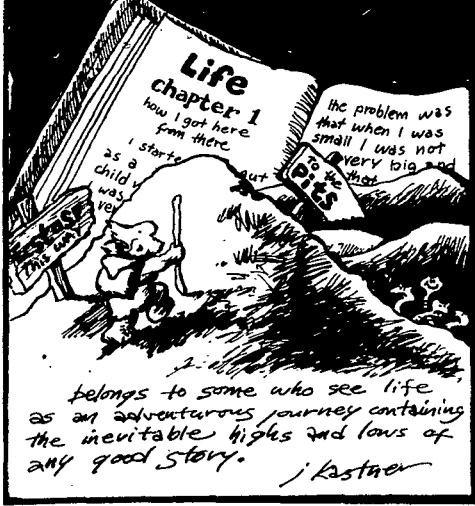


PEACE



Must we shake hands?

To the editor:

I don't know if this is a problem for the editor, but I would like to make a suggestion.

Please do away with the "hand shaking" in church when we extend to other parishioners the "Peace of Christ." When I hear people around me sneezing and blowing their noses, it disgusts me to think that I have to touch their hand. With all the germs going around today, I don't think we should be made to touch another person if we don't feel right about it. I know that there are other parishioners who feel the same way.

You could even consider taking a survey on this subject.

Grace DiPronio
North Walnut Street
Waterloo

Seminary wasn't colorblind

To the editor:

Though I disagree with Father (George) Stallings, he certainly forced the higher church authorities to do some thinking. This I understood, after reading the problems (last year) a black student encountered to enter a seminary for the priesthood. What patience he had! For entry I thought being Catholic was a requisite — not color.

Even a Protestant (white or non-white) can be elected Pope. And in the past accommodations were made in regard to ethnic and territorial customs: married priests, holydays observed, fast and abstinence regulations plus use of different liturgy and Julian calendar.

But I was really shaken up (by the rumor): Catholicism is not the only requisite for heaven.

Thomas H. Dady
Brett Rd.
Rochester

Jews own the 'greater grief'

To the editor:

The intemperate remarks by the Polish Primate, Cardinal Jozef Glemp, regarding both the Carmelite convent at Auschwitz and the 1987 pledge to relocate it, constitute the ecumenical equivalent of the Exxon oil spill.

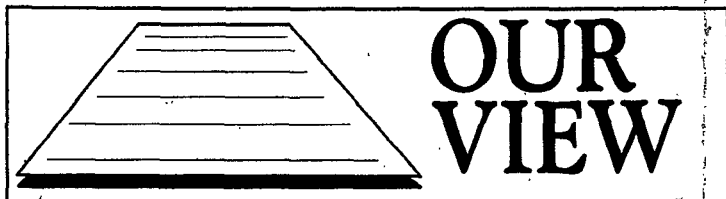
At the same time the apologia of Rabbi Avraham Weiss (letters, *The New York Times*, Sept. 12), the intemperate New York activist who occasioned much of the imbroglio by leading a handful of trespassers over the seven-foot fence and onto the convent property, is a classic instance ofchutzpah.

Intemperateness, though, will prevail. The intemperateness of the one will not thwart the relocation of the convent any more than that of the other will facilitate it.

When the convent is relocated, for it will be, it will come about as the result of the quiet and awesome awareness that Auschwitz belongs — peculiarly, properly, and uniquely — to the Jews. Theirs, after all, is the "greater grief."

E. Leo McMannus
N. Miami, Fla.

Change the economics of 'choice'



Opponents of abortion are raising a hue and cry over the U.S. House of Representatives Oct. 11 vote to extend Medicaid coverage of abortions to women who are pregnant as a result of rape or incest.

Meanwhile, abortion-rights supporters are claiming this legislative victory as evidence of a shifting tide that will leave the pro-life movement high and dry.

"Don't kill the second innocent victim of that rape," Rep. Henry J. Hyde, R-Ill, begged on behalf of the pro-life forces.

"Let's not turn this disgusting, ... solitary crime of rape into a gang rape by the Congress of the United States," fired back Rep. George Miller, D-Calif.

The level of rhetoric between the two camps threatens to obscure the significance of federal funding for Medicaid abortions.

In 1986, federal funds paid for only 227 abortions nationwide in cases where a mother's life was endangered. In contrast, taxpayers in New York state paid for 51,000 abortions of all kinds in 1986, according to officials with the state Catholic conference.

Preventing even one abortion is a victory. But how many of the women denied federal funding to abortion will actually choose an alternative to ending their pregnancies?

Perhaps more women would "choose life" if activists on both sides of the abortion debate employed their rhetoric to ensure that the medical care needed for childbirth and child rearing is as cheap and accessible as abortion is today.

Governor Mario Cuomo and the New York State Legislature have taken a step in that direction. On July 19, the governor signed into law the Prenatal Care Assistance Program, which extends Medicaid benefits for prenatal care to pregnant women and infants in families with incomes up to 185 percent of poverty level. Medicaid funding for abortion, meanwhile, stops at 100 percent of poverty level.

However, a two-year study by the Institute of Medicine reports that rising insurance premiums and fear of malpractice suits are prompting "significant numbers" of obstetricians, physicians and nurse-midwives not to handle high-risk pregnancies — found more often among low-income women.

The harsh fact remains that for too many women, an abortion — whether paid for by Medicaid or not — remains cheaper and easier to obtain than good prenatal care.

— The Editors

An exceptional teacher deserved Oscar for lifetime of performance

To the editor:

This summer moviegoers were treated to a memorable performance by Robin Williams in *Dead Poets Society*. This screen play was a fitting tribute to these unique teachers of high school students who not only inspire learning English, but also the ability to think independently. Admittedly, his students were intellectually gifted, from privileged families but truthfully we all need to honor those instructors who make material sacrifices to allow others to have a lifetime of cortical stimulation.

This summer another event even more realistically focused our attention on the lasting value of the exceptional teacher. On August 18, 1989, Sister Joachim passed to her eternal reward with the Teacher of all teachers. For 49 years she taught high school math to students at Elmira Catholic High School, and then Notre Dame High School. She had the unusual talent to be able and willing to teach the gifted and the less-than-gifted from privileged and underprivileged families with equal enthusiasm. To be perfectly honest, she did favor boys over girls but after all, unlike the movies, all is not perfect in real life.

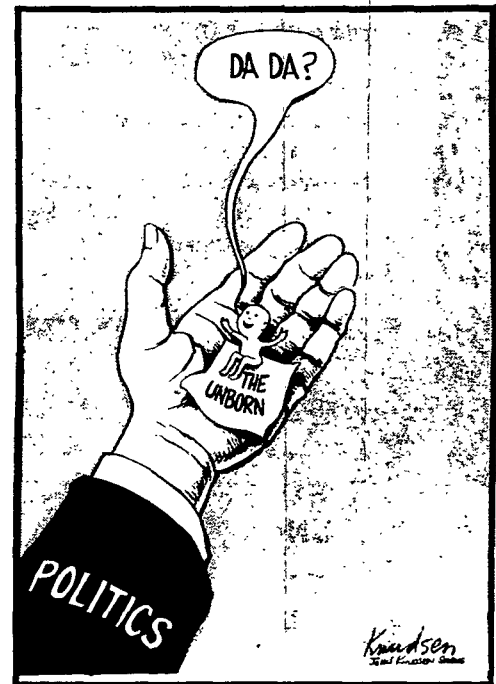
She provided three generations of students four years of math instruction, tutoring at free periods, after school and/or weekends, as well as summertime help if it was necessary. The student learned that any job worth doing was worth doing well,

and deserved their maximum effort. Nothing less would suffice.

Her demand was the same for all students ... always perform to the best of your ability. The talented student was in just as much trouble for getting an 85 percent on an exam as the less than talented student was for NOT getting an 85 percent.

I hope that Robin Williams gets nominated for an Oscar for the performance of a lifetime but in truth, I realize that Sister Joachim should win the Oscar for a lifetime of performance.

Thomas R. Curran, DDS
W. Water St.
Elmira



Unborn Americans robbed of funeral honors

To the editor:

Just about a year ago, funeral services were held in several places to mourn the loss of aborted fetuses found in trash cans and dumpsters. One hundred fifty seven were buried in Newton Grove, N.C.; 782 in Tallahassee, Fla.; and 2,000 were lovingly laid to rest in Chicago, Ill.

These unborn Americans, known to God for His own, consecrated before being formed in the womb, according to the prophet Jeremiah, never even knew the safety and comfort, the sanctuary, of the mother's womb. They were sought out, violated and

destroyed, deprived of the sacredness of their existence and relegated to the condition of garbage or trash.

These unborn Americans, the promise of the future, were obliterated as if the future did not matter, as if the present time were the only time. The funerals in Newton Grove, Tallahassee and Chicago laid to rest with honor and dignity almost 3,000 unborn Americans. There were many millions of unborn Americans who never had the honor of a tiny casket, flowers and tears. And this injustice goes on.

What is conceived in the mind of God and made sacred is meant to survive and share in the life of God. To turn what is sacred, what contains a spark of the Divine Life of the universe, into 20th Century trash is really an ill-conceived idea of petty human minds. It is an idea more suited to the minds of barbarian hordes than it is to rational thinkers of an enlightened age.

In future times, people will read about this civilization that became so hedonistic, materialistic and alien to God that it made a common practice of destroying its progeny. In future times, people will read about this American civilization that saw the glory in colonizing other planets but failed to see the disgrace of destroying its unborn children.

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