

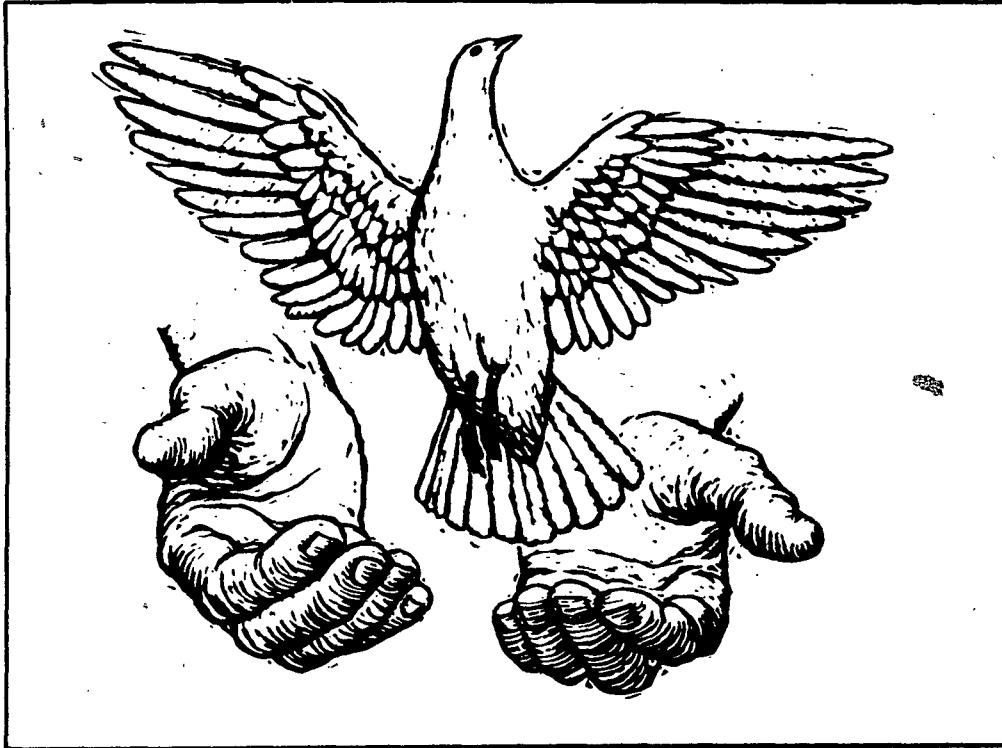
## Editorial

# Recalling a Terrible Week in Human History

When the first Atomic Bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, no one really knew the impact those detonations would have on the people of Japan or in the larger sense on the world of today. It was only known that the bomb was powerful, and that a conventional attack on Japan would have cost many lives. It was believed that employing the Bomb's enormous destructive force was preferable to allowing the war against Japan to drag on at a cost estimated at 10 times the number of lives lost in the bombings.

It is easy to understand how that decision was made. The long-range effects of radiation were not known at that time, nor could it be projected that an arms race would ensue once the Russians developed their own nuclear bomb in 1949. The ends seemed to more than justify the means. It is impossible to say whether knowing what we know today, our leaders 40 years ago would have decided to drop the bombs and set this pattern in motion.

That same lack of knowledge may persist today. Books, films and other media have attempted to show what full-scale nuclear war would be like,



*Negotiations must be pursued in every reasonable form possible; they should be governed by the 'demand that the arms race should cease; that the stockpiles which exist in various countries should be reduced equally and simultaneously by the parties concerned; that nuclear weapons should be banned; and that a general agreement should eventually be reached about progressive disarmament and an effective method of control.'*

Pope John XXIII, 'Peace on Earth,' No. 112.

and what the world be in its aftermath. But we cannot say with any certainty what would really happen.

Nor can we be certain that our presumptions about nuclear deterrence are correct. The United States has many times used the threat of nuclear weapons to force other nations to cease aggressive action. Our president speaks of "peace through strength," and many believe that the horror of full-scale nuclear war is enough to prevent any rational person from launching a nuclear attack.

Yet former President Richard Nixon recently admitted that use of the nuclear bomb several times has been considered by the United States. If we ourselves consider using the bomb, how can we be sure of the Russians or, worse yet, some erratic power like Libya or Iran?

We cannot, of course, afford to give up the bomb while others maintain it. And we may never succeed at reaching an agreement on disarmament. But with so many variables, so many unknowns, we must at least put our best effort toward ensuring that the evil visited upon Hiroshima and Nagasaki is never unleashed again.

## And opinions

# Principle of dialogue commendable; product unworthy

### To the Editor:

From its inception, I have followed the work of the Teen Pregnancy Coalition and participated in a school district committee's examination of the junior high sex-education program that the coalition has tried to affect. If the quotations from a letter of Father Charles Mulligan in the July 24 *Courier-Journal* are accurate, two concepts seem to be unwarrantedly juxtaposed, giving the false effect that the curriculum itself is praiseworthy in content. Father's actual words praised only the concept of collaboration; yet he gave the example of the curriculum as a result of that collaboration. Distinctions must be made.

I invite anyone to examine the curriculum while bearing in mind the universal moral norms. Catholics are privileged to have the Vatican outlines for sex education, "Educational Guidance in Human Love," with which to make their comparison. My own findings — throughout the three revisions — indicate that the curriculum opposes the Vatican outlines quite consistently.

I fear that throughout the whole discussion on teen pregnancy as well as on the matter of the curriculum, the basic goodness of dialogue has been confused with the principle of dialogue. The moral norms cannot be altered by dialogue — or by consensus. In "The Acting Person," the future Pope John Paul II identified the principle of dialogue: "The principle of dialogue allows us to select and

bring to light what in controversial situations is right and true, and helps to eliminate any partial, preconceived or subjective views and trends. Such views and inclinations may become the seed of strife and conflict between men, while what is right and true always favors the development of the person and enriches the community." On this foundation he continues: "... it seems that in a constructive communal life the principle of dialogue has to be adopted regardless of the obstacles and difficulties that it may bring with it along the way."

One could not find much that "in controversial situations is right and true" in an examination of the first draft of the curriculum. The second draft contained elements that were obviously reactionary against Judeo-Christian principles. Among other things, Joan of Arc was labeled as one of "a few transvestite women ... elevated to the sainthood," and the universal moral norms were flatly condemned. The Pope was slandered. The third draft removed a part of this objectionable material, but there were no fundamental changes that would show an acceptance of the universal moral norms. Religion continued to be denigrated as a moral force. It is clearly the intent of the curriculum to push contraception for teens, no matter what phrases one may occasionally be able to claim as a support for chastity.

The curriculum is so constructed that articles and information can be moved in and

out at any time to make criticism always appear obsolete. Individuals and committees would have to review the entire thing twice a year not to appear out of date. No one should waste time like that! What a clever device to deter people from positive action!

While one praises true dialogue aimed at bringing truth to light, and while it can be argued that there should be a Catholic presence in such community discussions as teenage pregnancy, we should be most

careful not even to appear to praise a product such as the junior high sex-education curriculum that fails so miserably to present adequately and to support the universal moral norms upon which the Vatican insists.

Don't take my word for it; go see for yourself — once, and maybe again in five years.

Judith Echaniz  
347 Barrington St.  
Rochester

## Chaplain honors memory of the late Gertrude Curran

### To the Editor:

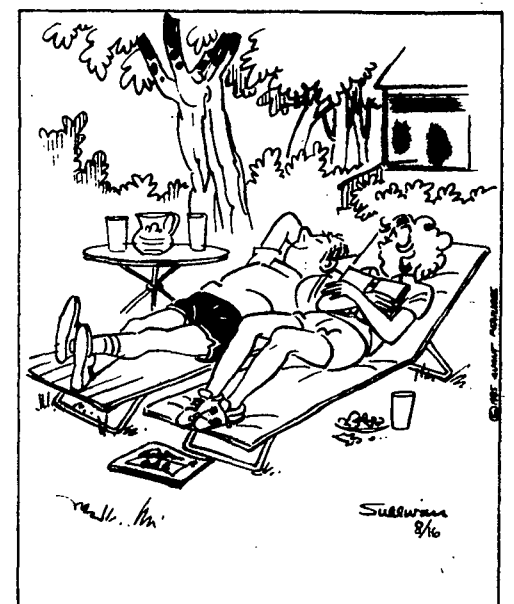
"Gertrude Curran: Noted Volunteer" said the headline in the *Courier-Journal*, but to us, Gertrude was much more. She was one of us. Whatever was ours — joys, struggles, triumphs, disappointments, laughter — everything that was ours was Gert's.

Glibly at times, we speak of someone whose "smile lights up a room" or who "has a heart as big as all outdoors." But no matter what words of praise were spoken about Gertrude Curran, none could be considered glib.

Since she has left us, we at last experience a sorrow that Gert will not have to share: *Deo gratias*. Our tears are for us, Gert, not for you.

Even though I did not sing at your Mass of Resurrection, to each of us who experienced your gentle smile and your loving presence, you remain an "amazing grace."

Sister Josepha Twomey  
Catholic Chaplain  
Elmira Correctional Facility



## Father Cuddy switched the rectory guests

### To the Editor:

I would like to set the record straight for Father Paul J. Cuddy and for many parishioners here at Immaculate Conception in Ithaca who were confused by his July 24 column in the *Courier-Journal*. I think Father Cuddy got some of his notes jumbled.

He stated that he had supper with Indonesian Jesuit Father Varghese Panangatt. The Indonesian Jesuit priest in residence at Immaculate Conception rectory and now studying anthropology at Cornell is young Father Albert Budi Susanto, not Father Varghese who is now the superintendent of a Catholic school in Nathangar, India. Father Varghese had been in Ithaca the past few months to celebrate Father Bernard Carges 25th anniversary in the priesthood on May

19, and stayed on at the rectory for a few months for speaking engagements in the surrounding areas, seeking funds for his school and gathering supplies and books for the school in Nathangar. He left Ithaca to return to India on July 16.

Father Varghese did indeed also study at Cornell for his doctorate about five years ago and resided in the rectory here. He is a jewel for the Church and the community in his charge in Nathangar, as well as Father Susanto will be a jewel for the Church and the Jesuits when he returns to teach in Indonesia in about two years hence.

Amelia Longo  
134 Hawthorne Place  
Ithaca

## Guidelines

The *Courier-Journal* welcomes your opinions. Letters must bear the writers' signatures, full addresses and telephone numbers. They should be sent to: Opinion, *Courier-Journal*, 114 S. Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607

Opinions should be brief, typed, double-spaced, and no longer than 1½ 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 writers' own styles.

Because submitted opinions exceed the space reserved for letters, we publish only original letters addressed to us. We will not use poetry, open letters, or copies of letters sent to other publications or persons. To ensure diversity, we limit each writer to one letter per month.