

Editorials

The Twain Not Meeting

When Kipling wrote about East and West not meeting, he could have been writing, in paraphrase, about the candidates and the Church in this year's presidential elections.

It must be stressed that the Courier-Journal cannot endorse any candidate or any political party. Tax laws, however, do permit discussion of candidates as they stand on issues deemed pertinent to Catholic readers.

When the bishops of New York State assembled last April in Rochester, they issued a strong pro-life statement, "Government Officials and the Support of Human Life," which emphasized the importance of abortion as a political issue. The prelates asked public officials to lead the struggle against abortion.

During the course of that meeting, Bishop Matthew H. Clark, in answer to a reporter's question, offered his opinion that any candidate that took a pro-life position toward all the critical issues of the day -- capital punishment, arms control and nuclear disarmament, poverty as well as abortion -- would make an attractive candidate.

Indeed, when another reporter asked Archbishop John O'Connor of New York City, if a candidate could take an anti-abortion stand and still be elected,

the prelate answered succinctly that President Reagan did.

And he continues to take a forceful and forthright pro-life stand as far as abortion. But, why oh why, can't he show such respect for life in other areas, such as helping the needy, the elderly, stopping the spread of nuclear weapons, working to erase the death penalty.

To be complete, it must be mentioned that while Archbishop O'Connor praised the president's position vis a vis abortion, he was critical on his cutbacks on social programs:

"We can't concern ourselves merely with the rights of the unborn but with human life at every stage," he said. "Recently, I visited the Bowery -- the Catholic soup kitchens and those of many faiths with which we cooperate. The private sector can't do this alone. Far more is needed from the public sector."

On the other side of the political coin, the Democratic candidates have very similar stands as do the state and national bishops on most of the human life questions. They have received favorable ratings from Catholics on disarmament, family and anti-poverty issues and civil rights.

Both Democratic candidates, however, are opposed to tuition tax credits.

But the same question concerning the president on these issues can be conversely asked of the Democrats contenders: Why, oh why, can't Mondale-Ferraro be pro-life when it comes to abortion? Bishop Clark's remark once again applies -- wouldn't they be more formidable and acceptable to many voters? Especially in the case of Geraldine Ferraro, daughter

of immigrants, ethnic, bright, a self-made woman, who seems capable of rearing a family at the same time serving as a congresswoman.

Ms. Ferraro, probably because of her sex, has become the cynosure of the national election. Her stand on abortion, a carbon copy of that of the governor of New York State, was summarized in a statement she made during a House debate on federal funding for abortions: "As a Catholic, I accept the premise that a fertilized ovum is a baby. I have been blessed with the gift of faith but others have not. I have no right to impose my beliefs on them."

Father Edward Bryce, secretary for pro-life activities for the U.S. bishops, says that idea is "seriously defective." He told NC News Service that that was the stance many ante-bellum American politicians adopted toward slavery but no one today would advocate legalizing slavery on grounds that it is a moral or religious question and should be left up to individual free choice.

Archbishop O'Connor said likewise in Rochester last April when he paraphrased the Cuomo-Ferraro position: "I am personally opposed to slavery but I support the right of others to hold slaves if they choose."

Just think if Reagan really put the squeeze on the Soviet to work for nuclear disarmament and arms control, if only he would cut defense spending and help impoverished children and minorities...

Or if Mondale and Ferraro, particularly the latter who says she is personally opposed to abortion, would take a pro-life stand regarding the unborn ...

If, if, if ...

and Opinion

Tithe To God

EDITOR:

Do you slide down in the pew when the collection basket is passed; or are you uncomfortable when you put your envelope into the basket? If so, I wonder if you know that neglecting to give back to God the tithes (money) that is rightfully His is in reality robbing God?

In Malachi 3:8 it says, "will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me."

The tithe according to Genesis 28:20-22 is a tenth of our income. That is \$1 for every \$10 we earn. Not to give this tithe unto God causes the flow of blessings from God to be hindered in our lives.

Also it is not right that our pastors should have to stand in the pulpit and beg parishioners for the money that they should rightfully have to use for God's work. Ponder what God says, "bring ye all the tithe into the storehouse that there may be meat in

mine house and prove me now if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it and I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruit of your ground."

Wow! What an opportunity to please God and to bring His blessings upon our households. It is wisdom to place our money in God's bank, for He pays the highest rate of interest on our investment. So often we destroy our own harvest by sowing sparingly. We do not prosper and we wonder why.

In Luke 6:38 it says, "give and it shall be given unto you; good measure pressed down and shaken together and running over shall men give unto your bosom. For with the same measure that you measure with it shall be measured back to you."

So "honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine" (Proverbs 3:9-10).

There is great wisdom in being a cheerful giver. Prove God. He really will open the

flood gates of heaven and pour you out a blessing. You say that you can't afford to give a tenth? I say you can't afford not to. Alleluia!

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Abortion Is Paramount

EDITOR:

In the July 18 issue of the Courier-Journal, an article was supplied by NC News Service entitled, "Pro-Lifers Level Ferraro Criticism." The article started out explaining the title's point through interviewing Dr. John Wilke of the NRLC on Ferraro's atrocious pro-abortion record in Congress. The article ended with praises of her appointment from pro-abortionists Tip O'Neil (a Catholic), Jesse Jackson (a minister), and Gloria Steinem (a feminist). Sister Sylvester from Network also endorsed Ferraro, although I do not know her stand on abortion.

I question the article's direction in publishing the remarks of the latter four. Their statements do not solidify the article, but only inflate doubts among weak Catholics as to the Church's position on abortion.

Archbishop John O'Connor of New York recently stated that he could not understand how any Catholic could vote for any pro-abortion candidate. Abortion is an issue that overshadows all other issues. It is as basic as life or death.

Abortion is a paramount issue in the Church today. The act is so grievous that it brings automatic excommunication, not only to those directly involved, but also to accomplices and perpetrators.

I am saddened when Catholics in politics vote the "pro-choice" position, yet are personally opposed. It is equally bad when Catholic journalism prints endorsements of pro-abortion candidates. The bottom line is the continuing slaughter of the innocent.

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Bouquet For Pope

EDITOR:

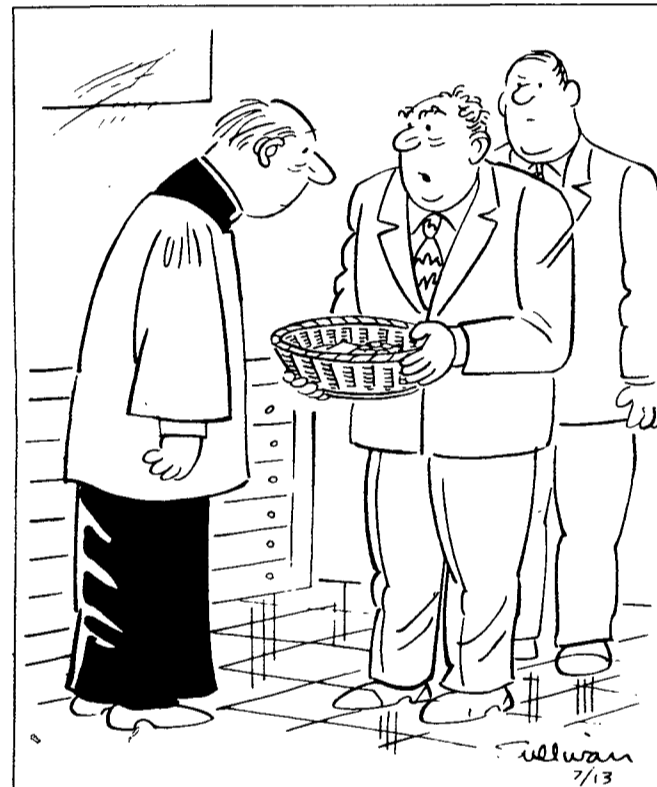
As a special gift to Pope John Paul II during his trip to North America in September, we plan to give him a spiritual bouquet of prayers, works and sacrifices from all over Canada and the United States.

We are asking lay people, as well as priests and religious, to participate and express support for Pope John Paul II, who has so much responsibility and many important decisions to make.

The participants may choose on day of the month to keep him in their prayers. This may consist of offering Holy Mass or the rosary or 15 minutes of special prayer time for his intention. The promises should be written in a personal note addressed directly to His Holiness, Pope John Paul II, Vatican City, Italy.

Anyone interested in participating in this spiritual bouquet which will be presented to Pope John Paul II in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, Sept. 16, should address them to Spiritual Bouquet, 1013 N. First St., Fargo, N.D., 58102. Deadline is Sept. 5.

Mark and Nancy Emmel
1013 N. First St.
Fargo, N.D. 58102



"YOU'VE BEEN TOO NICE, FATHER. IF IT'S OKAY BY YOU, NEXT WEEK BOB AND I ARE GONNA START USING THREATS."

Handshake Undignified

Every time I see a priest come down off the altar and rush down the aisle frantically shaking hands, I wonder if he is running for office. Is there any rationale for this "press-the-flesh" exhibition? Did any person in the pew ever ask for this enforced intimacy with his priest? I

believe our intellectual elites have struck again.

How does this square with the priest's performance of his priestly duties? Do you suppose any other religion at any time has laid this undignified behavior on its priests? What does this have to do with the sacrifice of the Mass?

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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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Thanks
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