

C-J Opinions

Russian celebration of Christian heritage is Kremlin ruse

To the Editor:

How can the Kremlin honor Christianity? The liars in the Kremlin are preparing the commemoration of the "Millennium of Christianity in Russia," which is to take place in Moscow in 1988.

Only Ukrainians have the right to commemorate this millennium. In Kiev in 988, under the direction of St. Volodymyr the Great, one of the rulers of Kievan Rus — the Ukraine's ancient name — the citizens of Kiev were baptized. This act, which symbolized the acceptance of Christianity in the

Ukraine, took place on the banks of the Dnieper River in the Ukraine, not on the banks of the Volga.

Russia did not even exist 1,000 years ago! It was not until the second half of the 13th century that the forerunner of Russia, Muscovy, came into existence. The formulation of the Russian nation came within the boundaries of Muscovy during the time of Peter I, who in 1713 ordered that the term "Muscovite" be replaced by the term "Russian." Even the English-language

"Outline of the History of the USSR," published in 1960 in Moscow, states, "The Russian nation began to take form in the 17th century." Therefore, how can there be a "millennium of Christianity in Russia" if Russia did not exist 1,000 years ago?

The Russians who falsify Ukrainian history, steal the Ukrainian culture and even stole the Ukraine's ancient name, Rus — as evidenced by the 1713 order of Peter I — now want to steal from the Ukrainians their right to commemorate the millennium of Christianity.

Why would the Kremlin, which discourages religion, want to commemorate the millennium of the introduction of religion? The answer is that in 1988, Soviet Russia plans to have the eyes of the world focused on Moscow and seize the opportunity to showcase itself as a peace-loving nation. At the same time, the Kremlin hopes to divert the eyes of the world from the atrocities in the Soviet concentration camps; their exportation of terrorism; the killing of men, women and children in Afghanistan with

chemical weapons banned by treaties signed by the Soviets themselves; and from their disregard for human lives, as evidenced by the nuclear tragedy and cover-up at "Chornobyl" — the correct Ukrainian transliterated spelling.

These same "pious" Soviets have banned the Ukrainian Catholic Church, the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and other Christian churches in the Ukraine. The leader of the Ukrainian Catholic Church spent 18 years in a Soviet labor camp for refusing to renounce his faith. Even as recently as this past summer, the International Society of Human Rights in Frankfurt, West Germany, and Keston College in England reported that Yosyp Terelya, a founder of a group organized to legalize the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the Ukraine, was sentenced to a seven-year labor camp term and five years of internal exile for "anti-Soviet agitation and propaganda." This is how Christianity is "practiced" by the Kremlin.

Nancy-Hope Melnyk
Sumner Park, Rochester

Staff should have sought reform, not reinstatement

To the Editor:

I have some comments and questions that arise from the reading of the letter of the pastoral staff at St. Mary's (C-J Opinion, Oct. 2: "Awaiting Fr. Curran's reinstatement"). The Church can neither condone sodomy, abortion, divorce, artificial contraception and extramarital sex nor deny the teaching authority of the ordinary magisterium in our Church. Authentic pastoring by the staff would have been better served by writing to "brother and friend" Charles Curran, urging his reform, rather than disillusioning Catholics and others further. Does "awaiting" mean that the pastoral staff is in a passive state of a limbo awaiting a never-to-arrive moment when the Church will betray our blessed Lord, His Church and purity, and surrender to Curranism? Is their letter an indication that influence, position, monies and facilities are even now being diverted to promote dissent and dissenters?

There is an obvious comparison with the angelic doctor St. Thomas and the Curran matter that was not made. The relatives of

St. Thomas, in an attempt to thwart his calling, shut him in a room with a prostitute. The reinstatement which the pastoral staff at St. Mary's seek would shut young Catholics in an institution nominally Catholic with a moral theologian who prostitutes chastity, fidelity and theology.

Because of the furtive hopes expressed and the potential and/or actual harm implied by the pastoral staff and others, the reinstatement they await looms ominous for our Church. Fortunately, the Church which will remain one, holy, catholic and apostolic has a champion in a weekly newspaper, *The Wanderer*, 201 Ohio St., St. Paul, Minn. 55107. Its pages are full of fidelity, love and certainty for the Church, pope and sound theology. I urge all concerned Catholics to subscribe. Its price of \$25 a year, or \$13 for a half year, is modest compared to the price paid by students for disinformation by so many in our Catholic establishments. The Wanderer's motto is, "Where Peter is, there is the Church."

Ursula Zeck
East Water Street, Waterloo

Catholics should challenge business practices

To the Editor:

I have seen no report in the Catholic press of the last annual meeting of General Motors' stockholders, although there was an important religious story there. A number of religious orders offered a resolution to require GM management to adopt the MacBride Fair Employment Principles in its Belfast plants. Chairman R. B. Smith opposed the resolution and kept repeating over and over without substantiation that GM does not permit discrimination.

Sister of Charity Regina Murphy challenged his assertions, by relating her own experience. On a trip to Ireland, she arranged to tour the GM Dundonald works. The day after her visit, a work stoppage lasting most of two days was called by Orange employees to protest allowing a Catholic nun to visit the plant.

Similar sectarian strikes have occurred before. There had been a shop rule forbidding displays of sectarian emblems. After a

strike, the company backed down, and partisan displays continue. Workers at Dundonald struck on March 3, 1986, to protest the Anglo-Irish accord. Far from being penalized, the protesters were retroactively given the day off as paid vacation time. The real policy of GM has been labor peace at the expense of ethical principles.

Unfortunately, GM is not the only American company to allow bigotry to control their business ventures in Northern Ireland. American Brands has a branch that employs virtually no male Catholics. Ford Motor has been found guilty by the Fair Employment Agency of prejudice in hiring.

American Catholics and all people of good will have an obligation to challenge these evils. As the Ascendancy in Northern Ireland uses violence to maintain its privilege, it will take real courage for American companies to proclaim the MacBride Principles.

George Korb
St. Anthony-on-Hudson, Rensselaer

AIDS is God's way of bringing sinners home

To the Editor:

We now have AIDS outreach. The Office of Social Ministry says AIDS is not God's punishment for homosexual practice. What is it then, God's gift to those who disobey His commands?

Yes, I think it is just that. He loves these people so much (that) He allows them a cross to carry and learn from, maybe because they can no longer hear the voice of the Church clearly. (It is) muffled in a litany of theological uncertainty — "under certain conditions," "in extenuating circumstances" and "relative this and that."

All through the Old Testament, when Israel fell from or abandoned God's way, all of Israel suffered. AIDS is not unlike the sufferings Israel went through. As long as we

sin and do not go to Him and confess and be truly sorry for it, it will consume us, destroy us and ultimately tell the world in history what God in Holy Scriptures already tells us.

Why don't we call sin sin anymore and quit trying to explain it away? Then sinners — all human beings — can turn with no uncertainty to Jesus, Lord and Savior, for forgiveness.

Jesus awaits with outstretched arms the turning of our hearts and minds — from self-justification and the denial of sin — to Him. He can forgive, save and heal all who come to Him with a sincere heart. All power is invested in Him.

Jean Vetter
Salter Road
North Rose

Priest perplexed by quotation on Fr. Curran

To the Editor:

I read with perplexity the quote attributed to Dr. May of Catholic University in Father Cuddy's column of October 23: "Father Curran is a kind, sincere man convinced he is right. But so is President Botha of South Africa."

There is no comparison between a man who symbolizes a system of moral theology

that enables people to be truly free and faithful in Christ and a man who symbolizes a political system that enslaves and discriminates against an entire people. One might just as well compare Father Cuddy to Joseph Stalin.

Father Robert L. Collins
St. Thomas More Church
Rochester

'Chemical reaction' to priest comes from within parishioner

To the Editor:

Father Cuddy's column is enjoyable every week, but his article on October 2 really caught my eye. We hear so much about the "fallen ways" because of this reason or that.

Calling the priest in question "thickheaded" and "Father Envelope Pusher" probably made the woman who wrote to him feel better, but I would have written further.

So this priest is not "Father Personality Plus." So what? God gives us all different gifts — see Romans 12:5-6. If the woman who had been away for 15 years would stick around for perhaps two or three weeks and would allow herself to engage in conversation with some of the parishioners, if she were to avail herself of the various Bible study groups this particular parish may have

or just let herself have a nice chat with the parish secretary, she would have to realize that the priest does not make up the whole parish.

In my opinion, the priest is a catalyst sent by the bishop with the guidance of the Holy Spirit to take care of the needs of the parish. The "chemical reaction" takes place in the parishioners themselves.

I'll certainly pray for the lady. Fifteen years is a very long time. The Body of Christ has missed her, as she has obviously missed us. I'll welcome her back with open arms. I hope she doesn't stay away for 15 more years, because we are not given all that much time to do the work that needs to be done.

Lorelei A. Radulski
Tanner Lane Macedon

Victor Bartolotta Jr.

A Closer Look



Pro-love, pro-life

Elections and political furor have passed, but one issue lingers like difficult-to-remove rust spots on a car's finish after the assault of winter. One untreated spot remains: What does it mean to have a consistent pro-life policy? Specifically, how is it possible for a political candidate or legislator to support sending weapons to the Nicaraguan contras, to support the death penalty, to support social programs that cut food programs and still be considered "pro-life" solely on the basis of his or her anti-abortion stance?

Even when the politician's commitment to pro-life is nothing more than public statement of opposition to abortion, the candidate's endorsement by many pro-life people remains intact. At that juncture, when a politician's stance on life issues is reserved only to anti-abortion positions and when the opposition candidate clearly supports abortion, I think that pro-life people ought to say that no pro-life candidate exists and leave it at that. In that case, no candidate ought to be given a pro-life endorsement.

Stating that an anti-abortion candidate is pro-life even though he or she supports federal budget cuts that will deprive poor children of proper nutrition, thereby hastening their death, is like saying that true love can be discriminating. True love, however, is love that places God and others first, and self second. It is love that eliminates no one, bestowing its grace and blessing on all.

Life and love are aspects of our existence that are deemed sacred by God. They cannot and should not be segregated, dissected or divided in any way. Pro-life or pro-love positions must be consistent in every respect possible if they are to be deemed pro-anything.

During World War II, Nazi actions constituted perhaps the most blatant examples of perverted pro-life policies. In his own sick way, Hitler supported a

pro-life policy for the select few through policies of "euthanasia," experiments on human beings and even the extinction of life. This kind of inconsistency can never be tolerated.

In a lesser way, people who support the death penalty for drug pushers, who back governments like that of South Africa which take away life rather than expand it, or who further armed conflicts by sending adversaries more weapons with which to kill each other can never be considered pro-life in any sense of the term.

And yet, in our confused, rationalizing way, we find it so easy to call these people "pro-life" because they may have a particular tenderness for unborn babies. Even the most heinous villains of history showed some sense of respect and sensitivity for life. But an expression of tenderness or sensitivity toward life in just one particular instance does not justify a person's being labeled "pro-life."

Jesus came to teach us that to love in a discriminating way is not to love at all. "If you love those who love you, what is that?" he asked. "Even sinners do that."

Jesus also taught us about the value and sanctity of every person in every instance. The new agreement that Jesus made through his death and resurrection included all peoples. Jesus, therefore, proved that the lives of all people, regardless of race or origin, are sacred. Jesus taught us by example that love and life must always be held as one and inseparable.

We must not compromise a policy of pro-life and pro-love. We must protect the sanctity of God's life for the unborn as well as the sanctity of life for those already born.

With the help of God, who is the creator of life and love, we must put our minds and hearts together to educate the well-intentioned but misinformed. With God as our teacher, using our God-given intellect, we must work to form a comprehensive and consistent policy of pro-love and pro-life.