

Promoting family life one means to oppose abortion

By Father Paul Cuddy
Courier Columnist

From a disappointed reader:

"While I read your column regularly, and agree with most of what you write, why don't you ever write about abortion? This is the greatest plague in the country, but you never mention it. And I have never heard a sermon at Mass about abortion. Why not?"

Answer: "You have a point. Abortion is the greatest plague in the country, though AIDS may soon catch up. Frankly I don't know how to give a sermon on abortion at Sunday Mass. The audience is a mixture of adults, adolescents and little children. It would seem that retreats, adult education classes, Cursillos, Marriage Encounters, high school classes and such — where the groups are adult and homogenous — would be more to the point. Why don't you write out a Sunday sermon on abortion as you think it should be given, and send it to me?"

Many would be interested, including myself.

Here are reasons for not writing about abortion in this column.

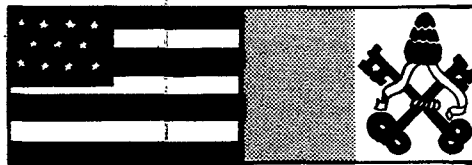
1. Those who read this column are securely in the pro-life camp. The church spends too much time preaching to the already convinced.

2. There are others who write more effectively. Unfortunately both in the printed and television media, abortionists have more advocates and more influential ones. The Knights of Columbus monthly, *Columbia*, is probably the most effective Catholic periodical, since it is well written, orthodox and goes to 1,300,000 members.

3. Many Catholic bishops speak out ably about the pro-life issue.

This column is a kind of a potpourri which hopes to drop hopeful hints, mostly through stories and incidents.

For example, in a narration of a recent visit with a family in Waterloo, I expressed



ON THE RIGHT SIDE

admiration for the alertness of two altar boys, and asked their mother if she read to them. The point to readers was to put their little ones on their lap and read children's stories to them. If that impels some to do so, the column is a success.

The August 10 column discussed why some Catholics drop Mass and the Sacraments, and some even leave the Church Universal for some cordial Bible congregation. The column must have struck the hearts of many whose children have drifted from the church, because at the end of the article I recommended Father Collins' little

booklet, *Acceptance*, as a possible help to hurting hearts. Nearly 50 people wrote to me at 10 Lewis St., Auburn, N.Y., 13021, asking for the booklet. Doesn't this indicate a common concern?

If pro-life people want to be greatly effective, they should work to get Mother Angelica's Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) available throughout the diocese. Network programming provides sound family values, including the virtues of fidelity, purity, piety and parenting. I often wonder at the mighty indifference, and sometimes genuine hostility toward this great Catholic television apostolate by those who sit in the seats of influence. The only areas in our diocese that get Mother Angelica are Geneva and Waverly. Pro-life is not just to stop abortion. It is also to strengthen Christian virtues and family life.

Thank you for writing, and I hope you will send me that sermon on abortion.

King David filled with great sorrow after death of Prince Absalom

By Cindy Bassett
Courier columnist

Absalom and his huge army entered Jerusalem just as Hushai, David's trusted friend, arrived at the palace. As soon as Hushai saw the king's son, he bowed before him, saying, "Long live the king! Long live the king!"

Even Absalom was surprised at his greeting. "What happened to your loyalty to King David?" he asked.

"You are the declared king of Israel now," Hushai said, choosing his words carefully. "I served your father once. Now I will serve you," he lied.

The deception was complete. Hushai, along with Ahithophel, became one of Absalom's advisors. He was there as they planned their next strategy in the war against David.

First Absalom inquired of Ahithophel. "What is our next move?"

"David and those who still cling to their loyalty to him must be tired and discouraged. Let us act quickly. Allow me to choose 12,000 of our best soldiers and set out immediately after them," Ahithophel suggested. "I will kill David. When his troops see him so utterly defeated, they will join with me and return here to proclaim you king of Israel."

"That does seem like a worthwhile plan," Absalom agreed. "Now let us see what Hushai has to say."

Hushai knew that he needed time to get word to David about their war plans. So he proposed something completely the opposite.

"Yes, it is true that David and his men are certain to be discouraged, but Ahithophel underestimates David's ability as a soldier," Hushai said. "I am sure he has gone into hiding until he can organize his forces. My advice is to wait and increase the ranks of our army. Then you, Absalom, can lead them to the glory of the victory."

Hushai had answered well. Absalom was vain and it was appealing to him to be there when David was defeated.

"Hushai's advice is better," Absalom said. "First we gather our forces; then we attack and defeat."

Meanwhile, as Absalom waited in Jerusalem, Hushai dispatched spies with this information to David. For his part, David divided his men into three separate forces and placed a commander over each. As he prepared to leave with them, they all advised him to wait for them until the fighting was over."

"If that is your recommendation, then I will do so," David told his commanding officers. "All I ask is that you do not kill



my son, Prince Absalom."

Prince Absalom did not lead his army into victory. He was forced to retreat from David's army with the others. He rode through a forest with his long mane of hair flying wildly behind him. Suddenly, both he and his hair were caught by the branches of a large tree.

When General Joab learned of it, he went immediately to the place in the forest

where Absalom still dangled in mid-air. And Joab killed him as a traitor. After he had done so, he blew a trumpet as a signal that the war was over.

"Go and inform King David that we have defeated his enemies," General Joab said to the messenger. "And tell him that his son is dead, too."

When David received the news, he was nearly overcome with grief. "O my son, Absalom," he wept. "I would have died in your place."

A short time later, General Joab confronted him. "You are humiliating your own loyal soldiers by this reaction. It's as if you


wish they had died in the battle and Absalom had lived."

So David went and posted himself at the place where his army would be returning from the war. He welcomed and thanked them for their victory. Soon he returned to Jerusalem to serve as king of Israel again. His heart was filled with great sorrow for all of the swords he had endured.

Scripture reference: 2 Samuel 16:15 — 2 Samuel 19:18.

Meditation: "I have made my servant David king; I will crush his foes and kill everyone who hates him" (Psalm 89:20, 23).

THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER



EDWIN SULEWSKI
FUNERAL DIRECTOR

Grief is help available?

Grief is the name of a complex combination of physical, emotional, and spiritual experiences. It occurs when we lose someone or something very important to us.

It is a natural reaction to the realization that we are not all powerful, that we ourselves are mortal.

Everyone deals with grief in a different personal way.

GRIEF RESOURCE INFORMATION FORUM and the PASTORAL CARE CENTER at Rochester General Hospital jointly sponsor a monthly bereavement group called WORKING THROUGH LOSS.

The group provides information, education and peer support for adults recovering from the death of a significant person in their lives.

The group meets the second Thursday of each month from 7:30-9:30 p.m. in the E-5 conference room at Rochester General Hospital.

Easy-to-follow signs are posted upon entering the hospital from the parking ramp.

Open to all adults. There are no dues or fees. You may attend as long as you choose.

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