

Editorials

The Appeal

The other campaign. We hope it has not been lost amid the tumult of the political arena.

To say the presidential election is important would be trite. It has been incumbent on us all to pay attention to the campaigns of the different candidates for all the offices. It requires time but not to do so would be a disservice to responsibility.

But we should not ignore that other campaign -- the Bishop's Annual Thanks Giving Appeal. After the last hurrah of the political rhetoric, the diocesan campaign will continue. It is non-ending, much as the work of the Church.

This is the fourth year that Bishop Matthew H. Clark has gone directly to his people for the finances needed to run the multi-faceted endeavors of the Church in Rochester.

The services rendered by the diocese to all of us are too numerous and complex to be described here. They range from providing a solid Catholic education for our children, to serving the needs of the elderly, to ministering to the poor, to providing

spiritual direction and wherewithal for our parishes, to performing those many undramatic administrative and clerical chores necessary to hold a burgeoning diocese together. From old to young, from urban to country, and all that lies between.

Appeal pledges are now being taken up across the diocese on the way to a goal of \$3,038,000. Rochester diocesans have always been noted for their generosity and the annual appeal affords them the opportunity to once again come to the aid of their Church and of their less privileged sisters and brothers.

Number, Please

The Courier-Journal appreciates all contributions to our opinion space. First, a healthy response indicates strong readership. But even more important, a newspaper, as any form of communication, must be a two-way street, or it risks becoming something of a bore. The person who only speaks but never listens soon loses his audience; so, too, with a newspaper.

However, in order to present the optimum opinion format, some requirements are necessary. The paper lists them weekly toward the bottom of this page.

Among the guidelines is the requirement of a telephone number; letters must be verified. This becomes even more necessary with such timely events as the current election; some letters, unfortunately, may not see print in time to be effective, because they could not be verified quickly.

So, please keep the space aside for our readers lively and diversified but please abide by the simple but necessary guidelines.

Pray, Vote

By the time this paper is published again, we all will know who will be our president for the next four years.

Neither of the major candidates is perfect; that would be impossible. Each has strengths. Each has weaknesses. We the people must choose.

As the U.S. bishops have pointed out, there are many issues. We have had ample time to study them and also to know where the candidates stand.

Pray. Vote. Pray for the loser. Pray harder for the winner.

and Opinions

Gratitude To Diocesans

EDITOR:

I am writing from Notre Dame University where I am taking part in the Institute for Clergy Education, a four-month sabbatical program for priests. I am receiving a thorough updating in all those areas of knowledge required for effective ministry in the post-Vatican II Church.

This past Summer I took part in a 30-day retreat at the

Jesuit Center for Spiritual Renewal in Wernersville, Pa.

I was able to take part in both programs because of the generosity of the people of the Diocese of Rochester to the Annual Catholic Thanks Giving Appeal. Thank you and bless you for your goodness.

As I continue my sabbatical I promise my prayers for the success of this year's Thanks Giving Appeal.

Father Robert L. Collins
Holy Cross Brothers Center
James Hall, Room 209
Notre Dame, Ind., 46556

Cuomo Logic Faulted

EDITOR:

Gov. Cuomo gave a controversial speech at Notre Dame University Sept. 1. Had he read a page of 16th Century history, he might not have said what he did. He would have read Martin Luther's description of the "principle of Private Judgment." This "principle" has served since to advance Protestantism and to destroy Catholicism.

"You must remember," Luther wrote, "that there are good Christians among us who have the true faith, spirit, understanding, word and mind of Christ. Why should we reject their opinion and judgment and accept those of the pope who has neither that faith nor that spirit..."

"Balaam's ass was more perspicacious than the prophet himself (Num. 22:28) since God once spoke through an ass, why should He not come in our day and speak through a man of faith and even contradict the pope?"

Luther's argument can be updated and wrapped in this syllogism:

A good Catholic can pass judgment about Catholic beliefs and practices even when that judgment differs from that of the pope.

But Gov. Cuomo is a good Catholic.

Therefore Gov. Cuomo can pass judgment about Catholic beliefs even when that judgment differs from that of the pope.

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

Abortion Tied To Nuke War

EDITOR:

Can those politicians who tolerate the legal killing of 4,000 persons a day find humane solutions to other social problems? Mother Teresa warns that "nuclear war is the fruit of abortion." Those who vote for pro-abortion politicians are picking bitter fruit for our children and grandchildren.

William P. Polito
Solin, Polito and Anderson
13 S. Fitzhugh St.
Rochester, N.Y. 14614

Archbishop Commended

EDITOR:

The following letter was sent by us to Archbishops O'Connor and Law. We think your readers would be as concerned as we are. We wrote:

"Please accept our support and encouragement in your efforts to educate Catholic politicians and candidates on the inconsistency of being 'personally opposed' to abortion while taking a public stance that supports a woman's right to choose this unacceptable alternative.

"We are members of the Board of Directors of the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry for the Diocese of Rochester. Our board twice rejected writing a letter endorsing your efforts to educate our Catholic public officials. As much as this saddens us, it makes it more clear that you and the other bishops and priests need to intensify your efforts to educate not only politicians but lay Catholics on the Church's teachings, keeping in mind the words of the late Cardinal Medeiros of Boston: "Those who make abortions possible by law such as legislators, and those who promote, defend and elect the same lawmakers cannot separate themselves totally from that guilt which accompanies this horrendous crime and deadly sin."

"At our meeting of the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry, we were compelled to imagine a similar meeting occurring in Nazi Germany at which a resolution condemning the extermination of Jews, gypsies and so many others was defeated so that the board could get on to more critical matters such as unemployment, farmworkers' rights and housing.

"We dream of a day when Catholics are united in support of the right to life of all God's children."

We hope that the seamless garment approach to life issues applies to all, not just pacifiers.

Donald Peters
17 Huff St.
Waterloo, N.Y. 13165
Richard Shipley
17 Mumford St.
Seneca Falls, N.Y. 13148

Voodoo Religion

EDITOR:

While the Republican Party could often get away with supporting anti-labor legislation, it felt that it could not wage a political campaign against the social justice for working people as advocated in the papal encyclicals and expect to get the votes of Catholic working people.

Therefore it devised the clever tactic of blowing up emotional side issues which pander to selfish sectarian interests.

During the depression, these conservatives got the Catholic press, with the exception of the Catholic Worker and Commonweal magazine, to oppose federal aid to Catholic schools and to oppose a proposed amendment to the Constitution that would merely give Congress the permission to outlaw child labor.

Now the Republican Party is more successful in getting the Catholic working people to forget their own economic welfare, as well as their safety from nuclear war, by getting them emotionally worked up over a single side issue, abortion.

The nonpartisan Urban Institute study has shown that while your attention was diverted by this side issue, the Reagan administration's policies since 1980, have diverted \$25 billion of income to the wealthiest one fifth of the nation from taxpayers in the lower and middle income brackets.

This legalized robbery is an example of the conservative religion of Greed and Class

War that is being waged against you. Do you want four more years of this "voodoo religion"?

Walter O'Hagan
7 Sherman St.
Auburn, N.Y.

Many Issues For Catholics

EDITOR:

The recent public stand by several bishops on Catholic politicians' voting records on abortion is their right and obligation.

Unfortunately, it points up very vividly the danger of "one issue" politics. Can these bishops stand silent, in their teaching role, on whether Catholic voters can support an administration whose policies have:

1. caused an increase in the number of Americans living in poverty;
2. encouraged government support of segregated schools;
3. arbitrarily cut Social Security funds to disabled persons;
4. neglected efforts to clean up toxic waste;
5. provided military aid for repressive military dictators;
6. violated international law by mining harbors?

Yes, abortion is an important consideration but should Catholics base their vote on this one issue?

Paul R. Stack
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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.

Neither Party Is Perfect But Vote We Must

Father Daniel Holland is pastor of St. Patrick's in Elmira. He is a frequent contributor to the Religion in the Community feature of the Elmira Star Gazette. The following column is a reprint from that paper's Oct. 11 edition.

By Father Daniel Holland

If your religious sensibilities allow you to read still another opinion on the subject of politics and religion, read on!

Both major political parties and their leadership have attempted to manipulate the many faiths of our citizens into overt political support, as if such support were a divine command. And many religious leaders, of many denominations, appear to allow themselves to be manipulated, into at least a subtle political support of one part or the other. Religious leaders ought to know better!

The Old Testament is full of stories of the tragic results for human society where religious leadership becomes identified with the goals and programs of governmental leaders.

The great prophets of the Bible fiercely challenged the identification of specific political programs with some supposed obedience to the divine will. God does not mandate specific government programs!

Christians believe that God is passionately in love with humankind. What God wants for people in their civil society is justice. Justice is the basis for peace. God leaves it to the free initiatives of people to devise specific programs and laws which promote justice. Neither political party and neither major candidate embody a consistent program to promote justice for all peoples, especially the most needy people: the unborn, the handicapped, the elderly, the victims of economic injustice, even our enemies! (Yes, God wills life, not death, even for our enemies.)

Conscientious Christians face a dilemma in voting in this national. Yes, vote we must! Through prayer and reflection, each of us will come to a decision as to which candidate more embodies our hopes and beliefs about civic life. Neither candidate fully embodies all that we believe and hope for human society. What choice is ever perfect?

If through prayer we are changed, perhaps through more prayer by more people our society is changed. And then our society will produce better candidates for governmental leadership.

Perhaps the biblical message to American Christians in this election is simple: the choice you have is what you deserve! Maybe that message will command us in more consistent activity for justice in our own lives and the choices for governmental leadership will be better on another occasion.