

## Editorial

# Survey indicates low interest in Faith Today; new columns planned

Well folks, it's definite. Faith Today will no longer be carried by the Courier-Journal. After analyzing the responses to both rounds of surveys and comparing them to our circulation figures for the month of July (when the survey was conducted) we have determined that there is not enough interest in the supplement to justify its continuation and related expenses to the paper.

Our overall response rate to the survey was .03 percent compared to the 3 percent response rate sought by most marketing firms when sending out direct-mail surveys. That figure alone leads us to believe that reader interest in the supplement is slight.

Moreover, the breakdown of votes, although slightly weighted in favor of continuing the supplement, is not convincing. Ninety-five people voted in favor of continuing the supplement, 77 people were adamantly against continuation and seven responses rode the fence.

Based upon those figures and an informal survey of opinion among religious educators in the diocese, we have decided to discontinue Faith Today. But on Page 10 you will find our initial effort to replace the aspect of Faith Today considered most important by those who voted to keep the supplement — the Children's Story Hour. "Bible Corner" by local writer Cindy Cottone

will be a weekly feature of the Courier-Journal and will explore various thematic and seasonal religious issues on a level geared to children.

We currently have plans to enlarge our staff for more coverage of diocesan and parish events. We also plan to provide our readers with more stories and reviews from our national/international wire, National Catholic News Service. Our highest hope is that we will soon be able to offer more articles for youth, including coverage of sports and school activities.

At one area chain of publications where several of our staff members once worked, an editor frequently lamented

the efforts of creatures she termed the "gremlins." The gremlins, she said, were responsible for seemingly impossible items that appeared in her newspaper, much to everyone's consternation and confusion. Seemingly, those gremlins have found their way to our offices and were responsible for the appearance of the name "Brothers of the Sacred Heart" in last week's editorial. We can't determine how the Brothers of the Sacred Heart were switched for the Brothers of Holy Cross, but we sincerely apologize for any confusion the switch may have caused and embarrassment to the Brothers of the Sacred Heart.

## And opinions

### Writer urges support for Falwell

To the Editor:

For two weeks in a row The Courier-Journal has criticized the Rev. Jerry Falwell for his remarks about Bishop Tutu of South Africa. One criticism came in the form of an editorial (Aug. 28), the other in a column by Don McEvoy of the National Conference of Christians and Jews (Sept. 4). At a weekday Mass recently, a priest also made a negative remark during his homily about Rev. Falwell.

Rev. Falwell has repeatedly expressed his opposition to apartheid. He, along with eight other pastors and religious leaders, went to South Africa to determine how American Christians could best help bring an end to apartheid in a way that would not destroy South Africa in the process. The goal is an end to apartheid. Who is to say what is the best means to reach that goal?

I could accept occasional criticism of Rev. Falwell from our diocesan paper if I were also to read words of praise and support for him at other times. Rev. Falwell's positions on most of the moral issues of today are completely consistent with our Church's teachings. It is unfortunate that The Courier-Journal is so quick to criticize him

on some issues yet so slow to offer him support on issues we agree upon.

As a Catholic, I have a lot of respect for Jerry Falwell. He is not afraid to speak out with clarity and compassion on the moral issues of today, despite the steady criticism he receives from the liberal press and the death threats he and his family get. He is a man of action. He not only speaks out against abortion, for example, but has established a nationwide program to help unwed mothers. In response to the starvation in Africa, Rev. Falwell and his Moral Majority organization recently began a project in Sudan to help ease the suffering there. Students from his Liberty University volunteer to work for six months in Sudan. His monthly publication, "Moral Majority Report," recently examined the growing problem of pornography in our society.

I urge The Courier-Journal and our diocese to lend support to Rev. Falwell and the Moral Majority on issues that we agree upon, rather than focusing attention on areas of disagreement.

Raymond N. Buonemani  
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### Writer defends reading of 'submission' epistle

To the Editor:

In reference to the letter that appeared in the September 4 edition (Opinion: "Writer protests second use of 'submission' epistle"): the writer questions and indeed "protests" — quite vehemently the necessity of a second reading — or even the reading — of St. Paul's beautiful epistle comparing Christ's love for his Church to the love that should be between a husband and wife.

In the charity of Christ, I submit that perhaps holy mother Church in her wisdom has determined that it would take two readings in order to get His message across.

The writer could consider herself quite fortunate, really. She at least was able to hear the complete reading. I understand that in some churches the good saint's teaching was omitted, with or without the pastor's permission. One would hope the latter was the case.

Theresa M. Lawson  
6 Flora Drive  
Fairport

### Devoted altar server lauded

To the Editor:

We at St. Mary's in Corning are very fortunate to have Jim Bennett for an altar server. He is so dedicated and serves with such dignity and devotion. He is also a Eucharistic minister.

Father Brennan and Jim cooperate so beautifully in serving our Lord and us 9 o'clock regulars. Thank God for them.

Mary Kester  
117 West 5th St.  
Corning

### Bishop's forum inspires 'mixed reflection'

To the Editor:

After having attended the Bishop's reflection forum on women on Sept. 17, I am left with a mixed reflection, to say the least. I am pleased and relieved that finally something is being done to address the needs of what is actually the majority of Church members. And hopefully, this was the beginning of something good.

However, the stark reality for me is that any positive outcome of this meeting and of the (U.S.) bishops' pastoral would be negated because we, the Church (both the

### Mary's birthday ignored

To the Editor:

What a fuss we make about Christmas: it's Christ's birthday! And yet, if it were not for Mary, there would be no Christmas.

Well, Sunday, September 8, was Mary's birthday, and at least two Masses I personally know of had no mention of it — no special hymns or Masses, no flowers, nothing. No candles to light at St. Mary's. So I said a special "Happy Birthday" anyway. It hurt. And I don't think — no, I am sure — Christ did not like it, either.

Dorothy Louis  
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### Reader urges weekly abortion censure

To the Editor:

Bravo for Mary Ellen Frisch (Opinion: "Catholics for Free Choice should obey Church teaching on abortion," C-J Sept. 4)!

Your editor's note, though, is rather simplistic. We really can and should expect our Church leaders — local, national, or worldwide — to speak about abortion every week. And we really can and should expect them to censure organizations like

### Still seeing rightly

To the Editor:

Father Cuddy has not mentioned in his column, "On the Right Side," that he is slowly recuperating from eye-implant surgery.

Even with a patch on his eye for well over two weeks, he has maintained his busy schedule of reading and writing — but not driving, making the roads much safer for us.

The patch is on his left eye, of course.

Father Raymond G. Heisel  
Mother of Sorrows Church  
5000 Mt. Reed Blvd.  
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### Lucky are those called

To the Editor:

Several years ago, I attended Mass at a neighboring church. When it came time for the young, visiting priest to say "Happy are those who are called to this banquet" it came out: "Lucky are those who are called to this banquet." It brought a joyful, delighted "Amen!" from the depths of my heart.

How lucky, indeed, are we Catholics to have the joy, the delight of Jesus' body and blood, soul and divinity available to us always in the holy Eucharist.

As another beautiful priest told us at a retreat some years back: "If we truly realized the wonder of the Eucharist, we'd come down that aisle on our bellies!"

Oh, how my heart yearns to receive Jesus in the holy Eucharist, on my knees once again.

Arlene O'Connor  
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## Religious garb: Symbol of vocation or concentration on worldly affairs?

To the Editor:

As our new pastoral assistant mounted the pulpit to deliver last Sunday's sermon, I couldn't help thinking how unlike a nun she looked. Indeed, her attire was more appropriate to an outdoor picnic than to serving on the altar. When my nine year old later remarked on "that lady who gave the sermon," I knew we had a problem.

When I was a child attending Catholic schools, we had a great deal of respect for "persons of the cloth," be they priests or nuns. We knew they had chosen a special, difficult way of life, and their presence was an inspiration to us. Their very being spoke to us of commitment, loyalty and love of God and His Church. Their vows of poverty, chastity and obedience were a sign of faith in the kingdom of God — a reminder to all that the things of this world should not be the focus of our lives.

Where is this inspiration for my children? Do they find it if the religious look like "one of the gang," sporting their alligator shirts and their designer labels?

I would never advocate the return to long black skirts, uncomfortable headdresses and dangling rosary beads. But do nurses, police and fire personnel wear uniforms? Do not our priests (a calling many sisters wish to embrace) wear the Roman collar? Do not these religious who have thrown off the visible signs of their commitment require the children who attend their schools to dress alike?

I am fully aware that Vatican II said we are all called to holiness, all called to serve. There is no class system in the Church, no one group better than the next. But the Church decries the lack of vocations today. As long as our youngsters can see no difference between serving the Church as a lay person and serving as a religious, there will continue to be a lack. Our preacher might just as well have been any "lady who gave the sermon."

Mrs. Gerald Cala  
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EDITOR'S NOTE: The writer brings up some valid points; oddly, though, some of the same points might be made by those who

disagree with her.

It is impossible to comment on the attire of the pastoral assistant in question without having seen it, but it can be safely said that attire that is really more appropriate for a picnic — here that description may well be overstatement — is not suitable for anyone in church, whether on the altar or in the pews. (And, we have all seen churchgoers sporting cut-off shorts, shirt tails hanging out, too-revealing garments, etc.) The way in which one appears for Mass is a reflection of one's reverence for the Lord and the sacraments, and we certainly hope that the pastoral assistant was dressed in a way that indicated respect.

Yet, is it really necessary for a religious woman to wear clothing that loudly announces her vocation? The writer speaks of the inspiring example the religious provided for her as a child. Was that example solely one of appearances? Would not those religious by their lifestyles alone have conveyed the same inspiration? We certainly hope and believe so. Moreover, we believe that if parishioners look beyond her attire and get to know that pastoral assistant as an individual, she, too, will provide inspiration through her faith in God and her chosen way of life.

The writer also speaks of Jesus' message that His kingdom is not of this world and "that the things of this world should not be the focus of our lives." Nonetheless, she seems caught up in concern over things of this world — the garments now worn by religious. Much of the basis for the modification of the old religious habits is an attempt to eliminate concentration on such matters, relegating questions of dress to their proper place in the spiritual lives of religious orders.

In that same vein, the writer speaks of religious wearing designer clothes, in contrast to their vows of poverty. Although we certainly acknowledge that a few women religious do wear expensive clothing, this is certainly not the norm. The vast majority of religious women with whom we deal dress very simply and conservatively, taking on the appearance of those they serve.