

**Editorial**

**CRS: It Works**

It probably can be chalked up to human nature that often we tend to forget or ignore such ongoing work as that done by Catholic Relief Services. Certainly, Catholics, to their everlasting credit, always respond in abundance to such plights as the current famine threatening Africa.

The need is graphic, the contributions are made, even though they often hurt in the pocketbook, and somehow we rest assured that we have done our part. And that is so -- but only because the middle man is on the job, in this case Catholic Relief Services, one of the agencies funded by the American Bishops Annual Overseas Appeal; the others are Migration and Refugee Services, the Holy Father's Charities and the National Apostleship of the Sea Conference.

Rochester dioceses in a truly heroic display of generosity have contributed nearly \$200,000 (as of this writing) to dilute the effects of the present African drought. And that money is put into action most efficiently because CRS is already in place and on the job. And so it goes with earthquakes, tornadoes and the many other calamities striking people down, as well as some of the more prosaic work of helping less privileged people around the world.

The annual collection for the bishops' overseas agencies is this weekend. Last year more than \$10 million was collected nationwide, enabling CRS to provide clean water, agricultural assistance, nutrition education and leadership training to millions of people in the developing world.

But CRS does still more. For instance, its executive director, Lawrence A. Pezzulo, points out that not only is CRS working on the current famine in Ethiopia it is also "formulating a strategy dedicated to recovery and development for which we have identified three areas of primary emphasis: agricultural productivity, water management and reforestation." In other words, at the same time the organization is struggling to help current victims it is also setting up preventive measures against such future disasters. This calls for the kind of funding that will come from this weekend's collection.

**Spawn?**

A group called "Catholic Women for Reproductive Rights" has popped up in Chicago. Headed by a "Sister" Deborah J. Barrett, a member of the noncanonical Sisters for Christian Community, the group also supports contraception, according to the National Catholic News Service.

The group, claiming to have 500 members, is brand new and the order itself is largely unknown -- neither the NC News Service or the National Conference of Catholic Bishops has ever heard of it.

In addition to supporting the idea that a woman should have an abortion if she wishes, the group is opposing efforts by Bishop Howard Hubbard of Albany to block opening of abortion clinics.

Could it be that that the so-called order of sisters, perhaps needing attention, has formed a rump group to seize on what it sees as an opportunity for recognition, namely Bishop Hubbard's blocking of the abortion clinics? If so, this editorial, in a sense, may be playing right into their hands. But it is to be hoped that that may be justified in making a plea to those members of legitimate religious orders who signed the New York Times ad concerning Catholics and abortion. They should worry over the kind of thoughtless knots of publicity-seekers that they may be inspiring across the land.

The Church's position on abortion is clear. Perhaps there is room allowed in theological circles to debate the intricacies involved but certainly such disagreement does not belong in the public forum where misunderstandings are bound to confuse not only Catholics but our friends outside the faith.

**and Opinions**

**Christ Suffers 'Voluntarily'**

**EDITOR:**

The questioner of "Can Jesus Ever Hurt?" (CJ, 11-21-84) was "shocked by the deep belief of many that we can hurt Jesus so much." The Open Window incorrectly and misleadingly replied that "we know better," that attributes of suffering in the glorified body of Jesus are anthropomorphisms -- "not a literal reality." A subsequent, unconvicted questioner who believes Our Lord suffers in His Mystical Body received a similar reply, that Jesus is free from "pain and sorrow" ("Extended Metaphors"; CJ, 12-12-84). The Catholic Church teaches and promotes devotions of its firm belief that each of us (even non-Christians like Saul) make Our Lord feel sorrow, joy and consolation.

As Catholics we believe Our Lord's prayerful teaching and dogma of His Mystical Body; that He desires us to be a dwelling place for Him, and that we do to Him as we do to others.

In His boundless, redeeming love, Jesus chose St. Margaret Mary as His instrument for the Church to draw men from their paths of destruction into His Mystical Body, by gratefully responding to His redeeming love, and by reparation for our sins. Through St. Margaret Mary, the Church instituted the Major Feast of the Sacred Heart, and has continuously promoted the universal devotion to the Sacred Heart; by solemn and universal approval, the Litany of the Sacred Heart is an official Church liturgical prayer which has high doctrinal value. The Church, the Popes in their letters, encyclicals, briefs and bulls mention the writings of St. Margaret Mary and the revelations therein as "unquestionable realities."

The below excerpts of revelations to St. Margaret Mary are from "Devotion to the Sacred Heart" by Father Louis Verheylozoon SJ; Tan Books and Publishers, Inc.: "Behold this Heart which has so loved men that It spared nothing ...to prove them Its love. And in return, I receive from the greater part of men nothing but ingratitude by the contempt, irreverence,

sacrileges and coldness with which they treat Me in this Sacrament of Love. But what is still more painful to me is that even souls consecrated to Me are acting this way." "This is more grievous to Me." He said, "that all that I endured in My Passion" ... "This devotion was the last effort of His love that He would grant to men in these latter ages in order to withdraw them from the Empire of Satan" (We have Sacred Heart Cathedral and St. Margaret Mary edifices only.)

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**Must Oppose Abortion**

**EDITOR:**

Jan. 22 was the 12th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision to legalize abortion in this country. Millions of unborn babies have been killed -- an average of four children per minute.

We, as Catholic women, can no longer be a part of the silent majority because by our silence we are condoning this atrocity.

It is now time for all of us to write our state and national representatives stating our opposition to legalize abortion.

Let's stand up and be counted on this moral Catholic issue now.

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**Can't Have It Both Ways**

**EDITOR:**

The pro-choice or "diversity of opinion" nuns have been getting much attention, pro and con, from the media: TV, newspapers, magazines, etc., but I believe that Don Feder, a Jewish columnist for the Boston Herald American, said all that needs saying in his Feb. 4 column, from which I will quote:

"In reality, there is no diversity of opinion within the Church on the subject of abortion. There are simply Catholics who follow the Church's teaching and those who contradict or ignore it." He states the Catholic

position on abortion from the prophet Jeremiah through the Noahide law, the Didache, Athenagoras, Tertullian and every pope of the 20th Century.

"They (the pro-choice nuns) wish to both be part of an institution and simultaneously to disregard its basic precepts, when it pleases them."

"If Church members are permitted to posit their own theology on abortion, why can't they also change any other aspect of doctrine that doesn't suit them? Perhaps the nuns would like a plebiscite on which section of the Bible Church members will accept and which they will reject?"

"The pro-choice nuns have themselves been offered a choice: Keep your vows ... submit to the teachings of the Church ... or leave your order. Whether the nuns go or stay, the Church will endure."

Thank you, Don Feder.  
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**Editorials Praised**

**EDITOR:**

Congratulations to the writer of the editorial in the Feb. 20 Courier-Journal entitled "One Picture" and its companion piece entitled "Deadly."

It deserves a place beside a recent article by a history teacher at John Carroll University, Fr. Donald Smythe SJ. He says that if we are sincere in our prayers for peace and social justice, we should get off our knees and do something in behalf of that for which we pray. But philanthropy is no substitute for justice.

To those who fail to act after praying, he says, "Do we expect God to do our work for us?"

The Courier-Journal editorial points to our cold-hearted insensitive government, that wastes billions on armaments while cutting aid to the disadvantaged and cutting the taxes of the affluent. But who elected this type of government? Is it not a reflection on us who voted for it? We, who rejected the "Seamless Garment." We, the majority of smug,

affluent, employed and retired people, who are concerned only about low taxes and not about our less fortunate brothers. We, who hide behind the smoke screen of pious and patriotic issues of abortion, prayer in schools and defense of country, when in our hearts we know that our taxes and our material possessions are our main concern.

The editorial asks this question: Is it not possible to oppose abortion and defend the nation without disheartening large segments of the people?

Yes, it is possible. It was possible in the last election. We could have elected a government that would raise the taxes of those in the higher income brackets, restore the cuts in the entitlement programs and make the drastic cuts in our weapons arsenal, which was big enough 20 years ago to annihilate all the people in the Soviet Union. After electing such a government, we could then write to our congressmen about our wishes concerning abortion, prayer in schools, etc.

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**Pro-Life Momentum**

**EDITOR:**

The Pro-Life movement is on the threshold of dramatic success. The latest elections and directives are decidedly Pro-Life. This year's March for Life was the most successful ever. The just-released film, "Silent Scream," is the most talked-about in the country.

Despite severe Rochester weather, a hardy group rode a chartered bus all night to march in Washington, D.C. Jan. 22 (the anniversary of Roe vs. Wade). St. John of Rochester (Perinton Diocesan Model Parish) was well represented, including their pastor, Father Dollen.

Father Dollen was so impressed by the whole experience that he devoted his homily the next Sunday to a glowing report of the trip and its meaning.

Two weeks later, Rochester Area Right to Life was invited to show the film "Silent Scream" in the church after all Masses. Approximately 1,000 saw the film.



"IN A SPIRIT OF FRATERNAL CORRECTION, LET ME POINT OUT A FEW THINGS I FEEL ARE WRONG WITH YOUR PUBLICATION..."

We attribute this great success at SJR to church membership involvement and participation and Father Dollen's cooperation. We hope other parishes and groups will perpetuate the momentum and take the initiative to have the film shown. (Rochester Area Right to Life, Education Committee has a 16 mm film and VHS video cassette.)

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**Is the Pope Fallible?**

**EDITOR:**

I have heard several homilies this year wherein we were told that although the Holy Father is certainly worthy of our respect and admiration, unless he speaks ex-cathedra (last done in 1950) he is just a fallible human being like all the rest of us -- ditto the magisterium.

Well, I don't know the theological aspects, but that troubled me deeply. And after struggling with it for a time, it occurred to me that, although that may in a certain sense be true, surely the Holy Spirit would make certain, for all our sakes, that the Vicar of Christ would not be left merely "the blind leading the blind," and to be at least a smidgen less fallible

in matters of faith and morals than the flock he has the awesome responsibility of leading to Christ.

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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.