



'Sacred' is an absolute value



Last week Christopher Stuart struggled to begin his life after a gunman ended his mother's. Shortly before Carol Stuart died, her son was delivered by Caesarean section. The infant, at least one month premature, and his father, Chuck Stuart, remained hospitalized in critical condition at press time.

The story of the Stuarts, robbed and shot in their car after they left a childbirth-preparation class at a Boston hospital, adds a new chapter to the awful litany of violence in our most violent nation.

On television we watched pictures of ambulance crews removing the couple from their car as we listened to Chuck Stuart's tortured attempts to remain conscious as he guided police via car phone to the scene of the shooting.

Newspapers printed transcripts of the tape alongside pictures of the couple — attractive, smiling folks next door. "Get my wife out," a barely conscious Chuck Stuart is reported to have said as police arrived.

The statistics of violence are numbing. But the Stuarts' tragedy strikes an emotional chord, as did the rape and beating of a young female jogger in Central Park last spring. These are news stories that wring our hearts and compel our prayers, perhaps because they deal with people "like us," people we perceive as ordinary or innocent — somehow undeserving of calamity.

On the other hand, how many of us secretly believe or openly insist that those who appear less innocent — Third World despots, drug kingpins, the sexually promiscuous — "get what they deserve" when they are murdered, executed, die of AIDS? How many of us could muster an ounce of compassion for the suspected drug dealer killed in a shootout that took place near Manhattan's St. Patrick's Cathedral on the same night as the Boston shooting? How many would advocate "stringing up" the Stuarts' attacker, or worse?

As Catholics, we profess to believe otherwise. In the words of Pope John Paul II: "Human life — from the moment of conception and through all subsequent stages — is sacred, because human life is created in the image and likeness of God." (Washington, D.C., 1979).

That principle sets a tough standard. For if we truly believe that the spark of God's likeness burns equally in all of us — no matter how deplorable our actions — then the life of Carol Stuart's killer deserves no less respect than that of her newborn son.

— The Editors

Women who seek priesthood misguided by arrogance

To the editor:

This is directed to the women who want to become priests. Wake up and get a grip on reality ladies. The first prerequisite for priesthood is that one be male. No woman meets this criteria, therefore no woman can become a priest. I realize you may think that some man instituted the standard that requires only men need apply as priests. This would be correct thinking because a man did institute this standard. You may recall his name. It is Jesus Christ of the Triune God. If memory serves me correctly Christ called twelve men to head his Church and to administer the Holy Sacraments. At the Last Supper there were twelve men not six men and six women. There were twelve men. If Christ wanted women to be priests the first woman priest would have been the Blessed Mother for she surely was more holy, pure and perfect than any of these twelve. You see Christ called twelve imperfect men.

If you think you have been called by God to become a priest, it is an illusion of your

own grandeur. You may have been called by god the self or by god the prince of darkness, but I assure you. You have not been called by the Holy Trinity or beckoned by Queen of Confessors. It is with pride that you demand the Magisterium change to suit your desires. A man called to be a priest or a woman called to be a nun accepts the call with humility, not pride. A man or woman that is to enter into a cloister order does not say, "I want to be prioress," nor does one complain about the Rule of the Order, on the contrary. The individual gives themselves to the whims of God and accepts the mandates of the Order they're called to.

You women on the other hand demand to be priests. You say you suffer. Maybe in your mind you believe you're going through a dry martyrdom of sorts. Stop kidding yourself. You're acting out of that arrogance that is perpetuated in our society. Your so-called suffering is due to the fact that you will not accept the doctrine instituted by the Roman Catholic Church. If

you are not ill in health and all your family is alive and healthy, if you're not starving and you're blessed with employment — you are not suffering.

If one or some of you somehow manages to be ordained be assured that you will not be a Catholic Priest Roman or otherwise. You will be a fraud. In the eyes of men, you may hold a place of distinction, you may be heralded by women's groups, but you will be in grave disobedience to the Holy Father and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Any Mass you say, any confession you hear and any other Holy Sacrament you administer will be invalid.

In the ancient Greek play, *Agamemnon*, written by Aeschylus, Agamemnon has a bout with pride. His excessive pride, or hubris, caused him his own death as well as the death of family members. Be careful because your swollen pride might result in the losing of your souls. I am sure that you ladies will do what you want to. Remember though that God is not manipulated and He does not bend His knee to any creature anywhere that ever existed in or out of time. No. It is the knees of all in creation, above, below and on the earth that will bend to His Sacred Name.

Joanne Rowan
Spencerport Rd.
Rochester

Hospital stay showed couple a deacon's role

To the editor:

We never really knew or appreciated the role of a Deacon in the Catholic Church was until this summer. My husband was a patient for many weeks in Corning Hospital. There we met and grew to know Deacon Ray Defendorf. He not only gave us spiritual support, but physical and moral support also. We are not from the Corning area, so our parish priest could not attend to us, but Ray did all and more anyone could do. On Sunday morning, I would attend Mass either at Saint Patrick's or Saint Mary's. Ray's sermons were among the finest I've ever heard.

In time of great need, a priest is a great comfort. Because of the lack of priests, it isn't always possible to have this comfort. The ordination of deacons certainly fills such a void. Too bad the Church won't allow the elimination of the celibacy vows. A married priest is better than no priest at all. At least there are good and caring men like

Ray, who devotes his time and energy to help others. His goodness and faith are contagious. We were very fortunate to have him.

Mrs. John Stein
Hammondsport

Boycott opposes TV violence, sex, profanity

To the editor:

Christian Leaders for Responsible Television (CLEAR-TV) has called for a one-year boycott of the products of the Mennen company and Clorox Corporation.

CLEAR-TV identified the two companies as leading sponsors of sex, violence and profanity on television. CLEAR-TV officials had written all network advertisers — including Mennen and Clorox — asking that they please not sponsor programs with gratuitous sex, violence, profanity and anti-Christian stereotyping.

I am supporting the boycott. I urge others ... to join me ...

If Mennen and Clorox sales drop during

this time, then they will get the message, as will many other advertisers, that the American public demands an end to the exploitation of sex, violence, profanity and anti-Christian stereotyping by advertisers and the television networks.

If the boycott fails then the networks and advertisers will only assume that this is what Americans want and we can expect a continual exercise in abuse. Violence and vulgarity will prevail.

Is this what we as Christians want?

Mary Rita Crowe
East Main Street
Rochester

Legislators betrayed church teaching, board membership

To the editor:

The Monroe County Legislature recently voted to deprive parents of their right to be notified if their minor children request birth control devices or an abortion. That body also voted to use those parents' and other taxpayers' money to help Planned Parenthood provide those services.

The most scandalous aspect of this betrayal of families, however, is that two of the offending legislators are Catholics who sit on the Diocesan Board — Richard Dolinger and Joseph Morelle. The latter also sits on the Catholic Family Center Board.

It is hypocritical to sit on boards which represent the Roman Catholic Church in

our diocese and yet vote for bills that are contrary to its moral teaching. And why vote taxpayers' money for anti-family, anti-life Planned Parenthood when profamily, pro-life Birthright and Crisis Pregnancy Center are so much more morally deserving of our support?

We must not tolerate this hypocrisy to satisfy political ambitions. Legislators Dolinger and Morelle should be immediately removed from the Diocesan Board and the Catholic Family Center Board.

Mrs. Jean M. Lloyd
Glendale Park
Rochester



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1150 Buffalo Road • Rochester, New York 14624 • 716/328-4340

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