

## Editorial

### Betwixt and between

Even though it was entirely predictable, the reaction of Ferdinand Marcos to the Philippines' bishops' recent statement was surprisingly frank.

The bishops issued the statement — calling for as yet undefined non-violent action to combat alleged election fraud in Marcos' recent presidential win — knowing that the statement would not be popular with those on either side of the fence. "We have taken a non-violent stance, and this will anger the left, which advocates armed struggle, as well as the government, so we will be caught in the middle," Bishop Federico Escaler.

In response to the statement, Marcos sent a clear warning to Cardinal Ricardo

Vidal, head of the Philippine bishops' conference. He urged the cardinal to "remember that we are not talking of ecclesiastical issues, but of political matters," and said the statement had "dangerous implications" for the country's law and order.

Marcos message was polite, but a threat nonetheless. One can only hope that world attention — including expressions of support from Pope John Paul II and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops — will restrain him and his opponents from making martyrs of the voices of reason caught in the middle of this deadly tug of war.

### Urge president to join Soviet Union in test ban

#### To the Editor:

In their 1983 pastoral "The Challenge of Peace," the U.S. Catholic bishops recommended "support for immediate, bilateral, verifiable agreements to halt testing, production and deployment of new nuclear weapons" and "support for early and successful conclusion of negotiations of a comprehensive test-ban treaty."

The Soviet Union has not tested nuclear weapons since August 6, 1985, and will maintain this unilateral moratorium through March 31, 1986. If by the last day in March, the U.S. joins the moratorium, the Soviets have announced that they will never be the first to resume testing. The Soviets have agreed to accept on-site inspection as a verification measure for a comprehensive test ban.

The occasion for our government's policy changing in a direction that is in keeping with

moral teaching is at hand. The responsibility for supporting this moral teaching, (exemplified by) a test ban, in the public arena is ours.

We have an historic opportunity to end the arms race by stopping nuclear testing. The opportunity can be realized if communities of faith respond in prayer and action.

Specifically, Lent coincides (Feb. 12-March 30) with the final six weeks of the Soviet moratorium. During Lent, let the special focus of our prayer and fasting be for reconciliation and peace. Let us also express our prayer to the president in writing (The White House, Washington, D.C. 20500) and ask that the U.S. adopt this moral position and join the Soviets in a test moratorium.

**Michael Affleck  
Rochester Catholic Worker  
St. Joseph's House of Hospitality  
Rochester**

### Church can't be judged by feminist standards

#### To the Editor:

Luis T. Gutierrez, in his letter "Scandal of Sexism..." admitted he could not provide theological arguments to prove his point.

Unfortunately, there are those, like Mr. Gutierrez, who believe the Church has discriminated against women primarily because women have been denied ordination to the priesthood.

The first thing these critics should try to understand is that the Church is not a democracy.

For example, the Lord gave Moses the Ten Commandments, not the Ten Propositions.

Was Jesus a male chauvinist because He chose 12 male disciples?

Is it really fair to judge the Church by feminist standards?

Remember, the feminists are the ones who usually scream the loudest for women's rights, but ignore the rights of the unborn.

Currently, we are hearing words like "humankind" replacing "mankind" in our Sunday and weekday Masses. Who appointed these liturgical experts? Is this the word of the Lord with corrections?

Was not Eve created from the rib of Adam? Does it not then follow that mankind includes women also?

Our Blessed Mother, the Virgin Mary, is the greatest Catholic saint. She is also a woman. Somehow, I don't feel threatened by that...

**Robert P. Bart  
Box 594  
Ithaca**

### Advises avoiding evil

#### To the Editor:

As I read the very convincing letter by William Santy (Opinion: "Confront rather than avoid message of anti-Christian programming, film," Feb. 6) I thought, like Red Skelton used to say, "This just don't sound right to me." But I couldn't quite put my finger on it.

So, I said a prayer to the Holy Spirit: "Please help me. What's wrong here?" And then it came to me. It must be that Mr. Santy is unfamiliar with the lives of the saints; the saints had nothing in common so much as their great humility. Without great humility they never would have become saints. Every saint has always known that he or she has a corruptible human nature — that each and every one of us, because of original sin, has a "built-in" inclination to evil. So they did not confront evil, they fled from it.

We too must avoid evil at all costs, whenever humanly possible, for we are much more corruptible than the saints were. We would do well to have a little humility ourselves and follow the guidance of the Church in film and television ratings where they are available, and "pray that we may not enter into temptation."

**Arlene O'Connor  
Haddon Road  
Rochester**



"IN MY RELIGIOUS ORDER, CARS LAST A LONG TIME. ONE OF OUR BROTHERS IS A WHIZ WITH ALUMINUM SIDING."

## 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 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 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.

## And opinions

### Writer disputes scriptural basis of letter on sexism in the Church

#### To the Editor:

Luis Gutierrez' letter (Opinion: Feb. 6, "Scandal of sexism" in the Church cannot be ignored, writer asserts), accusing a so-called scandal of sexism in the Church for its "adamant refusal to consider admission of women to orders" contains the real reasons within it. He admits that "scripture is the norm of norms," and that "tradition must conform to scripture." This is precisely why the Church is steadfast in its refusal to admit this foundation-doubting innovation. There simply is absolutely no scriptural warrant given for female priestly ordination; quite the contrary.

The Church knows itself as "covenant people" and as such sees our Lord as the sign and seal of that covenant. With covenants came stipulations and commands. A covenant people know the commands of covenant as a revelation, not a mere cultural, social, egotistical "subjugation" from an UN-enlightened source. The revelation that God is our Father, however motherly, is a deliberate initiative from Himself. The two sexes existentially express two different relational aspects to existence with one expressing most closely the Creator's own immaterial "sub-stance."

Beyond the males He created, God is the essence of maleness in that as an Only Creator, He, beyond any man, is the absolute power of freedom within the ordered fetters of creation; free of encompassing a second pro-Creator, and an Existant free of free of the fetters of encompassing that which is engendered. Maleness in the covenant-commands identify exactly which God it is we are "house-bonded" to in contra-distinction to not only the pagan "gods" surrounding Israel but also the false "gods" within our egoistical minds and

ideologies today. Being bound to His order is precisely the big latter-day rub in the "liberationist" world pantheon today or any day.

The scriptures quoted by Mr. Gutierrez that show God's feminine qualities do not obliterate the fundamental thrust of the whole revelation anymore than to describe certain female graces of any man changes his basic God ordered identity as a man. Jesus of Nazareth could not have been a woman. Christ would come to us as a man, for as God's Son, He is one substance with the Father. The wonders He freely worked, not in union, but in oneness of divinity with the Father in the face of order-bound creation, signaled His identity. It is we, ordered creation, who are the "cosmic" burning thornbush encompassing her maker.

"Scripture norms" nowhere suggest that any bishop, bishop of Rome, or gathering of bishops have any creative power to make women be priesthood, anymore than to baptize and circumsize a male pig could make it be heir to blood-covenant. Bishops are not our free agent power to reorder God's work, but are epitomized only as mere gatekeepers with keys to admit only what is in keeping with what God already has created, revealed and ordered. God has given us in His renewed covenant a supreme gift in His priests as permanent representatives of His Son.

If we don't come again to value the uniqueness of men's own gift, few can rise to the sacrifices entailed in it, and we will have earned our barrenness. The cup of revolt mother Moscow gives us to drink once again "liberates" Eve to bark the wrong tree.

**Gene Charles  
4069 Geneva Turnpike  
Canandaigua**

## On the Right Side Father Paul J. Cuddy



### A Supply Priest

What does a supply priest do? He gives thanks to God that he doesn't have to prepare people for marriage or baptismal instructions or wedding rehearsals or be involved with annulment petitions or have to attend a lot of meetings. He is not responsible for raising funds, paying bills, repairing boilers, roofs and plumbing. He has little involvement with mollifying disturbed parishioners. What he does is routine pastoral work: celebrating Mass, preaching, baptisms, funerals, hospital calls and communion calls to the sick at home. He is available for information or to comfort troubled people. He gives encouragement and solace.

To me, "witnessing" is very important. This is easy in a small village of 5,000 like Lyons, where I was supplying. Just walk downtown in a black suit and Roman collar, and all the village knows by 6 p.m. that a new priest is in town, and he is seeking out souls. The Saturday/Sunday Masses bring the faithful together to worship, to sing, and to hear and heed some aspect of the faith.

A peculiarity of my own apostolate is a religious articles stand set up after Mass, with prayer books, beads, Bibles, missals, children's books and other literature made available. In Lyons, there was a great demand for children's books for youngsters aged 3-10. On Monday, I phoned Miss Agnes Nolan of Auburn, sister of the late Father Ray and Edwin Nolan. She runs a religious goods store in Auburn. "Could you get me 200 of Father Lovasik's children's books by Saturday?" I requested.

"I'll phone Chicago," she replied, "and hope." The books came from Chicago within three days, thanks to UPS. Colorful pictures of Our Lord, Our Lady, angels, St. Joseph, Peter, Paul, Anthony and Mother Seton, as well as a child's missal, picture dictionary and rosary booklet, all with simple texts, brightened up the religious articles stand. Today, dozens of children

in Lyons and environs are reading about holiness, and grandparents, parents and older brothers and sisters are reading to little children — a holy and happy and healthy thing.

St. Michael's Church was being reconstructed to conform to the new liturgy. During the reconstruction, Mass was celebrated in the church basement. This provided a certain intimacy, like the catacombs of the early Church. But all will be glad to get into a proper church, with proper pews, a large sanctuary, pipe organ, bright walls and stained glass windows — aids to the solemnity and beauty of devotion.

The chairman of the building committee, Mr. Gerry Spiegel, was a student at Assumption College, Windsor, when I was there in 1950. He was a classmate of three distinguished professors at St. John Fisher: Basilian Fathers John Murray, John Cavanaugh and William Marceau. He and Mr. Phil Poliotti, a construction specialist, gave great praise to the building committee, to the parishioners for their generosity, and to Father Orlando for carrying out so impressive a project. As with all radical changes, there are the pros and cons, but above all architecture and decorations is the Mass, the greatest act of worship given by the Lord Himself.

As I wrote to Father Orlando: "Supplying in Lyons was a happy occasion. The people were cordial; the parish workers for the newly constructed church interior (including the whole confirmation class) were impressive; the enthusiasm for the religious booklets a joy. The care for me in the rectory by Pat and Sylvia and Marie would spoil me. I had two pairs of trousers, tight from two years ago. Jennie Quagliatta Witt let them out a comfortable two inches. Had I stayed in Lyons, she would have had to let them out two more inches. Thank you for inviting me, and greetings to your good people."