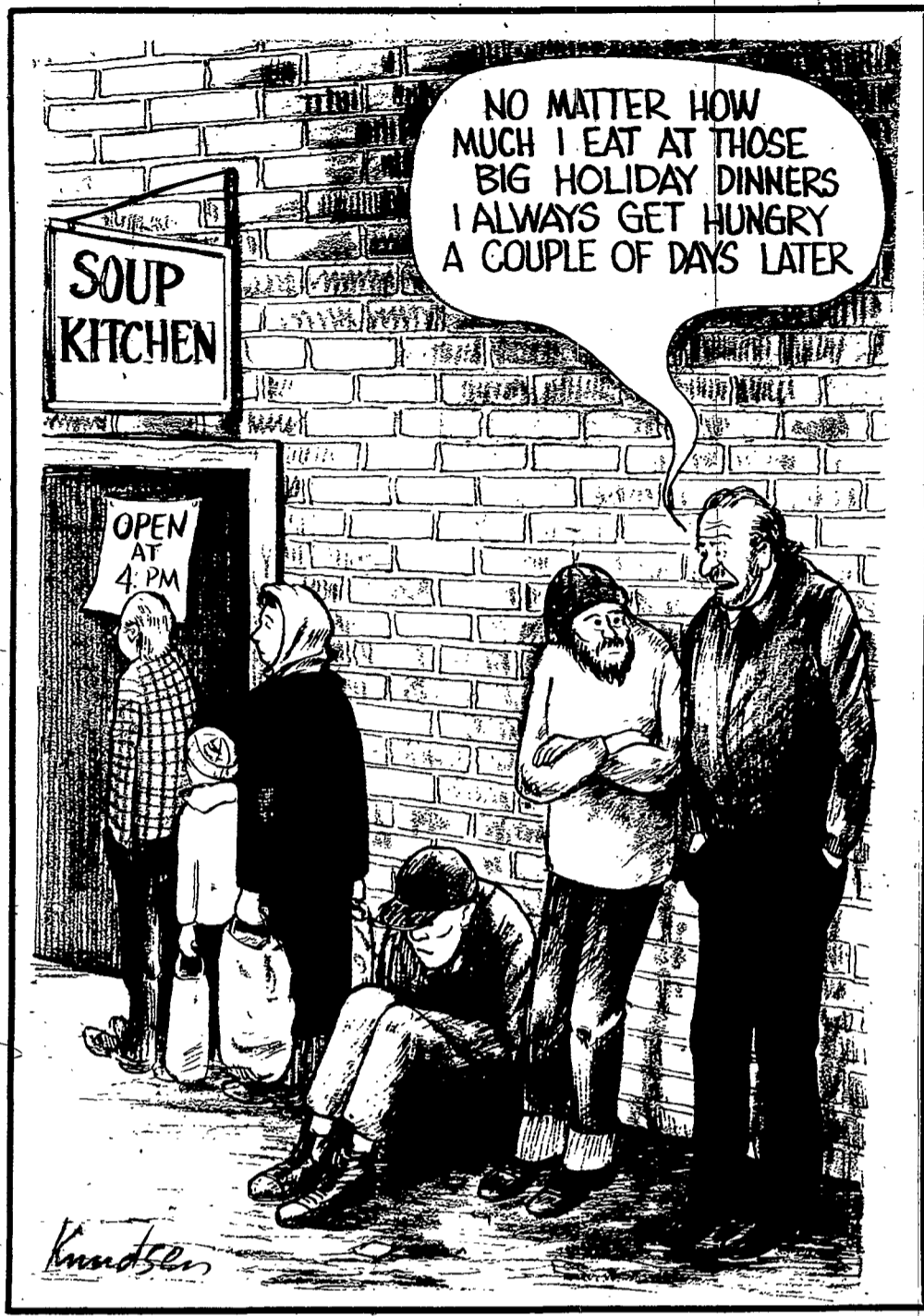


Editorial and Opinion



Dog-food donor wanted to help pets...

To the editor:

A recent article in the *Courier Journal* concerning food banks and the like included mention of donations of pet food. The centers receiving these donations took umbrage and interpreted them as a negative reflection on those for whom donations are intended.

I suggest a simpler explanation. Even the needy sometimes have companion animals who need to be fed. Perhaps the donors were doing as I have on occasion and providing

... deserves charity ...

To the editor:

The article by Rob Cullivan about food and clothing donations made some valid points, but to choose to be insulted because someone donated a bag of dog food ...

To assume that the donor was "making a statement" and then faking a 5"x6" photograph of that so-called statement, I believe you folks need to do some rethinking.

Why not accept the gift for what it was?

Our pets are not subsidized — nor should they be — but I know more than a few poor families who enjoy the companionship of a pet dog or cat. Your anonymous donor — and I have no idea who that is — was thinking only of one small way to make life just a little bit easier for that family.

I believe you owe a printed apology to that unknown donor, since you certainly gave him a most visible slap in the face.

I strongly agree with you about the need for USEFUL clothing — not junk that is good only for rags. THAT is the real insult!

Heddy M. McGarry
Ballard Avenue
Spencerport

for them as well. The Humane Society has pet assistance programs for the needy, but they are not easily accessible in neighborhoods, and how better to provide for companion animals than at the same locations where food for human consumption is dispensed? Let us use some imagination as well as charity in our provision for the needy.

Joanne M. Weber
Rhea Crecent
Rochester

EDITOR'S NOTE: A word to clarify. Several agencies mentioned in the article — soup kitchens, clothing cupboards, etc. — said they regularly receive unusable donations. Only one of them reported having received dog food. That particular center was an emergency overnight shelter for the homeless, not a food bank or soup kitchen.

... and printed apology

To the editor:

Your feature story "Organizations ask donors to think before giving" left me wondering.

Who said, "Christianity hasn't failed — it's never been tried"?

Why do you assume a donation of dog food is a negative message? Wouldn't it be just as easy to assume the donor wants needy people to be able to feed their pet?

Charity may cover a number of sins, but it seems to me people who are charitable to the needy should be just as charitable to the donors. To whom do we look for role models?

Lou Anne Montemorano
Tyre Road
Clyde

Father McBrien displays contempt for Church traditions and Scripture

To the editor:

Fans of Father Cuddy's sensible Catholic column, "On the Right Side" were insulted in the December 1 issue of the *Courier-Journal*, when Father McBrien's column appeared in Father Cuddy's usual space. Perhaps Father McBrien's column should be labeled "On the Wrong Side," because he is always on the side of the dissenters instead of the supporters of the Roman Catholic Church.

In the aforementioned column, Father McBrien shows his contempt for his critics who in his opinion ascribe current Church discipline and teachings to a fictitious Christ and not the historical Christ. These ignorant Catholics overlook the "real" Christ and his law of love in the New Testament. He cites numerous Scriptural quotations to justify his criticism of his critics. Indeed, he implies, according to Matthew 23, those in religious authority are imposing burdens on his "right to dissent." Don't Pope John Paul and Cardinal Ratzinger read the New Testament's law of love? After all, according to Father McBrien, the Pope is wrong to find dissent from official Church teaching unacceptable (*Courier-Journal*, Sept. 24, 1988).

Although Father McBrien quoted extensively from Matthew to make his point, he overlooked these quotations:

"No disciple is above his teacher, nor is the servant above his master" (11:24).

"You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church ... and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven ..." (16:18-19).

"Go therefore ... teaching them to observe all I have commanded you ..." (28:18-20).

He also missed this one from Luke: "He who hears you, hears me, and he who rejects you, rejects me" (10:16).

By his mocking disdain of his critics' beliefs Father McBrien shows his disdain for Tradition. By ignoring the Scriptures which point out his errors, he shows his disregard for Scripture. Yet both Tradition and Scripture make up the teaching authority, or Magisterium of the Church. Father McBrien's contempt for the one and selectivity of the other show why he and his column need to be censured.

Jean M. Lloyd
Glendale Park
Rochester

EDITOR'S NOTE: Although we attempt to provide consistency in the placement of our regular features, we sometimes must violate this pattern to accommodate varying lengths of these features.

Cornell parish joins boycott of California grapes

To the editor:

We, the members of the Parish Council of the Cornell Catholic Community, endorse the United Farm Workers boycott of California table grapes. We take this action for the following reasons:

1) Our church has historically recognized and supported the efforts of workers to organize to win better working conditions, just wages, and a greater measure of control over their lives.

2) Philosophically, our traditions recognized that workers as human persons are more important than the wealth they create or the work they do. Pope John Paul II in this 1981 encyclical *Laborem Exorcens* states a long-held conviction: "Further consideration of this question should confirm our conviction of the priority of human labor over what in the course of time we have grown accustomed to calling capital." Again, he states, "There is no doubt that human work has an ethical value of its own, which clearly and directly remains linked to the fact that the one who carries it out is a person, a conscious and free subject, that is to say, a sub-

ject that decides about himself or herself."

3) The reports we have seen concerning the conditions of farm workers in many California vineyards leads us to believe that they are exposed to unhealthy working conditions, are paid wages that are below the level of just wages, and experience serious disruption of family life due to the practices of employers. PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS BOYCOTT IS DIRECTED SPECIFICALLY TOWARDS CALIFORNIA TABLE GRAPES. NEITHER NEW YORK GRAPES NOR THE GRAPES OF ANY OTHER STATE ARE THE SUBJECT OF THIS BOYCOTT.

We commit this parish to a boycott of California table grapes at all functions. Further, we encourage the members of our parish to join the boycott regarding their own personal or family shopping.

The Cornell Catholic Community
Parish Council

EDITOR'S NOTE: The above letter was signed by Peter Johnson for the community.

SSJs thank members of diocese for generosity to missions

To the editor:

I write to thank (the members of the Diocese of Rochester) for your generosity in the recent appeal for the Brazil mission. Father (Robert) Bradler has recently given us the money from the collection; your many gifts show me that we are indeed a diocese who takes care of its own while at the same time keeping a broad view of mission.

The vision of mission that we share is one of bridge building. During a past visit to Brazil, I saw evidence of one of our bridges in the homes of the families I visited: water filters — a gift from Rochester families to families on Brazil.

Now, with your generous support, we are enabled to continue building bridges between Rochester and the people in Brazil, especially in Uberlandia, the smaller towns in the State of Goias, in Sao Feliz — on the frontier of Mato Grassi — and even further in the interior in

Goiania, where our novitiate is found.

On behalf of our sisters and the church in Brazil that we serve, and on behalf of the Sisters of St. Joseph, I thank you for your friendship.

Sister Elizabeth Anne LeValley
Superior General
Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester

Column hews to Gospel values

To the editor:

I wish to express my appreciation for your carrying the column "Essays in Theology" by Father Richard McBrien. What he has to say each week is informative and challenging and hews closely to Gospel values. I particularly liked his column "The New Testament law of love."

Eileen Cichello
Franklin Street Weedsport

C-J Letters Policy

The *Courier-Journal* wishes to provide space for readers throughout the diocese to express opinions on all sides of the issues. We welcome all signed, original letters about current issues affecting Church life.

Although we cannot publish every letter we receive, we seek, insofar as possible, to provide a balanced representation of expressed opinions and a variety of reflections on life in the Church. We will

choose letters for publication based on likely reader interest, timeliness and a sense of fair play. Our discerning readers may determine whether to agree or disagree with the opinions of the letter writers.

We reserve the right to edit all letters. Mail them to: *Courier-Journal*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, NY, 14624. Please include your full name as well as telephone number and complete address for verification purposes.

PEACE

