

Editorials

Our Loss

An old superstition proclaims, "They always die in threes." Last week that was true for the American Catholic Church as Msgr. Geno Baroni, Auxiliary Bishop Edward Maginn of Albany and Cardinal Lawrence J. Shehan, former archbishop of Baltimore died.

Individually, each of the trio was exemplary and together their diverse accomplishments represent much of what is good about the Catholic Church.

Cardinal Shehan, described as a "gentle and holy man," nonetheless was known for his stand on racial justice, for his firm anti-abortion position, for his ecumenical efforts, particularly with the Jewish community, for his support of the Catholic educational system and for his early opposition to the Vietnam War.

Bishop Maginn, Albany's longtime auxiliary, effectively ran the post-Vatican II affairs of the diocese as administrator serving an ailing ordinary. He was a champion of racial equality and was in the forefront of ecumenism. He was as indefatigable in his work as he was self-effacing and his life of dedication was a lesson for us all.

Age-wise, Msgr. Baroni was a babe compared to the elderly cardinal and bishop. Just 53, he was a

victim of cancer. But his list of accomplishments was long and important, almost as if God knew he would be leaving early and propelled him at a faster rate. He was a champion of the urban poor, of ethnic minorities and particularly of racial justice. Ironically, in light of the closeness of their dying, he and Cardinal Shehan were among the clergy who marched with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. in Washington in 1963.

Each life was full and meritorious, dedicated to concerns of justice and reaching out to neighbors. They all happened to be men and ordained. But the values they typified transcend gender and vocation and should be embraced by all pilgrims of this 20th Century Church.

Teacher

The new archbishop of New York City seems particularly adept at teaching some of the hard lessons of life.

Not only does Archbishop John J. O'Connor speak out clearly and logically when he deems it necessary, on such issues as abortion, he also teaches subtly, a gift which may be even more persuasive than plain speaking.

and Opinion

Suggestion For Courier

EDITOR:

I am responding to the letter from Sandra Burton, "School News Lacking," in the July 4, 1984 issue of the Courier-Journal.

The Journal is a diocesan newspaper, not a parochial newsletter. The parishes in Rochester can develop a newsletter for the purpose of circulating school news among them, if they so desire.

Bishop Clark has made it clear that the Journal is to be a source of information and education for the diocese. I quote from a letter, dated April 1984, to parish pastors, from the bishop: "... a plan for increased circulation carefully formulated and

unanimously approved by the Board of Directors of the Courier-Journal ... calls for a three-year, phased-in circulation plan aimed at reaching all parish envelope-users by July of 1986." Since the local parish is billed for all subscriptions, parish funds must be used for delinquent subscriptions. Those who contribute to their parish should receive value for their money through the improved coverage of diocesan, national and international Catholic news in their diocesan paper.

I would like to suggest that the center page of the Courier-Journal be used for local Rochester news. I'm sure it would be of little interest to parishioners in Rochester that our Altar-Rosary Society is meeting, or that students are singing

Christmas carols at the nursing home, so to spare us from such news of Rochester, the center page could be omitted from mailings beyond the city limits.

Mary Rose Eschler 88 Talcott St. Owego, N.Y. 13827

Fulltime Moms Neglected

EDITOR:

It was of interest to note the backgrounds of the women named as consultants to the bishops' committee on a national pastoral letter on women (Courier-Journal, Aug. 22). While two of the five women are described as being wives and mothers, there is no woman for which this is her sole calling.

The Church has always held the roles of wife and mother in the highest regard. These were the occupations performed by Mary in Nazareth. It would have seemed appropriate, therefore, that at least one advisor for this pastoral letter would be able to reflect the joys, satisfactions, frustrations and pastoral concerns of those who have no other career to divert their energies or to deflect the problems they face-- be they those of isolation, yearning for adult conversation during long daytime hours or interacting at the level of five-year-olds. For these women, no career is of higher value than nurturing the minds and bodies of the next generation -- acting, as the Church says at Baptism, as a "first and best teacher."

So, it is regrettable that the bishops have not seen fit to recognize a fulltime wife and mother as one who has worthwhile counsel to give. Let us hope they will broaden their view of the importance of the roles and identities of a significant, but unfortunately declining, number of those who place the highest value on their vocation as wife and mother.

Alan V. Purcell 12 Inverness Circle Fairport, N.Y. 14450

Catholic Literature

EDITOR:

Readers may like to mail their used Catholic pam-

phlets and magazines direct to foreign missions.

If those who wish to do so will please send me self-addressed stamped envelopes, I will give them the addresses of missionary priests and nuns who need Catholic literature.

Mary Conway 14 Castle St. Cork, Ireland

A Plea For Help

EDITOR:

Bethany House is a Catholic Worker House of Hospitality for women and children in need of emergency housing. The only staffing and funding for the house is through individual and group volunteers and donations.

Presently we are in need of evening house-sitters to spend time with our guests and answer the phones, etc. We also need people who can volunteer overnight once a week, once a month, or on an on-call basis. Persons interested in helping us with cooking or who could be available on an on-call basis to help with plumbing, electrical, carpentry, or appliance work are also asked to contact us. Our telephone number is 454-4197.

And, finally, your prayers in remembering all of us at Bethany is greatly appreciated.

The Bethany House Staff 169 St. Bridget's Dr. Rochester, N.Y. 14605

Abortion Is Murder

EDITOR:

In response to Adolphe d'Audiffret's letter in regards to President Reagan's record, let's not forget the Democrats and Jimmy Carter.

They, the Democrats, passed the Notch Years Law for our Social Security. Anyone born between the years 1917 to 1921 will receive \$100 a month less in Social Security. Let none of us who were born in those years forget that. I now receive \$100 less per month.

The main issue for all Catholics should be the abortion issue, as abortion is murder.

Mrs. Anna Nick 126 Seneca Ave. Rochester, N.Y. 14621

A case in point is his recent good-natured ribbing of the governor of New York at the funeral of Albany's longtime auxiliary bishop, Edward Maginn.

For those who missed the newspaper reports, the archbishop said, "We have the governor of New York State here, who I hope will come when I die. But then if he does, the newspapers will say the governor is happy to go to the archbishop's funeral."

The congregation, including Mario Cuomo, laughed.

Much has been written about the contention between the two men over abortion and the associated issue of religion and politics. The differences, to be sure, are serious. However, that fact does not preclude the archbishop from an exercise in civility which may do more to impress the governor than all the logic of the archbishop's correct position that abortion is wrong and must be opposed at every level.

It should also be noted that the day before the funeral, the two leaders met in private, presumably to discuss their varying views. That, too, is a healthy sign. Only when differing opinions are aired is there any chance for re-evaluation of seemingly locked-in positions. And it is very possible that Gov. Cuomo, in his heart, knows the archbishop is right.

Fr. Louis J. Hohman



The Open Window

Emphasis Explained

Dear Father Hohman,

We have recently had a new church built in our parish and the Blessed Sacrament is not on the main altar, but is in a place that is not easily found. I always thought that the presence of the Blessed Sacrament on the main altar was what made us Catholics different -- that we had the real presence of Jesus in our churches and others don't. What brought about this change? It seems very strange to me and takes away something very important for me as a Catholic. I am confused and a bit angry. Isn't there anything to hang onto anymore?

(Signed) F.G.

Dear F.G.,

I am surprised you had not observed this phenomenon before. Most churches today have the Blessed Sacrament in a side chapel or in some side reverential place. The change stems from the liturgical reforms of Vatican II and has solid reasons behind it.

In the very early days of the Church, the Blessed Sacrament was reserved only for Communion for the sick. Generally the "tabernacle" was suspended somewhat like the lamp.

Only gradually did devotion to the Blessed Sacrament reserved in this manner come about.

It is important to remember that in no way does the removal of the Blessed Sacrament to a side chapel diminish our belief in the real presence of Jesus Christ in the eucharistic species, nor does it diminish our reverence. The fact is that such reservation and devotion can become (and did become) somewhat one-sided in the sense we tended to forget that central to our belief is the idea we are the temples of God.

St. Paul, speaking to the Corinthians, says, "You are the temple of the living God." The presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist is also a reality, but meant primarily to be a sign of his love and giving of his total self to us for our salvation.

Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament should, in a very special way, remind us of that love, and that giving of himself to us as the bread of life.

Otherwise, we need to believe that God indeed dwells in us and that we are his temple. Therefore, we do not have to find him in a particular space or external place, but rather in our hearts. And that is just as real a presence as the presence of the Holy Eucharist.

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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