

C-J Opinions

Failure to rebuke all sins does not weaken rebuke of one

To the Editor:

I'm writing in response to the October 23 article "Seminar breaks down walls between gay Catholics, Church." I would like to say, most sincerely, that I sympathize with those involved with this issue. The scars of impurity are deep and those scars tend to haunt us for the rest of our lives, but let us have faith and trust in Jesus, who heals us. As for the rest of the Church, "purity of heart" is one fruit we seem to be severely lacking, and I ask that all pray earnestly for this virtue.

It appears that the Church does not rebuke with the same severity all sins of impurity,

which could be partly true. But this does not change the fact that monogamous homosexual relationships and pride in this state of life are, without a doubt, sinful and should be confronted by the Church. Adultery, fornication, greed, gluttony and idolatry are also sins of impurity and should not be looked upon as something less sinful than homosexuality. The community is always ready to embrace anyone who comes to them for help to overcome these weaknesses, but those who deny responsibility or refuse to repent are deceivers and alienate themselves from body of believers.

What person who has committed adultery

can say they are without fault and are in communion with their spouse and the Body of Christ?

Who can commit fornication and say this is acceptable?

Who has lusted in their heart, married or not, for another, yet can say they are not in need of forgiveness?

It seems to me that the gay community is smoke screening its fault by demanding equal tolerance with their weakness as the Church has (given) for adulterers, fornicators, and etc., which to me is fair. But, when they want to make something dignified out of their wayward state of life, I wholeheartedly implore them to give up this folly.

St. Paul thought it necessary to clarify the relations of believers with one another in 1 Timothy 5:1-2: "Do not rebuke an older man, but appeal to him as if he were your father. Treat the younger men as your brothers, the older women as mothers, and the younger women as sisters, "with all purity."

Webster's Dictionary defines pure" as "free from moral fault, innocent, also chaste;" "chaste as "I) innocent of unlawful sexual in-

tercourse; virtuous. 2) celibate 3) pure in thought 4) modest."

Jesus is purity. St. Mary was pure; St. Joseph was chaste. Francis of Assisi was chaste, just to name a few. Jesus is the universal man. His life radiated holiness and purity. Those who followed after Him embraced this way of life and were called blessed. Shall we now try to make their lives irrelevant? Friendship and love of neighbor reflect the person of Jesus; marriage and pure-hearted affection glorify Jesus' relationship with His bride the Church. Let us be vigilant and resist the temptation — do not allow Satan to defile that which is holy and good.

At Fatima our Blessed Mother admonished: "More souls go to hell because of sins of the flesh than for any other reason!"

If I should be in error about this, Lord have mercy on me. If there be profit in what has been said, all glory and honor be to our Lord Jesus, our most wonderful counselor.

Mark A. Petersheim
Damsen Road
Rochester

History speaks of conflict with Rome

To the Editor:

I am finding such an aid to Catholic perspective in St. Bede's "History of the English Church and People" to A.D. 731 that I must recommend it to others. A modern translation by Leo Sherley-Price was published as a paperback Penguin Classic and reprinted as recently as 1974.

While most of the book deals with the conversion and progress of the Angles, Saxons and Jutes, there are often present the seeds of dissent among the Britons, the local Celts brought under Roman rule.

The origins of the faith in Britain are ancient and obscure. There is a legend that Joseph of Arimathea founded Glastonbury. Many of these British Christians were good; yet as a group they reportedly refused to evangelize the newly arrived English and gave rise to Pelagius. The persistent "external" signs of disunity — a difference in assigning the time of Easter and a difference in tonsure — were claimed by the Britons as belonging to their local culture and tradition.

Yet the influence of the See of St. Peter is recorded as early as A.D. 156, when Lucius,

a British king, wrote to Pope Eleutherus, asking to be made a Christian by his direction. The pope speedily complied. Later letters of popes and bishops working to evangelize pagans and bring reluctant Christians into full unity make fascinating reading. They show real care, concern and action, not a detached administering. St. Bede had access through scholars and friends to documents from papal archives.

The lessons are obvious enough — tensions between the See of St. Peter and the outposts may be inevitable. One might say that an effect of original sin is a tendency toward isolation, each one of us from the other. It's interesting that original sin was a stumbling block for Pelagius. Bishops play a major role. Unity requires sacrifice, sometimes of things close to the heart, sometimes not. But such sacrifices are always means of grace for the flowering of the faith in souls. Others have gone before us along this path. Unity is the very prayer of Christ and His achievement with our cooperation.

Judith Echaniz
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Rochester

Catholic lawyers guild offers position paper on matter, 'deviations' of Fr. Curran's views

To the Editor:

The diminution of the objective dignity and inherent value of human life in our country at this time is a cause of deep concern. Not so long ago, such an approach to human life resulted in the Holocaust.

The acceptance of the principle that there can be a life not worthy of being lived was the basis of Nazi ideology. Therefore, any erosion of the idea that human life has value independent of its quality is dangerous. Regrettably, the impact of the "theology" promulgated by the Rev. Curran appears to justify both euthanasia and abortion. Several Catholic politicians have justified their dual position on life issues — opposition to abortion as a personal view but support of liberal abortion as a public policy — on the Curran "theology."

Father Curran's theology is not a mere abstraction being debated by theologians in academia; it impacts life and death issues, societal relations, the family, governmental power and the law itself. It is for this reason that the St. Thomas More Lawyers Guild was compelled as a matter of both individual and collective conscience to support the magisterium of the Catholic Church — that innocent human life deserves legal protection. The Vatican is correct in requiring Father Curran to either abide by the teaching of the Church in this matter or to end his identification as a Catholic theologian.

The St. Thomas More Lawyers Guild has issued a paper approved 10-2 by its Board of Directors at a special meeting on July 8, 1986.

William P. Polito
Former President
St. Thomas More
Lawyers Guild

Congratulations on story about homosexuals, Church

To the Editor:

Congratulations on the splendid article by Teresa A. Parsons on the seminar at St. Mary's Church of the Deaf, which was sponsored by the Coalition for Gay Civil Rights (C-J Oct. 23: "Seminar breaks down walls between gay Catholics, Church").

I understand that this organization believes in the Christian American principle of equal rights, peace, liberty and justice for all — including Christians, Jews, whites, blacks, red-heads, blonds, normal children, children with Downs Syndrome, heterosexuals and homosexuals — all of whom are intentionally created that way by God.

God is perfect and doesn't make mistakes. However, some people accuse God of making mistakes when He is supposed to have created Lucifer and other devils as well as a hell, which only a sadist would do.

I don't believe that God is capable of making a single mistake, nor do I believe that He is a sadist. Some people believe in a fallible God of vengeance. I believe in a God of perfection, mercy and love.

Since some parents have been known to have forgiven the murder of their children, dare we accuse God of being less forgiving?

Walter O'Hagan
Sherman Street
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General's statement is sorry commentary

To the Editor:

Recently I came across the stark statement made by Gen. Omar Bradley, a famous U.S. general in World War II: "Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants. We know more about war than we know about peace, more about killing than we know about living. We have grasped the mystery of the atom and rejected the Sermon on the Mount."

This quote from Gen. Bradley is a stunning statement of how far the "civilized world" has wandered from the paths of human justice, and the attitudes and actions that lead to genuine peace. How can we silently watch as billions of dollars are being spent on Star Wars, the Strategic Defense Initiative, while every day

40,000 people in our world die of hunger and diseases caused by serious malnutrition? Most of these are children.

Think of the human problems that could be solved in our own country and around the world with Star Wars' billions — those billions in the hands of peace-loving and caring people could start to remake our upside-down world. Surely love and peace are more infectious than fear and distrust, so the United States would not have to "go it alone." Other countries and peoples would be drawn into bringing healing and peace to a troubled world.

Nathalie Coleman
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Geneva

Victor Bartolotta Jr.

A Closer Look



Perks for parents

Life's so unfair. My friend who started his hair when he was still in high school is completely bald. I have all kinds of hair problems. Another thing I don't like is the amount of money former presidents are allotted to pay staff members. Employees do can't get anything. Meanwhile, the president's staff really started coming to the holiday celebration during a recent Halloween. I thought my life-energy of 40 and-a-half-year-old. Holidays seem harder.

I'm sure a lot of mothers out there are saying: "Here's this guy with one measly kid, and he's coming apart at the seams! Who's giving me any sympathy for what I have to do with my four kids?" Wait a second, mothers. I'll admit your

example, I have a hair when he, Now, at 35, he's bald. I have all kinds of hair problems. Another thing I don't like is the amount of money former presidents are allotted to pay staff members. Employees do can't get anything. Meanwhile, the president's staff really started coming to the holiday celebration during a recent Halloween. I thought my life-energy of 40 and-a-half-year-old. Holidays seem harder.

comment is valid, but at least give me the chance to tell you what I did for this infamously celebrated holiday, and why I think life is unfair. On Halloween day, I sent Lynn to school with a five-part costume, compliments of my sister, Jeanne. Of course, I had to go pick it up the night before. Naturally, each part of the costume had to be individually labeled with Lynn's name and carefully placed in a similarly marked paper bag. That day I also had to bring her lunch pail, an envelope with a check for her tuition and, as usual, her knapsack. After I dropped her off at school I had to run to the credit union to transfer funds to my account so that the tuition check wouldn't bounce. (Remember, folks, that's only the morning agenda.)

Now, I know reading all these details is boring. And, you're probably saying to yourself, "Boy, what a complainer!" But, I'm just trying to make a point. During the time I spend preparing life for my four-year old, Jimmy Carter is proba-

bly having his \$30,000-a-year secretary get him his second cup of afternoon coffee. Or ex-president Ford is probably directing his librarian to call the local bookstore and see if the softcover edition of Andrew Greeley's new novel has arrived yet.

I mean, come on! I'm killing myself, and these guys have got perks coming out of the woodwork. So I started thinking, why can't the government create some perks for parents?

If anyone needs a whole contingent of staff people to help, then parents do. Therefore, I would like to propose to Congress that if the government is willing to pay for staffers for former presidents, it should be willing to fund staff positions to help parents. Naturally, my plan would give single parents like me special consideration, but would help all parents.

To heck with former president Nixon's full-time clerk. We parents are the ones who need the help. We're those forgotten slaves who have to sit back and watch former presidents, whose children have left home ages ago, receive all the benefits of paid help while we're left with nothing.

I mean if God really cares for us parents, then it seems to me He ought to pressure the government to give us some help. God seems big on children, as long as He doesn't have to give any kid a bath.

Come on, Lord, how about a break? How about creating some perks for parents?

Reminds people of appeal

To the Editor:

May I remind the thoughtful people of the Diocese of Rochester of the importance of supporting this year's Thanks Giving Appeal, now taking place in our parishes.

As a result of past contributions to the TGA, I am now a participant in a sabbatical program here at Notre Dame, the Center for Continuing Formation in Ministry. I am grateful to the people of our diocese, to our bishops and to the diocesan visionaries who have provided me this splendid instrument for personal and ministerial updating. With renewed vigor and greater ministerial competence, I eagerly await my new pastoral assignment in 1987!

Diocesan-wide support of the current Thanks Giving Appeal will give other gospel ministers similar opportunities for growth.

Father Gene Weis
Notre Dame, Indiana

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