlooking the U.S. war of aggression against Nicaragua at this very time; considering atheistic materialism more dangerous than capitalistic materialism; stymying rather than promoting dialogue both with the Church and Nicaraguan society.

Dominicans agree and add criticism:

Failure of the bishops to note achievements of the present administration; laying the blame for all of Nicaragua's problems on the Sandinistas thus implicitly calling for replacements of the leaders, labeling as disloyal sons of the Church who identify with the revolution; putting religion at the services of one political option with the grave risk of becoming accomplices of the holocaust which would follow a military invasion. All of what is happening makes authentic evangelization difficult and likewise drives away young people.

The bishops apparently have a private consulting firm which excludes input from both clergy and people

within Nicaragua. Alienation is the price of bad advice. When I get to Siberia, provided they let me take my typewriter, I'll send you the address.

Father Bernard Survil
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School News Lacking

EDITOR:

What a disappointing experience it is to read the *Courier-Journal* each week. Filling its pages are articles and photographs that have come from national and international sources. There are book reviews, movie reviews and lessons on how we should behave towards one another, especially our brothers and sisters in distant and far off countries. What is lacking in our paper is the news of vital interest to us, the people of the Rochester diocese.

In an age when we are trying to promote Christian values and expand our system of Christian education there is in our newspaper a real lack of news about our schools. We don't hear a great deal about our local Catholic high schools. How are we to choose where our children get their secondary education when they come of age? And yet, talk to the teens who attend these high schools. They are enthusiastic about their schools, the programs offered, the alternatives presented to them. Why don't they receive better coverage?

We hear even less about our elementary schools through the *Courier*. Once a month they are given minimal coverage and attention. Yet, what a terrific opportunity the *Courier* presents to "sell" a Catholic education, to promote good will throughout the diocese and share ideas and concerns among the parishes, children, and adults of our community; an opportunity that is neglected.

I would wager a bet that most Catholics of our diocese would find it difficult to name four Catholic elementary schools. I honestly believe this embarrassing lack of knowledge is due to the fact that our local news source, the *Courier-Journal*, does not or can not find the

space to devote to our own people.

I do hope that the managing staff of the *Courier* will soon turn a sharp and critical eye towards our own diocese and will soon give us equal time and space for our parishes and schools.

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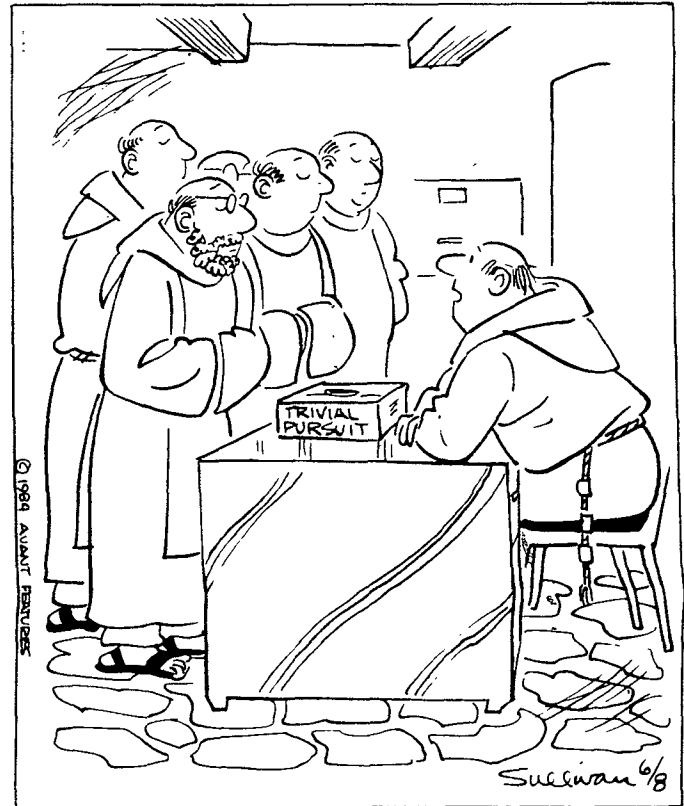
Tribute To a Nun

EDITOR:

The passing of Sister Marie Francis, SSJ, is a cause for both sadness and joy -- sadness because of the loss of a marvelously gifted and dedicated Catholic educator, and joy because those of us who knew her are certain about her special place in Heaven.

Sister Marie Francis was an outstanding and exemplary educator, who brought the Catholic faith alive for us each day in our seventh grade classroom at Blessed Sacrament. The depth of her spiritual maturity was the wellspring which watered and nourished the spiritual formation of those students who were blessed to have her in the classroom. Her love for God and His Blessed Mother was reflected daily in the great sense of joy and concern with which she carried out her educational responsibilities. She was at home with Plato, Chesterton, Belloc, Descartes and Rembrandt as she was with St. Theresa of Avila, Ignatius of Loyola and Mother Seton. She could move effortlessly and skillfully from geography to art, from English grammar and literature to theology and from math to history -- and bring these subjects to her students with enthusiasm and erudition. Perhaps her most noteworthy classroom quality was her ability to elicit the best at all times from her students, regardless of differences in ability. She was always most accessible to those who needed her most. There is no doubt that she left her own special mark, spiritually and educationally, on a very large number of students in her 32 years in diocesan classrooms.

Sister Marie Francis was a wonderful and loving woman who served Catholic education, the Catholic Church and her God with a pronounced spirit of freedom and love -- the freedom and



"FIRST OF ALL I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHERE YOU GOT THE TRIVIAL PURSUIT GAME."

love which she found in her gift from and to her God -- her vocation to the religious life and her special contribution to the spiritual formation of young Catholics in the Diocese of Rochester for so many years.

Thank you, Sister Marie Francis, for having served your God and His children so well ... but who will take your place?

William F. Schmitz
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Refugees Breaking Law

EDITOR:

I read with interest the article about the refugees from El Salvador who were given the right in your newspaper to voice their opposition to the El Salvador government. They are in this country illegally and they are

being sheltered illegally by Corpus Christi Church, which to me does not set a very good example to condone an illegality.

I believe your article would have been more objective if it had advised the readers of the *Courier-Journal* that the newly-elected president of El Salvador is considered a devout Catholic and is a graduate of Notre Dame University.

It seems that the people who are opposing the present administration with respect to their foreign policy in Central America is the same crowd that opposed the war in Vietnam, a war in which this country could have easily won and instead left the poor Vietnamese people to the perils of the Communists.

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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.

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