

Media slanted march news

To the editor:

I would like to report what really happened on Monday, Jan. 23, 1989, at the Pro-life march in Washington, D.C.

The 70,000 people reported in attendance is a completely inaccurate estimate by the media. The crowd filled Constitution Avenue from the Washington Monument to First Street and around the corner to the Supreme Court Building. There were more people at the march than at any stadium event which I have attended in excess of 80,000. In my estimation, there were at least 120,000 marchers in attendance.

These people who came to march against abortion, who feel strongly enough about this holocaust to take their children out of school, to miss a day's work, to travel from all over the U.S. and Canada are a beautiful cross section of society today. The media really plays down the commitment our society places on pro-life but this march renewed my confidence in the moral fiber of our country. Families, clergy, all races and ages and Judeo-Christian religions were represented at this demonstration. The miles covered by these individuals carrying banners, young children, and baggage was enough to aggravate anyone, but the only complaint I heard was from a hungry baby. The lack of litter or any other debris after the march also speaks for the kind of person involved in this war against abortion. I feel blessed to be among these individuals.

Another anomaly in the press coverage of this event was the way they sought out interviews with the scant handful of pro-abortionists present while ignoring the masses of pro-life people. I was with a film crew walking all day in an attempt to get an accurate cross section of the people there for a documentary. In my travels I saw only four pro-abortionists, the same four throughout the course of the entire day. The press flocked to these individuals while ignoring individuals among the pro-life group for interviews.

Senator Moynihan shirked his responsibility to his constituents in all of this. Not only did he walk right by us in the hallway

outside of his own office, but he left misleading information regarding his whereabouts with his receptionist. He knew we were coming months in advance, he could not have had a previous engagement. Everybody knew he wasn't there because of his deplorable, pro-abortion voting record. The Senator left two young and inexperienced aides to answer questions and convey the group's thoughts back to him, although they took no notes, in a room filled with hundreds of pro-lifers. Senator D'Amato was not present but he has nothing to hide. His voting record shows that he knows the difference between right and wrong.

An Operation Rescue participant, who I meet at the march, mentioned that the media emphasized the fact that one pro-lifer in an Atlanta rescue became verbally intolerant. According to this individual, the media neglected to mention that the pro-abortion groups were urinating and spitting on Operation Rescue members while in silent prayer at a rescue. He went on to tell me this was the norm rather than the exception. This testimony seemed plausible early in the day but after observing the media coverage of the march I was convinced it was the truth.

There is an evil force at work behind this abortion issue. I never realized it before I attended the march this year but it seems as though the media is keeping the view of the majority, the pro-life movement, from the public eye. We are also being ignored by our congressional representatives.

In closing, let me say that these pro-abortion people are the same types that had me questioning the moral values of the country that I call home. Thank God that I was led to Washington last Monday to see what is going on. I now believe, again, that the majority in this land is good, but were are being presented vastly overweighted immoral viewpoint by our media. You'll have to draw your own conclusions as to why?!

Michael Baker
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Father McBrien speaks for majority

To the editor:

Please keep Father Richard McBrien's column in the *Courier*. I do believe that he speaks for a majority of Catholics. Many letters published in the *Courier* written by his opponents would seem to say he is in



error and not a true theologian. I think Father McBrien's credentials as a Professor of Theology at Notre Dame U. are great. I feel it is views like the letter writers against Father McBrien that are turning off many Catholics. It is like the last column by Father Cuddy (C-J, Feb. 2: "Coalescing and colliding, part two"). This about altar boys, etc. Would Jesus really have cared because it took a minute extra to bring up the gifts. Because of a lack of flow, of ease? I really don't think so.

This is the same with theologians. Their purpose is to examine and evaluate Catholic teaching, etc. But as some say, all teachings are set in concrete — what need is there for the theologians? Their thought seems to me (that) nothing can change, (so) let's take the theologians out of universities and put them into such good work as the missions, working with the poor, etc.

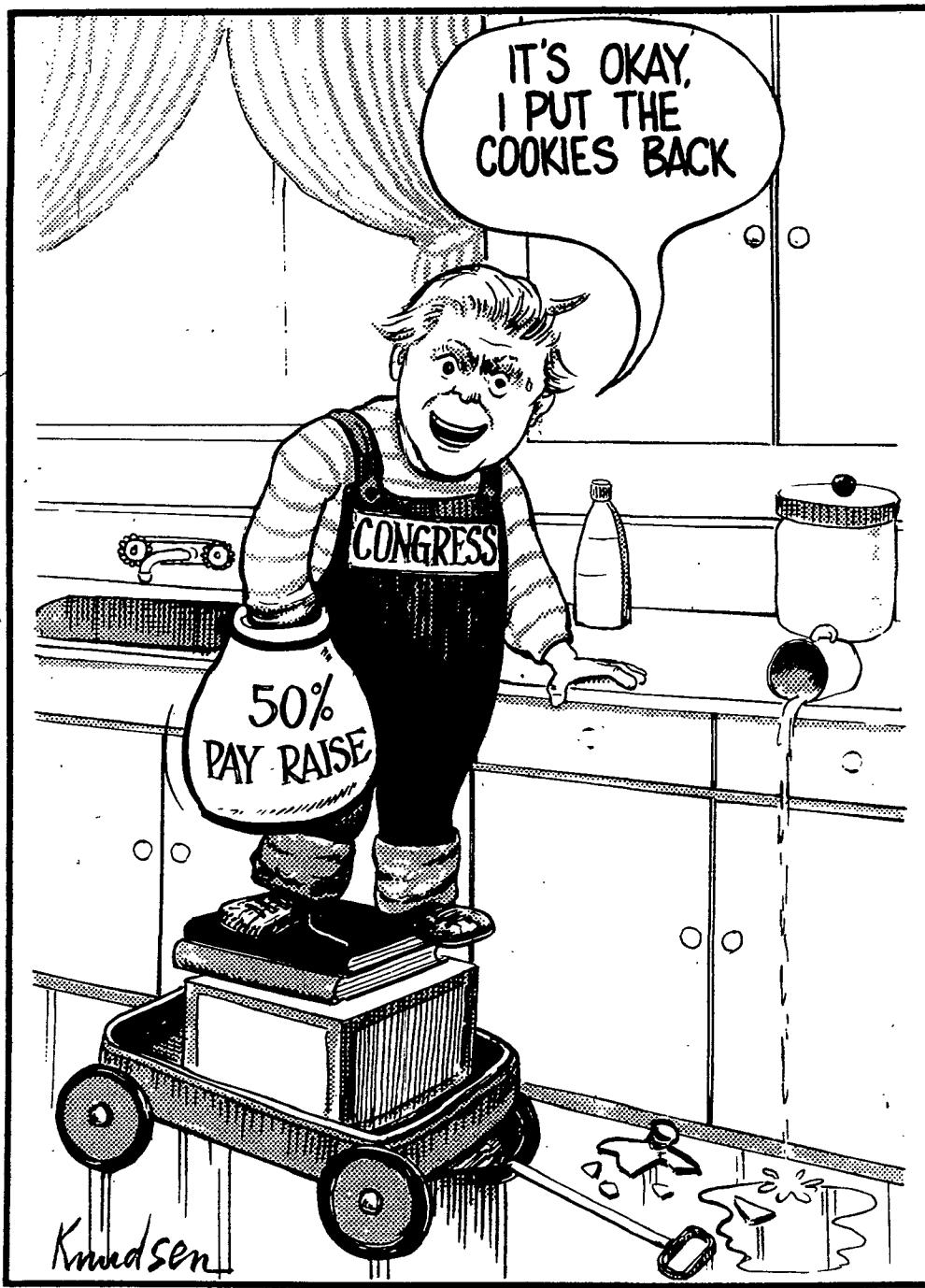
Elmer J. Ruisi
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Catholic Courier Letters Policy

The *Catholic Courier* 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: *Catholic Courier*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, New York 14624. Please include your full name as well as telephone number and complete address for verification purposes.



Former commission's work goes on

To the editor:

I want to set the record straight on Father David Mura's assertion that the "Division of Social Ministry worked tooth and nail several years ago to dismantle the diocese's Human Life Commission" (C-J, Jan. 5: "Coming home to roost on pro-life education"). The entire Division of Social Ministry underwent a restructuring which became effective July 1987. With that restructuring, the Human Life Commission, as well as the International Justice and Peace Commission and the Campaign for Human Development, ceased to exist as separate entities of the Department of Justice and Peace.

In its place, the three regional Offices of Social Ministry in Elmira, Geneva and Rochester, and the Office of the Director at the Pastoral Center are responsible for the ongoing work to implement the U.S. Bishops' *Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities*. Our programs and services total over

\$390,000 and reflect the threefold effort called for by the Bishops in the areas of: education, public policy and pastoral care. None of the major programs of the former Human Life Commission has ceased to exist. They are carried out by our nine Justice and Peace staff as part of our commitment to all persons who are vulnerable and marginalized.

Determining priorities when there are so many moral issues which need to be addressed is certainly no easy task. However, I can assure you that the issue of abortion and support for the health and well-being of pregnant women and their babies continues to be a major priority for the Division of Social Ministry. Should anyone desire additional information about the scope of our pro-life work, we welcome their contact with our offices.

M. Lourdes Perez-Albuerné
Associate Director
Division of Social Ministry

Gays must abide by rules for sacraments

To the editor:

I read Father O'Brien's column "Bishops, Theologians and Unity" (Feb. 2) and take issue with the brief paragraph:

"As priests and pastors their instinct would be to provide Eucharist for anyone who asked for it — even if they happened to be gay or lesbian. As officials of the church they feel bound to implement policies mandated from on high. And so, they shut down the Masses for gays and lesbians, but not without much private pain in their hearts."

The mandate from on high was to discontinue special Masses exclusively for gays and to stop the use of Church facilities for gay meetings. There was no order to refuse communion to any gay or lesbian attending the regular scheduled Mass and presenting him/herself for Eucharist in private and proper manner.

It is hardly appropriate for the Church to proclaim homo-sexual acts sinful and then honor the group with special Masses. The Church welcomes all — saints and sinners

alike — to participate in Mass and to partake of the Sacraments under the rules for that sacrament!

Jane Predmore
Honeoye Falls

Culture is losing respect

To the editor:

Because our culture is losing its respect for the sanctity and dignity of human life, child abuse has increased 500 percent since abortion was "made legal" by the Court.

The above is a paraphrase from a talk given by Father McBrien's column "Bible week of Jan. 30. Dr. Wilke, M.D., is author of the book *Abortion: Questions and Answers*, published in 1985 (by) Hayes Publishing Co., 6304 Hamilton Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio. His wife is the co-author. The book is a successor to *Handbook on Abortion*, published first in 1971 with the 21st printing in March 1983.

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Catholic Courier