

The Editor's Desk

Production 'values'

Almost everyone is looking forward to Pope John Paul II's fall visit to the southern and western United States. Yet news stories reported during the last month or so show that the pope's tour indirectly is causing controversy and confusion. Oddly, the problem stems not from some doctrinal or ideological issue, but from the financial strain the pope's tour puts on the dioceses he will visit.

In San Antonio, Texas, costs are estimated at \$2.5 million; \$4 million is the predicted expenditure in San Francisco. And the tiny diocese of Monterey, California, needs to raise \$2 million — a task which, at one point, pushed diocesan officials to the point of trying to auction the Holy Father's visit to the highest of several media bidders.

Fortunately, the bidders involved had better sense than the harried diocesan officials. Media officials said Monterey's offer was in bad taste and in defiance of journalistic ethics.

Now, diocesan officials are selling diocesan parishes the bulk of available tickets; according to reports, the tickets will be given free to individuals, and the parishes will seek donations to offset the costs. In effect, much of the cost of the papal visit has been transferred to the parishes.

I'll admit from the start that I'm naive about the costs of major events, though I realize that security and crowd control alone must cost a small fortune. Nevertheless, it seems that a huge amount of money is being spent, and I wonder if all of these expenses are necessary.

I suppose the dioceses want to put on a good show for the pope and for the television audience that will be watching throughout the nation and the world. But the pope's visit is supposed to be about evangelization and pastoral care; it doesn't have to be a Cecil B. deMille production, complete with the parting of the Red Sea.

I just hope that the dioceses don't sacrifice their ordinary ministries in order to put on a fancy show.

Victor Bartolotta Jr.

A Closer Look



Land-rights rollercoaster

On August 18, 1954, you could ride the rides at Roseland Park in Canandaigua for only a nickel and a Coca Cola bottle cap.

Now, the only thing left to ride is the wave of controversy that swept over the property after the park's closing in September, 1985. Since then, the rides have been dismantled and sold, and the property has lain vacant.

Lately, the focus has shifted. Reports indicate the state may repurchase part of the Roseland Park property for a mere \$1,845, even though the land was purchased in 1961 for \$900,000.

In 1925, Canandaigua native William Muar paid \$50 for an eight-acre parcel of land on the north end of the lake. The next year, he opened a hot dog stand and a dance stage, calling his enterprise Lakeside Amusement Park. Two years later, Muar planted a bed of roses, and the park was renamed Roseland.

Then, in 1961, trucking company owner Lester Boyce bought the property with the intention of retaining its essential character by keeping it an amusement park. Boyce and his son, Richard, continued to run Roseland Park until high operating costs forced the park's closing in 1985. Plans were underway at the time to build an \$87 million housing and office complex on the property.

Since then, a number of problems have arisen, mainly concerning a bridge that the development company wanted removed. When the Canandaigua City Council voted to keep the bridge intact, development plans came to a standstill. Now it seems the state may try, under certain buy-back provisions, to repurchase a portion of the lakefront property. The parcel in question was filled in prior to 1961, while Muar still owned the land.

The Roseland Park controversy raises important questions. Should the owners of the former Roseland Park allow the land to remain accessible to the public, as it has been for almost 70 years? What relevant commentary on this situation can be found in Catholic social teaching about the right to ownership of property?

Since 1981, during the reign of Pope Leo XIII, the church has emphatically upheld the individual's right to own property. Property ownership is necessary, according to Catholic teaching, for the healthy development of human beings.

Over the years, papal teaching about the right to private ownership of property has been expanded. In 1931, for example, Pius XI stated, "The right of property is distinct from its use." Pius XI explained that property ownership becomes a right only when one takes into consideration the welfare of others.

In 1963, Pope John XXIII wrote: "There is a social duty inherent in the right of private property." Subsequent papal statements have always linked social responsibility with ownership of property.

The Roseland Park controversy is a good issue on which to test this social principle. I believe Catholic teaching indicates that, although the land is technically owned by Lester and Richard Boyce, its unusual location on a public lake near the center of a populated area dictates that it remain accessible in some way to the public.

It may be ironic that plans for private development of the land have failed. In fact, the state's involvement may help the property retain the public character it once had.

Catholic social teaching aside, the situation was perhaps best summarized by lifelong Canandaigua resident Stuart Case. In a 1985 newspaper article about the former Roseland property, he was quoted as saying, "Those are public waters. But after people buy it up, they won't let people like you and me in there, even to walk around."

Letters

Bishops issue sex-clinic call to arms

To the Editor:

The Courier-Journal has shown an improvement in some areas of pro-life reporting lately. For example, the articles on Project Life (C-J, Jan. 15: "Webster couple's pro-life commitment tops their agenda") and the Washington March for Life (C-J, Jan. 29: "Pro-life march hindered by freak D.C. storm") were impressive. However, at the same time, a related subject was making news, but the Courier-Journal's coverage was incomplete.

The subject of school-based health clinics, which pro-life advocates Dr. Wilke and Judie Brown (among others) have dubbed "sex" clinics, appeared when the (Rochester) City School District applied for a grant to establish one in Jefferson High School. You did

cover that. In November, you also printed a survey of six local diocesan high school students, four of whom approved of "school birth-control clinics." Another teen subsequently wrote an editorial in "Speaking Out" (C-J Echo: Jan. 15) also approving of them.

However, in January, the Catholic bishops of New York state issued a statement on education in sexuality, which includes a series of recommendations to the Church in New York state. One of these concerns is sex clinics. The bishops recommend that "parents and others concerned should oppose the introduction in educational institutions of clinics in which contraceptive and abortifacient counseling and services are made available to the students."

Here is a call to arms for parents and students from our bishops who are teaching on moral matters with the authority of the magisterium, and there was not a mention of it in your paper! Therefore, I have enclosed this most timely article, which appeared in a Buffalo newspaper, so you can now print it. It is obvious from your survey that students and their parents need to know the bishops' stand on these clinics and why we must oppose them.

In a related pro-life matter, you have begun printing Father Richard McBrien's column. He is a public dissenter of *Humanae Vitae* and a defender of Father Charles Curran's erroneous moral teachings, which have been condemned by the Holy See. Both the Australian and American bishops have found serious doctrinal errors in (Father McBrien's) two volumes of *Catholicism*. Therefore, do a service to your readers by removing his column and by printing the article concerning the New York state bishops' statement on education in sexuality.

Jean M. Guzzetta
Glendale Park
Rochester

EDITOR'S NOTE: Of the six teens who responded to the question, "What are your views on in-school birth control clinics?" only two expressed clear approval. Elizabeth Berliner's "Speaking Out" column (C-J, Jan. 15) reported on the Chemung clinic controversy, and concluded with the observation that "Adolescence is a time of startling growth and change, both physical and emotional. Each area presents its own set of problems. It is time to give such problems the attention they deserve." Nowhere in the column does Berliner give specific "approval" of the clinic's function as a source of birth-control referrals rather than as a source of general health care for teens.

Because of copyright law and other considerations of journalistic ethics, the Courier-Journal isn't able to reprint articles from other publications.

Writer commends C-J coverage of important pro-life issues

To the Editor:

I would like to add my "thank you" to that of Lynne Buonemani (C-J letters, Jan. 29: "Thanks for article") for your article on Project Life and the Problem Pregnancy Center (C-J Jan. 15: "Webster couple's pro-life commitment tops their agenda"). It is certainly good to see the Catholic press reporting on those who are so courageously dedicated to such "a serious baby-saving work done in obedience to God's Word" (David Long). More extensive coverage in this area would be most welcome and helpful.

Like other life-oriented, baby-saving organizations such as Birthright, Crisis Pregnancy and Melita House, Project Life is to be commended. In their counseling work, David and Diana Long are honest enough to give "the whole story" (Diana Long) about abortion, and they do so much to help the desperate young women who come to the Problem Pregnancy Center on Lake

Avenue. And how encouraging to read that the Center will counsel teenagers about chastity (a Christian virtue, which the AIDS scare is bringing back into vogue) rather than pressure them into the practice of artificial birth control (a serious sin, which is often abortifacient — baby-killing!)

Finally, I am glad to hear that Father Anthony Mugavero is such a good sidewalk counselor. May God bless him! If only more of us Catholic priests would devote more of our time and energy to the pro-life struggle! A good place to begin would be to follow the lead of the Holy Father in upholding and promoting more clearly and vigorously — "in obedience to God's Word" — the Catholic Church's teaching on the fifth and sixth commandments.

Father Dennis Bonsignore
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Reader decries movie portrayal of St. Therese

To the Editor:

After seeing the movie *Therese*, I felt a certain disappointment in the way she was portrayed. There were negative overtones throughout the film, which led me to believe it is not a truthful representation of a great saint.

One small example of this was the scene showing her audience with the pope. In the biography *Therese, Saint of the Little Way* by Frances Parkinson Keyes, this scene is depicted almost verbatim, as in the film, with some important subtle differences.

Ms. Keyes wrote her biography in the late '30s, after extensively interviewing sisters who were St. Therese's contemporaries. Ms. Keyes says of Pope Leo XIII after he answered Therese's question, "He had not repulsed her, he had spoken with understanding and loving-kindness in his voice." Evidently the writer and directors of the film chose not to show this "loving-kindness," since the actor who played the pope in the film was aloof, cold and uncaring.

As is so typical of current religious films, Therese's human

qualities were emphasized — for example, her physical pain and her temperament — and little was said of her devotion and intense love of Jesus.

I found the film lacking in sincerity about a simple child who was very close to God. The addition of segments that have no basis in truth made me very sad.

Pam Malthaner
Lake Breeze Park
Rochester



A GREAT NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION FOR YOU WOULD BE TO SET A BETTER MORAL TONE IN KINDERGARTEN.

Exhorts readers to pray for Fr. Curran to get back on theological inside track

To the Editor:

Regarding Father Curran, we do not know how or where he got off the track, but, dear reader, please pray that he gets established where he can truly serve the Church and its people.

The following article, entitled "The Genuine Theologian," appeared in the October newsletter of Human Life International, whose director is the Rev. Paul Marx, O.S.B.

"The true theologian does not contradict the doctrine of the Magisterium. He acknowledges it in its authentic meaning; he tries to clarify it in his studies justifying the Church's use of Scripture and the Father's; he prepares the faithful to receive it. If, to the contrary, he bases his theological research on the false conceptions lauded in contemporary intellectual circles, then he has become a mere ideologue, not a theologian. He dares to present a theological system from

which the Holy Spirit, the Plenitude of Church's truth, is absent."

The article, written by Abbe Andre Richard, was originally published in L'Homme Nouveau, No. 529, July 5, 1970.

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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, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.

Opinions should be brief, typed, double-spaced, and no longer than 1½ 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.