

Controversies of earlier era give comfort today

On a table next to the chair in which I now sit rests one volume of the three-volume biography of the founding Bishop of Rochester, Bernard J. McQuaid, written by Father Frederick Zwerlein and published in 1925. Bishop McQuaid served as Bishop of Rochester from its foundation in 1868 until his death in 1909. Zwerlein's splendid work tells the story, not only of the life and ministry of the remarkable McQuaid, but of the growth and development of the Catholic Church in the United States in the latter part of the 19th century.

It is a wonderful and rich account filled with stories of vision and courage and quiet sacrifice. It is also an honest story of the public and private disputes, human frailty and capacity for venality which have been a part of the church's history from her earliest days.

I had read the biography shortly after I arrived in Rochester and learned a good deal about the beginnings of our local church and the people, places and events that figured prominently in the first third of her existence. I pulled the volume from the shelf again a few days ago to reread some

portions of it. I recently finished reading a biography of John Ireland, first Archbishop of Saint Paul, Minn. McQuaid, a public and vocal adversary of Ireland on several issues, is mentioned many times in the Ireland biography. I wanted to go back to Zwerlein's several references to Ireland to refresh my memory on the McQuaid/Ireland relationship.

At great issue in those days were questions not totally unlike the ones we have today: How "American" need Catholic immigrants become before they could be regarded as truly Catholic and truly American? What responsibility do the state and parents have in the education of children and where do these responsibilities intersect? How should the church see to the Christian formation of her young? To what degree could the Catholic Church in this country adopt American ways and still remain Roman Catholic?

McQuaid and his allies did battle about these issues with Ireland and his associates. Some of the battle was waged in correspondence made public only years after their deaths, but some of it was waged on the pages of daily newspapers all over the

country. One of the more heated disputes arose when, in the judgement of McQuaid, Ireland interfered to McQuaid's detriment in the process by which members were selected to sit on this state's Board of Regents. For all of their disagreements, we do know that in their latter years, Ireland visited McQuaid in Rochester for three days and they spent a peaceful time together.

Such biographies are consoling reading for me for a couple of reasons. The first is that they remind me that the disagreements, tension and struggles which we experience in the church today are not peculiar to this age. Indeed, the evidence is that they are more the rule than the exception in the history of the church.

The second reason, which I have mentioned many times — perhaps even in your hearing — is the consolation McQuaid offers me. I put it this way to friends: Whenever at the end of a day I feel that the day was tough and there were too many burdens, I open McQuaid's biography at random, read a few pages, thank God for my comparatively easy life, and fall asleep in peace. Perspective is a wonderful thing. Peace to all.



Along The Way

Readers urged to try 'living rosary'

To the editor:

We invite each person to become a member of this beautiful and highly indulgent devotion called the Living Rosary.

What is the living rosary? It is a method adopted for the recitation of the rosary which consists of dividing the 15 decades among 15 people. The 15 mysteries of the rosary are delegated, one to each individual. Each member then forms a spiritual representation of his or her mystery and all are united to complete the whole rosary. The members, united spiritually, form with their hearts a "Living Rose" in the field of Our Lady's Rosary Garden.

Anyone, regardless of age, may enroll, and the decade may be recited at any time of the day or night, in church or at home, at work or while walking. If a person already recites the complete rosary, another decade need not be added — simply meditate on the assigned mystery. The Living Rosary was started in France by the foundress of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and was approved by Pope Leo in 1832. Pope Gregory XVI blessed it with many indulgences. Many priests have recommended it to the faithful as second only to

the Sacraments as a means to draw abundant graces for all.

This is not a new devotion but a continuation of the rosary preached by St. Dominic.

Over 6,000 people are members of the association, located all over the world.

Imagine the joy Our Lady must have as she collects each decade to form a complete rosary and presents them to her Son as a loving gift from His little ones. One can imagine her presenting them to Him as a bouquet of roses, mentioning the name of each person who makes up this living rosary, and asking him to bless each one abundantly — as he surely does. Many miracles have been wrought through the saying of the rosary and many people have turned back to the Lord because of the rosaries prayed.

If you are interested in obtaining more information, please write to me, or write directly to Richard and Patti Melvin, 5013 Harbor Light Drive, Dickinson, Texas, 77539.

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Letter writer rejects defense of Father Haring

To the editor:

Mr. Guardelli responded (*Courier*, March 16: "Reader deplors letter's offensive language") to my charge (Feb. 23: "Fr. Haring errs in bending theology to the popular will") that Father Bernard Haring's position on birth control was dishonest with a resume of Father Haring's credentials as a moral theologian. In so doing, Mr. Guardelli evaded the specific and carefully framed issue of Father Haring's dishonestly formulated theological position. Perhaps to his dismay, Mr. Guardelli's sloppy evasion helps to substantiate my charge. For one would expect a moral theologian of Father Haring's stature to know better than to have the questions of moral truth raised in *Humanae Vitae* settled by the popular will. Where is Father Haring's concern for objective, sustained, and timeless truth and principle? Should we not be suspect of an accomplished scholar who advocates settling moral questions according to the whims of the present age; especially one consumed by hedonism?

Mr. Guardelli's second line of defense was his sentimental and irrelevant celebration of Father Haring's "pastoral concern for the individual." It seems one can get away with anything today if it's cloaked in warm-puppy "pastoral concern." Mr. Guardelli apparently has trouble distinguishing between objective standards of

right and wrong and compassion for those of us who again and again are lured through weakness toward the wrong. In the words of the Catholic philosopher Alice von Hildebrand, "True compassion does not mean approving sin."

Dominic A. Aquila
Cedarwood Terrace
Rochester

School parent requests answers from diocese

To the editor:

As a member of the St. Margaret Mary School Board, I am deeply concerned about the reorganization of the Northeast Quadrant parochial schools. Parents' concerns and questions about many aspects of the proposed plan have not been addressed. They have been left in the dark and expected to just "go along" with the decisions made.

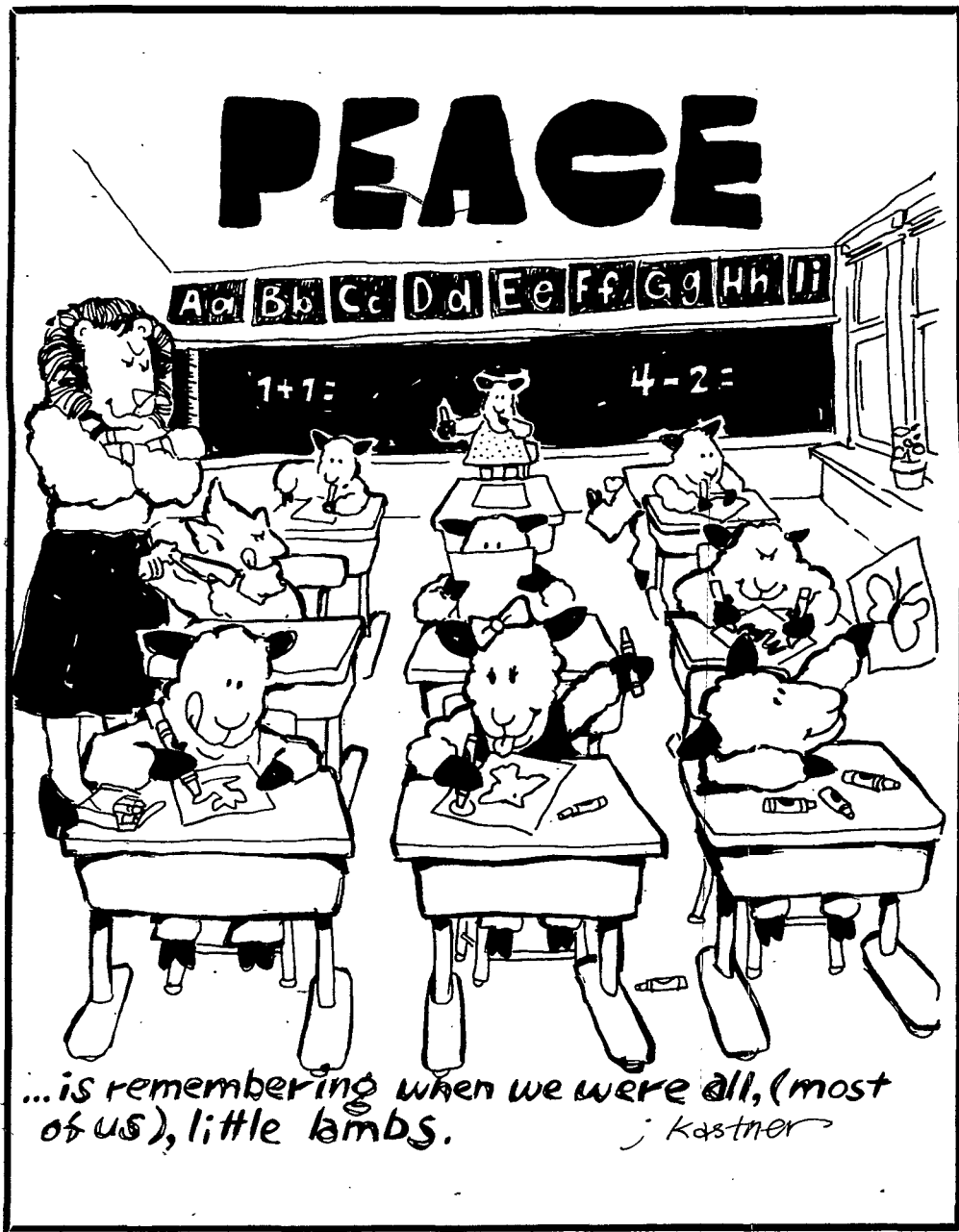
We feel as parents that we are entitled to some answers before we enroll our children in a system that is unable and unwilling to communicate and listen to our feelings.

It makes me very sad to be losing children from our schools simply because of the diocese's inability to address the many issues still unanswered.

They just don't care.

Barbara Zimmerman
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Rochester

Catholic Courier



Father McBrien unfair in attacks, reader says

To the editor:

In a clumsy attempt at guilt by association, Father McBrien took a cheap shot and fabricated a link between the good people of the *Wanderer* (newspaper) and Catholics United for the Faith with totalitarian foreign regimes (*Courier* March 2, "Why conservative Catholics are not fundamentalists"). How absurd!

Father McBrien has consistently defended the pro-abortion actions of "Catholic" politicians Gov. Cuomo and Senators Kennedy and Moynihan on the grounds of an alleged popularity and not imposing their morality on others. This theologian and these politicians acquiesce in having the immorality of others imposed on themselves and the innocent unborn. In their moral cowardice they have become part of the murderous abortion wolf pack. The pa-

papal document on procured abortion states that such involvement in abortion incurs automatic excommunication. Scripture says "no murderer has life!" When will Father McBrien ever write a sequel "Why liberals are not pro-choice on abortion"?

The *Wanderer* and CUF uphold and are protective of the pope, the unborn and orthodoxy and stand in opposition to the power grab of the Americanist church. I suggest an unwillingness to be opposed and exposed as the reason for Father's diatribe against honorable people. Indeed if there are no "enemies within," how else explain the continuance in the *Courier* of "Essays in Drivel"?

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& Es
Hou
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