

## Editorial

# A marvelous way to end the year

Just over a year ago, the new staff of the Courier-Journal first entered these offices at 114 S. Union St. We busily set about to produce the best Catholic newspaper we could.

Now, as we mark our first year with preparations for our move to new offices at the diocesan Pastoral Center, we are just beginning to feel that we have our house in order — that the initial groundwork is complete and that we can devote ourselves to perfecting our craft.

Back in February of this year, we entered some of our best efforts from April through December of 1985 in the

1986 Catholic Press Association awards competition. As we prepared those entries, we noted the progress we had made and the work that was still to be done. We hoped that our work would be recognized with some minor awards, but never dared to hope that we could win a major prize.

Thus, it was with astonishment and great excitement that we received the news that we had been chosen for first place in the general excellence category. In an effort to keep subscriber costs down, we had decided to forgo the expense of attending the CPA convention, which was held in Columbus, Ohio. So instead of

hearing the news directly, we read of our awards on the National Catholic News Service's wire. It took several readings before we could bring ourselves to believe our own eyes.

We are very proud of this accomplishment, but prouder still of the support and patience that have been shown to us during this difficult transition period by the parish pastors and all of our subscribers. Without that support, progress would have been impossible. On behalf of the entire staff, I thank all of you.

In particular, I wish to thank Bishop Matthew H. Clark for his confidence in us

and for giving us the editorial freedom to implement changes; Bishop Dennis W. Hickey for his limitless patience and fatherly guidance; and our board of directors, particularly those members who have been most intimately involved in the transition.

Although the whole staff contributed greatly to the Courier-Journal's success, special recognition must go to Terri Parsons and Jeff Goulding. Their dedication, long hours and exemplary work are the mainstay of this newspaper.

Once again, thanks to all.

— KMF

## And opinions

# Mooney senior writes poetic tribute to classmates who died this month

### To the Editor:

I am a senior at Cardinal Mooney High School and have recently suffered the loss of a classmate, Lynette Fragnito, who committed suicide. She died on April 23, 1986.

About 10 days later, Colleen Gullen of Nazareth died suddenly from spina bifida. She was also a senior. Last week, John Schoenberger also died suddenly, leaving the whole McQuaid community stunned. John, too, was a senior.

I and many other people in the Rochester area have been deeply affected by these losses. I think that these deaths were a terrible loss and should not go unremembered.

I have written this poem in their memory. I would ask you to please print the poem as a tribute to them. I'm sure the poem will help many people to cope a little better with these terrible situations.

### Why Did It Happen Now?

Things were going so smoothly  
Everyone having fun  
No one ever expected this fate  
It seems so cruel, so wrong.

When someone leaves us suddenly,  
Our eyes fill with tears,  
Our hearts are crushed with sadness  
And we're left wondering here.

### Why did it happen now?

There was so much more in store for them.  
So much more they could have been,  
But still the frightening facts remain  
And here, we are left to wonder,  
Why did it happen now?  
Oh, Lord, Why?

A tragedy brings us together,  
We share our loss with each other  
Crying, thinking, loving and wondering  
Why did it happen now?

### And now we continue living

We'll soon go our separate ways  
But still, we'll always remember,  
That one we wished would have stayed.

And maybe we'll always be asking  
That question that can't be answered:  
Why did it happen now?  
Why did it happen now?

Nathan Chamberlain  
Peck Road  
Hilton

## Peace efforts must begin at home

### To the Editor:

In his Along the Way column of May 1, Bishop Clark evaluated the bombing of Libya based on our "Catholic tradition," which offers some "very precise criteria to evaluate these actions." Following these criteria, we hope, pray and work for peace. But, peace doesn't start on an international level; it starts on a personal one. So with that thought in mind, I will quote the first criterion and offer parenthetical remarks, which I hope will make it more personal, more meaningful and bring it closer to home.

"1. The sanctity of life and its preservation is the foremost principle. In a special way, we need to safeguard the lives of innocent civilian victims (unborn children). Action on the part of any government (individual) that may result in the loss of life is a grave action with serious consequences. Dehumanizing the potential victims by name calling (blob of tissue, products of gestation) is also a way of violating the sanctity of life which is theirs."

It is good that we can recognize that killing our far-removed Libyan brothers is a great evil. But what a tragedy that we complacently allow 100 intrauterine children each week to be torn apart in Rochester by the suction machines of the abortioners! Why is the ter-

rorism of our local abortuaries hard to confront, hard to write about, hard to picket and pray for? Perhaps we are afraid; perhaps we're buying into the secular "me-ism" that considers children dispensable commodities; perhaps the burden of working for peace just seems too weighty for us!

Do you often wonder, as I do, what Christ would do if He walked in Rochester today? Would He be praying and counseling outside abortion clinics? Would He be preaching the evils of abortion, in season and out? Would He be having a media blitz on the sanctity of life and virtue? Would He be telling women to utilize for their care physicians who do not kill babies? Would He forgive a sorrow-filled woman?

Well, in a very real sense, Christ still is in our midst in His Church. And therefore it would seem that the quest for peace and the end of this terrorism in Rochester must be started by the Church and its members taking action. Christ works through us! One voice is weak, but all Catholics made conscious by our bishop and the clergy can and must make a difference. God-given life depends on it!

Barbara A. Fredericks, M.D.  
Magee Avenue  
Rochester

## Bishop's statement in line with democratic pluralism

### To the Editor:

I must admit that I had not read the bishop's column of May 8 before I wrote my letter of May 16 (Opinion, May 29: "Awaits 'word from the mountain' on Curran"). But I did read it before publication of my letter.

Since the (bishop's) Father Curran statement was in the Opinion section, it was there that I expected any denial, rebuttal or clarification to appear.

The column — as I read it — was no more nor less than the original statement and reflected exactly the view you stated in your editor's note to a previous letter. The column

was irenic. The bishop expressed great satisfaction that the vote was 350 to 50 in favor of his position, which would indicate that the consensus of his supporters is that they agree with him, which in the context of Cardinal Ratzinger's logic means that he is "in line with the democratic mechanism of consensus formation from below which marks the secular, democratic, pluralistic society."

Since the bishop still holds to his original position, he is sure of re-election.

My apologies.

John J. Clark III  
RD-1  
Wayland

## Bishop Clark should seek outpouring of Holy Spirit

### To the Editor:

We were told that there would be no more letters to the editor on the Curran situation, and yet there was a front-page feature giving Father Curran's views again. And now the bishop is starting up again. Fair is fair. Now I figure I'm entitled to my two cents, too.

It would be much better if the bishop had held his peace and exhorted all of us, with himself in the lead, to get down on our knees and beg for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Church and in the world, in a new Pentecost.

Bishop Clark seems to put great store by the fact that he is riding high on the tide of popular acclaim — what was it, seven to one in his favor?

Instead, his knees should be knocking. When, I ask you, except in Marian ages, was the Christ-like view ever the popular view?

As for Father Curran, talk about delusions. After 2,000 years of the moral teachings of the Church, all of a sudden he knows better?

Arlene O'Connor  
Haddon Road  
Rochester

### Father Paul J. Cuddy

# On the Right Side



## Steuben County notes and folks

Father Paul Schnacky invited me to take care of St. Joseph's in Wayland for a week — May 17 to 23 — while he was on retreat at Stella Niagara. Wayland is 50 miles directly south of Rochester. The Sunday pulpit game me an opportunity to hawk holy wares: prayer books, beads, children's books, etc. The people were responsive. The holy wares are now bearing holy fruit in that area. The 11 a.m. Sunday Mass was the traditional first holy Communion class of 28 children — the girls so dainty in white dresses and veils; the boys so serious in their white shirts and ties. Father Schnacky beamed the beam of a great paternal pastor.

On Monday, I went to Dansville to check with Dansville's Portia, Helen Pratt, about an Ireland tour reunion. With professional efficiency, assisted by two legal secretaries, she had the preparations accomplished. On returning from Dansville, I saw a sign saying, "Perkinsville — One Mile," and decided to investigate. The village has only about 40 houses, but the parish originally was a combination of Catholic German farmers and railroad workers. The late Monsignor Azzi was a native and is buried in the parish cemetery. The parish was shepherded years ago by a huge Father Ferdinand Scheid, then by the scholarly Father Riefer, who taught us Greek at St. Andrew's Seminary in the '20s. Fathers Merkel, O'Donnell, Tuite and Kane succeeded them, but the parish is now a mission to Cohocton.

The last resident pastor was Father Tim Wieder. He left the priesthood for marriage in 1980, but while there developed an active human services program. One was "Kennedy House," the former rectory, which is now a halfway house for eight high school youths from troubled homes who have been adjudicated to the place by the civil courts. After leaving Perkinsville, Tim was youth minister at Good Shepherd, Henrietta. Today he is supervisor of Heritage Christian Home in West Webster (within St. Rita's parish), a halfway house for mentally or physically disabled youngsters, and of a similar place in the Henrietta area. He will soon establish another center in Webster, adjoining the Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd on property donated

by the parish for the cause. He has a talent for this work and uses it well.

On Wednesday, there was a Mass and dinner at Rexville, 40 miles from Wayland, to celebrate the golden and silver anniversaries of our priests. One hundred years ago, Rexville was a large parish of Irish farmers. The village itself has only 24 houses, and the parish is now a mission to Canisteo. Except for Owego and Apalachin, it is the farthest from our bishop's Rochester see.

I was surprised that 150 priests traveled so far to the celebration, and the 150 priests were surprised at the handsome new church and hall which were built under the aegis of Father Tom Burr. The original church was destroyed by a lightning-caused fire in 1981. It had been insured for more than \$400,000, and determined parishioners made sure their church would be replaced.

At the Mass, Rochester's answer to the musical group known as the St. Louis Jesuits provided accompaniment for singing. Father McKenna with his base viol, Fathers Mull and Clifford with their guitars, and Father Kraus at the organ beat out triumphant hymnodies, and the 150 mighty male voices acclaimed the praises of God. It was reminiscent of the glorious music at St. Bernard's Seminary in the days of the jubilarians.

Golden jubilarian Monsignor Art Ratigan had a stroke last year. Though greatly improved, he was not able to make the celebration. He resides alone in a house he built in the hills, halfway between Wayland and Hornell. The next day, I paid a fraternal visit. I suggested: "You shouldn't be here alone!" He replied: "But I like it here. It's beautiful and restful." "Yes," I said, "but I heard you fell last week and were 15 hours on the floor." "Seventeen hours," he corrected. "My sister came the next day and called a neighbor for help."

Then he showed me a gadget around his neck and said: "Since then I got this 'Life Line' gadget. In emergency, I can press this button which connects me with St. James Mercy Hospital, and they would get me aid." With all his physical problems, he retains that same exuberance and optimism which is part of his lovable personality.