

More Opinions

SSJs Thank Diocesans

EDITOR:

On behalf of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester, I extend to the people of the diocese our heartfelt gratitude for the generous support of our Sisters working in the mission areas of Brazil and Selma, Ala. Because of contributions to our diocesan Mission Appeal over these many years, the work of our Sisters has grown and flourished in both of these areas. We are blessed, too, in the knowledge of continued support through diocesans' prayer and concern for our Sisters and the people they serve.

This year, on Dec. 7, Bishop Clark and I, all of our Sisters in Brazil and our three postulants there, will celebrate our anniversary of 20 years in our mission in Brazil. The people of the diocese will be especially remembered during that Eucharist.

May the Lord richly bless all in the diocese for their thoughtfulness and for the sacrifices they are making for the people in these mission areas.

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Thanks Due Courier Staff

EDITOR:

A reply to Joseph J. Murray's letter entitled "Coverage Criticized" (Aug. 22) is long overdue. Ninety-nine percent of Courier-Journal readers, I'm sure, are grateful to the improvements put in by Messrs. Costello and Viglucci. Murray said, "...the C-J does not provide the essential elements of Catholic journalism which are necessary for the salvation of the souls of the C-J staff and its readers." Is it what I read or is it what I do and what I feel in my heart that determines salvation?

In addition, Murray wrote of "C-J contents and coverages which subvert Catholic faith, its teachings, authority and disciplines." Specifically, he referred to "a collection of thrusts against the ordained priesthood, permanent commitment and celibacy."

Wake up, Roman Catholics, before it is too late. Vocations to the priesthood are showing an alarming reduction. Talk to most young men and celibacy is usually THE reason they decided against the priesthood. Continued restrictions on preventing priests from marrying will split the church, particularly in the Western world.

Murray obviously also scorns the idea of women priests. Cannot a woman believe?

Are we in the 1980s susceptible to the archaic doctrines of the Dark Ages? Namely, that women come second?

And what's that slur regarding his so-called "verbal and pictorial praises of individual or centerfold collections of lay-image religious" mean?

Substantial and beneficial changes in the Church always have come about as the result of lay people, who themeleves are the Church. Again, ask any Roman Catholic what he or she

wants changed in the Vatican. I'm certain you'll find the answer to be "more openness, less secrecy."

So, C-J staffers, my profound thanks for providing me with both sides of Church issues.

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No Action By Reagan

EDITOR:

In 1980, candidate Reagan said he would support a constitutional amendment to abolish abortion and in view of his "track record" as governor in California, Right to Life people were amply justified in being skeptical and I am not aware of any ACTION to fulfill his 1980 promise as I will document.

The appointment of Mrs. O'Connor to the Supreme Court satisfied a demand that a woman be appointed to the Supreme Court; however, her record as an Arizona legislator showed that she had voted for pro-abortion legislation. In any event, one justice on the court will not change the ruling made in 1971.

The matter of abortions is a very limited area of Dr. Koop's domain as surgeon general and in no event would he be able to overturn the Supreme Court's rulings on the subject.

What is needed is a constitutional amendment and this requires passage by both houses of Congress and approval by three fourths of the states, but no approval or veto by the president, so we are justified in looking at his ACTIONS in support of such an amendment. In 1981, Reagan early in his administration announced that such social action would have to await 1982. However, in pressuring an unwilling Congress to adopt the Kemp-Roth tax legislation and his budget including increased appropriations for the Defense Department, he clearly demonstrated how to get Congress to do what he wanted. He called groups of recalcitrant senators and representatives to the White House, made periodic visits to the Capitol and even phoned members from Air Force One to lobby for their votes.

In 1982, Sen. Helms succeeded in getting a proposed law (but not his own constitutional amendment) out of the Judiciary Committee and on the Senate floor for debate on Aug. 16, but an opponent immediately commenced a filibuster to prevent action. On Sept. 8, Reagan announced his support of the Helms bill and when Helms moved to end the filibuster, the president is reported to have phoned 14 senators said to be wavering; however, it developed that one of the calls was made to a Rep. William J. Coyne, who had no vote in the Senate and apparently was mistaken for Sen. William J. Cohen, who was not contacted. The motion to end the filibuster lost on Sept. 15 and Helms moved to table his bill and also to withdraw his amendment from consideration. Meantime, Reagan had written a letter on the 9th to all the senators saying that his support of the Helms bill did not mean that he was opposed to Sen. Hatch's constitutional amendment. In a press conference on the 15th, Reagan stated that in

view of the failure to break the filibuster proposed restrictions on abortion would have to be put aside till 1983.

In 1983, Sen. Hatch's constitutional amendment was debated and was defeated in the Senate on June 28 and 29 and failed of passage and there is no record of any lobbying by the president of the type he had used in 1981 or, for that matter, of any action in support.

In 1984, Reagan on Jan. 31 renewed his call for a constitutional amendment, not to the Congress which needed to act, but in a speech to a convention of the National Religious Broadcasters. And, of course, he touched the right bases in this election year, by writing to congratulate Archbishop O'Connor for his March 17 address in which he had "spoken out against abortion," and on April 2 he sent an aide to a conference sponsored by Americans United for Life to express "his high regard for the goals of abortion." MORE WORDS, but where is the ACTION?

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— Citation accompanying the Honorary Doctor of Laws Degree conferred upon Rep. John J. LaFalce by Niagara University.

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- CANISIUS COLLEGE, 1961
- VILLANOVA SCHOOL OF LAW, J.D., 1964
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