

More Opinions

Catholics Must Return To Marian Devotion

To the Editor:

In past years, May has traditionally been set aside to honor Mary, the mother of God. Not only is she the mother of God, but she is the spouse of the Holy Spirit and the most highly favored daughter of God the Father. In addition, she is mother of the Church, and our mother.

Yet, in this 2,000th anniversary year of her birth, in this 500th anniversary year of the rosary as we know it, I wonder how many Catholic churches will even have an altar decorated in a special way to honor her month.

While the world beats its breast and wrings its hands — and spends billions on weapons of destruction, while turning its back on the poor and the sick — wondering how to

prevent its own destruction, Our Lady has given us the answer. She told St. Dominic: "One day, through the rosary and the scapular, I will save the world."

So now, it's up to us Catholics to say the daily rosary and wear the brown scapular as Our Lady requested at Fatima and to once again love and honor the sweetest mother the world ever knew.

And for those "grown-up," modern Catholics who would object that such sentimental devotion is for children, let them remember that Our Blessed Lord told us: "Unless you become as little children, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."

Arlene O'Connor
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Freedom from Sins Found in Confession

To the Editor:

The writer of "Find God Everywhere" (Opinion: April 24) can talk theologically that God will forgive anyone who makes a good act of contrition. I believe the Church teaches these ideals, but the power to get rid of the mortal sin habits, or rather bondage, I found in going to the confessional. If I could not get forgiven except by going to confession and if I could not take communion — the precious treasure of Jesus physically in

my body — I would lose my hope of heaven which I sought and seek for 27 years and also not see Jesus.

I had been practicing this habit for about two decades, always confessing only to Jesus as a good evangelical Protestant. Now, I am Catholic, and now I am free.

Stephen McManus
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Pacifism or Passivity?

To the Editor:

A minor point in regard to the editor's note of May 1, which stated in part "This is not to say that we should be pacifists and allow ourselves to be controlled by forces whose beliefs are abhorrent to us..."

You may be confusing two similar words: "pacifist" and "passiv-ist" or better, "passivity." Genuine pacifism, a principle at the root of Christian teaching, concerns the resolution of conflicts by nonviolent means.

Far from denoting apathy, it signals a willingness on the part of the Christian to undertake serious, sustained, courageous action in order to build a peaceable world.

"Peace is not just the absence of war ... (but) must be constructed patiently and with unshakeable faith." (Pope John Paul II, Coventry, England, 1982.)

Susan K. Roll
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Helpers' Departure Leaves Void in Parish

To the Editor:

Because of personnel shortages within their congregation, the Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart will soon be leaving Father Kelly's School of Religion in Fairport.

Their departure will leave Assumption Parish as well as the Diocese of Rochester so

much the poorer, since their service, dedication and presence have enriched our lives.

We thank them for the blessing they have been among us.

The Northeast Region
Religious Education Coordinators

On the Right Side

with Father Paul J. Cuddy



Golden Reflections

With the coming of 50 years of ordination, shared with Fathers Rogers, Gaynor, Cuffney, and Heisel, this interview gives some idea of what the years have meant to a priest.

Q: Where have you served these 50 years?

A: Let me smile at that question. I've done so many things in so many places I feel like the man with a dozen hats. Thanks be to God, all my assignments have centered on the priesthood. We were 13 ordained for the diocese June 15, 1935. Eight have died: Fathers Fischer, Lane, Hester, Tydings, Tressy, Lux, O'Brien and Manley. God rest their noble souls. My first assignment after ordination from St. Bernard's Seminary by Archbishop Mooney was to a saintly pastor, Father Joseph Curtin in Clyde, for three years.

Q: And after that?

A: Assignments have been varied and interesting: assistant pastor, Air Force chaplain for 10 years, college chaplain at Sampson College near Geneva, and a brief stint as spiritual director of St. Andrew's Seminary. However, that stay was shortened by my being recalled to the Air Force in 1952. On return from the second tour of military duty, Bishop Kearney sent me as pastor of Clyde for 10 years. Then Archbishop Sheen assigned me as hospital chaplain of St. James Mercy Hospital in Hornell. In 1972, Bishop Hogan assigned me as assistant at Holy Trinity, Webster. The Rochester diocese retires priests at the age of 70, so I was retired in 1978, and have continued in residence at Holy Trinity.

Q: What is retirement like?

A: The plusses include release from administration, fund raising, preparing marriages and the occasional antagonism of a few parishioners. We have a saying: "In every parish, 10 percent love the priest, 10 percent dislike him, and 80 percent do not give a hang one way or another." As long as they revere the priesthood — with its grace to give them the Mass, sacraments, orthodox doctrine,

and assist in developing community and preserving unity in the parish — that is enough.

Retirement leaves me free to assist in the Webster parish, and frequently to assist at other parishes when a priest is needed. This is an extra plus because I am invited to use the pulpit not only to explain the Scriptures, but also to vend religious instruments: prayer books, rosary beads, religious articles, religious cassettes. It pleases me to have been able to distribute more than 45,000 Sheen tapes, which are floating around Africa, China, Europe as well as the states. In scoring tours to sundry countries, I have always hauled a bunch of tapes to distribute. Bishop Raphael Ndighi, who is now president of the Kenya Council of Bishops wrote: "The Sheen tapes are invaluable. I use many of Archbishop Sheen's ideas for my conferences."

Q: Anything in particular you are happy about?

A: Yes, writing the weekly column for the Courier-Journal. It brings news of the diocese, recommends books, alerts about off-beat liturgy and theology, praises people and good works being done, and injects a bit of humor. It is consistently loyal to the Holy Father, a needed quality in these days of dissent within the Church. Father Moynihan just returned from Belgium and declares the Church is practically dead in Holland and Belgium. These have been centers of dissent and contestation. The results are spiritual decay.

Q: Are you having a big celebration for your golden anniversary?

A: We had a big celebration for my 75th birthday, so this will be relatively low-key. There will be a special Mass at Holy Trinity on Sunday, May 19, at 12:15 with our special choir. Father Heisel will preach. And a reception will be given in the school hall afterward, with tables loaded with snacks. No special invitations are being sent, but the whole world is invited to come and share the happy day.

Upbeat Pro-Life March and Rally Attracts More than 100 Participants

By Teresa A. Parsons

More than 100 people participated in a prayer service and demonstration for the cause of the unborn Saturday, May 11, organized by the Right-To-Life group of St. Thomas the Apostle Church.

Parishioners from several Catholic churches and representatives from other denominations gathered at St. Mary's Church on South Avenue at 1 p.m. for prayer and remarks by Father Charles Adams, a Franciscan priest retired from the faculty of St. Bonaventure University, and the Reverend Theodore Georgian, pastor of Covenant Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

Father Adams spoke on the sacredness of human life, while Georgian discussed the importance of sustaining human life at all stages.

Afterward, the group assembled in front of the church, some carrying banners and signs, for a march up Clinton Avenue and down East Main Street to the Liberty Pole. There bouquets of roses were placed in vases in memory of the 17,000,000 lives lost to abortion since the 1973 Supreme Court decision.

Alice Proia of Women Exploited by Abortion spoke briefly to the group, encouraging their continued efforts and noting the progress she has observed, particularly in the attitudes of teenagers. Joann May, a member of the Rochester-area Right-To-Life committee and a parishioner of St. Thomas the Apostle, added specific suggestions for action, including support of anti-abortion legislation, helping pregnant women who need housing, or volunteering at Melita House.

Pat Arpaia, 52, of Church of the Assumption, Fairport, marched with his 14-year-old daughter, Edie in their "first-ever protest."

"I hope this will educate people," he said. "I don't wish to demean the other side because I don't think they're evil — just misinformed." His daughter agreed, adding that she thought the march "could do some good."



Organizers of Saturday's pro-life demonstration, Greg and Carole Sampson of St. Thomas the Apostle Church, unfurl their banner to lead the march.



Demonstrators pause during a brief ceremony at the Liberty Pole commemorating lives lost to abortion. Lou Gabello holds 2-year-old son Matthew, while 6-year-old Luke inspects a sign.

Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal