

Abortion foes call for action

To the editor:

At no other time in the 16 years since *Roe vs. Wade* have we been so close to restoring at least some legal protection for the unborn. During the past year much attention has been given to the abortion issue thanks primarily to the efforts of those in the rescue movement. We have a new president who supports reversing the 1973 Supreme Court abortion ruling. If President Bush follows through on his convictions we can look forward to the appointment of Supreme Court justices who recognize that the "right" to abortion is not found in the Constitution.

At no other time is your personal involvement in the pro-life movement so important and necessary. If you are not involved in the pro-life movement in some way please consider making that commitment this year. We are at a critical stage in the abortion debate. A groundswell of support and involvement from Christians will make a difference.

Although rescue missions at abortion facilities have increasingly become an important, and even necessary, part of the pro-life movement not everyone is able to get involved in this way. Please do not let your

inability to become involved in peaceful direct action keep you from getting involved in other ways.

Volunteering at our local Problem Pregnancy Center, Crisis Pregnancy Center or Birthright, distributing pro-life literature, sidewalk counseling, participating in demonstrations and prayer services, writing letters to the editor and letters to our elected representatives are just some of the ways you can get involved.

Each Saturday morning from 9:30 to 10:30 a group of Catholics meet in front of Highland Hospital on the public sidewalk to pray 15 decades of the rosary. This is an excellent way to begin getting involved in pro-life work. Prayer is an essential part of our efforts to restore legal protection for the unborn.

If anyone would like more information about any of the above activities or other ways to get involved please feel free to contact me at 716/621-3906 or call the Project Life office at 716/235-1611. I cannot overemphasize the importance of your personal involvement.

Raymond N. Buonemani
Holkroft Road
Rochester

Diocese contradicts pro-life stance

To the editor:

Bishop Hickey in his December 13, 1988, letter to pastors, says, "The Diocese of Rochester restates its commitment to protect the unborn and to speak against the abortion laws so destructive of human life and the fabric of our society." And Gaynelle Wethers (of the) Diocesan Board of Social Ministries, in her letter to the *Democrat and Chronicle* of Dec. 26, states, "In our work on public policy, we advocate for state and federal legislation that protects the life of and promotes the health and well-being of unborn and new born children and their mothers." These two statements seem to emphasize the commitment of the diocese to the pro-life issue. Why then do Father Mull, Bishop Hickey and Father Norton all uphold the right of Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, an avowed abortion advocate, to appear, or to speak, at Sacred Heart School at a lunch for Girl Scouts on March 4? There seems to be a contradiction here and certainly no support for the pro-life lay people who are struggling against the pro-death crowd.

Archbishop O'Connor has ruled that any public official with a pro-abortion record or (who) has voted for pro-abortion legislation is not to be allowed at a Catholic function.

Mary Studier
Mosley Road
Rochester

Don't miss Holy Land

To the editor:

Recently we went to the Holy Land with Deacon Ray Defendorf of Elmira. Everyone before the trip talked about the dangers, and people who really wanted to go stayed home because they were afraid. Go and enjoy. Enjoy the sights. Everything in the Bible comes alive. The guides were great, the food wonderful, five-star hotels. I wouldn't have missed it and either should you. We went with Educational Opportunities of Lakeland, Florida.

Julie Boland
Seneca Parkway
Rochester

Design Catholic schools that address special needs

To the editor:

Although I can appreciate the massive task facing the Northeast Quadrant Planning Board, and understand that such basic issues as location and optimal building use as yet remain unsolved, another concern needs to be addressed during this crucial period of reorganization: the needs of the diocese's primary school students with learning disorders — i.e. special education needs.

My son is such a student at St. Ambrose School. I applaud the efforts of the staff there in providing him with wonderful caring, quality schooling. Unfortunately, I fear that unless careful planning is executed now, he and the other learning disabled children who are attending all the schools concerned, will surely suffer. Since at present, remediation programs are for the most part administered by the same staff members who attend special education needs, the many students receiving remediation also stand to lose if planning is inadequate and such a situation as understaffing occurs.

Children such as my son unfortunately perform well above average in some areas, and are not severely enough disabled overall to be effectively processed through the city school system. Yet their needs are real and pressing. We cannot afford to let the inadequacies of the public school system trick us into believing this small, but potentially promising segment of the school population does not deserve its due. Is it our tradition to neglect or penalize those few who learn differently or at a different pace?

The time has come for the Diocese of Rochester, with its admirable history of well-publicized service to the poor, to address a concern such as this. Most of the

families involved do not qualify for benefits under the federal government's Title I program. But we are "working poor" parents of children for whom we have struggled in order to pay considerable child guidance fees. We have had our children professionally evaluated to educate you and ourselves about how to teach them most effectively. Furthermore, for most of us, the luxury of simply picking up and moving to a public school system with more to offer than the City of Rochester's is simply not a financially viable option. The move, in the long run would probably not emotionally benefit the child anyway.

It is my hope that my son will continue to receive the caliber of education he has previously enjoyed in the nurturing environment of our diocesan Catholic education system. I would, however, be a fool to believe that this will automatically happen as a result of reorganization. Hasn't this already lain dormant on the board's agendas? Why? Special education must be maintained at its present levels, if not improved as we consolidate.

We can make our present school system more efficient and more attractive to city and suburban residents, thus more profitable if we really have the best to offer. Let us design a system that will teach all children: gifted, average and learning different! We will also produce tolerant graduates who have learned to maximize their God-given assets and to exist peacefully with their liabilities. Since I have a vested interest in helping my children learn to achieve this balance in life, I pray my pleas reach a receptive audience.

Margaret B. Wilcox
Hazelwood Terrace
Rochester

Father Cuddy's tours influenced travelers beyond fun and games

To the editor:

At Christmas time, I was away from home long enough for a considerable amount of mail to accumulate. I have been laboriously attending to it for several weeks and am now getting into the less demanding material. It was with a thrill of pleasure I spotted Father Paul Cuddy's picture in one of your December issues and read about him.

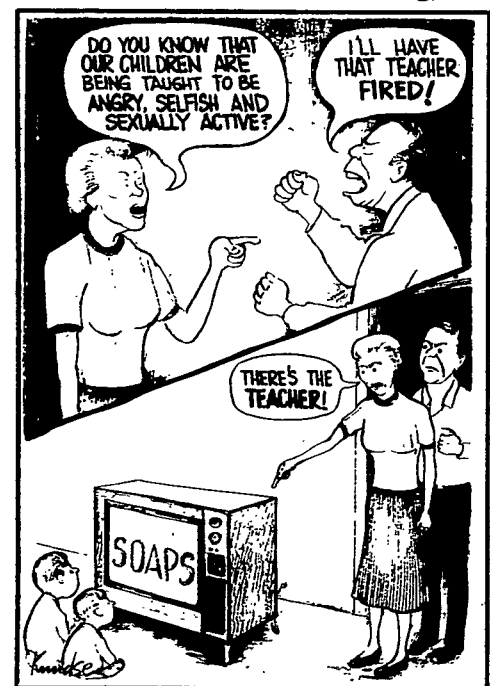
I had met Father Cuddy casually through the years at various events, but it was on one of those tours of his that I really got to know him and accompanied him thereafter whenever I could. Those trips weren't fun and games. They were far from superficial. Like the Apostles, Father has spread the Gospel far and wide. He prepared for every tour with information about the places to be visited and also of the persons who contributed to the historic legends that make them interesting, with emphasis on the role of the Church. The entertainment provided was light and gay but ever with respect to what we were.

It was about 16 years ago I made my first trip with Father but I feel as if I'd known him all my life. I appreciate the contact I have with him and treasure his friendship.

You may not think this worthy of publication but I wish you would because there

is a lot more to Father Cuddy than you'd think from the article — as glad as I was to see it. There are surely many others who are thankful for the influence Father has had in our lives. God bless him.

Rhea Gartland
27th Avenue North
St. Petersburg, Fla.



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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.