

Ithaca's proposed pro-choice boycott may backfire

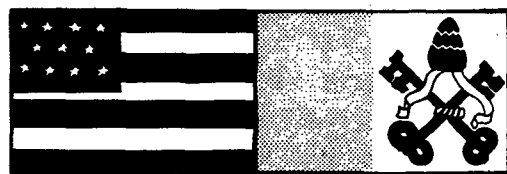
By Father Paul Cuddy
Courier columnist

Behold a dreadful news release headed "Ithaca Aldermen Approve Pro-choice Resolution."

The article reported on a vote by the Ithaca Common Council, guaranteeing a woman's right to an abortion and allowing the city to boycott companies that support anti-abortion groups. The vote by the council's Human Services committee was 3-2 in favor of the resolution, and it was going to be considered by the full council in early February.

The article went on to say that the original resolution was introduced by Ithaca Mayor Benjamin Nichols.

Hence this letter to the Ithaca Common



ON THE RIGHT SIDE

Council:

Someone sent me the newspaper article regarding your vote for abortion — and to allow a city boycott — directed against those who are doing what a City Council should be doing.

What should you be doing? Recently I made a sick call on Winnie Hodge of Lyons, N.Y. She is in her sixties, a suc-

cessful business woman, black, intelligent and the recipient of several awards for civic service in the village of Lyons. She narrated the following: "When my husband and I opened our seafood business in Lyons, a group of rowdy young men would hang around our store, drink beer out of cans, and intimidate potential customers."

"I complained to the village Council, and requested protection from these young hoods by enforcing the 'container law.' The container law forbids drinking alcohol from cans and bottles on the streets. The Council replied, 'We can't do anything about it. We don't have such a law in Lyons.'

"I replied with some heat: You are the village Council. You should be like a

father of a family, taking care of the citizens who elected you. They are your civic family. Why don't you have the law to protect your family? It took a while but finally a local ordinance was passed, and the rowdy crowd disappeared, thanks to the action of the Council."

While reading your "pro-choice" resolution, I thought to myself: The Ithaca Common Council is elected to be like the father of a family, to take care of the rights of the people of Ithaca. Now this "father" votes to guarantee as a right, the death of unborn children.

"Pro-choice" is an adroit word which really means "a woman can choose to give birth to a baby or give it a grisly death through knives and scissors, or burning through a saline solution."

I regret that I do not live in Ithaca where I would give my patronage to those whom you would boycott. I remembered a TV newscast recently which showed a rabid group of pro-abortion women — and a few peculiar men sprinkled in — screaming excitedly at customers at a Domino's Pizza Shop in California.

The reason they were doing this: The owner of the Domino's Pizza chain strongly supports pro-life with his good will and substantial cash contributions. I was so disgusted that — although I am not partial to pizza — I telephoned the Domino's Pizza place in Auburn, where I reside, and ordered a large pizza for delivery to our eight resident priests at St. Alphonsus rectory. May your proposed boycott have a similar boomerang effect.

Spiritual peaks lend strength for everyday valleys

By Father Albert Shamon
Courier columnist

Sunday readings: (R3) Matthew 17:1-9; (R1) Genesis 12:1-4; (R2) 2 Timothy 1:8-10.

We say that life begins at 40. For Abram, it began at 75. Did you ever ask a favor of someone and promise to repay it handsomely later on? Well, God did that for Abram. He said to Abram, "Go forth!" Abram did ("He went as the Lord directed").

Then God promised, "I'll bless you and those who bless you — all the communities of the earth."

In his letter to Timothy, St. Paul reinforces what the first reading tells us, namely, that God always takes the initiative in saving us. He called Abram.

And Paul writes that "God has saved us — He has called us, not because of any merits of ours, but according to His own plans, made before the world began." Though in prison at the time of his writing to Timothy, Paul is dauntless, because Jesus has "robbed death of its power and has made it clear what immortality is all about."

In the Gospel we see God still among us and calling us through His Son. Jesus takes His favored three up a mountain and lets the sun of His divinity shine through the cloud of His humanity. Moses and Elijah appear, symbolizing the Law and the Prophets, which Jesus has come to fulfill. They talk with Jesus about His passing over from death to life, thus robbing death of its power.

Peter blurts out, "Hey, I've got a great idea ..." A bright cloud, a symbol of the presence of the Father, cuts Peter's bright idea short. A voice says, "This is my beloved Son." Peter was right in confessing Jesus as Son of God. But the voice continued, "Listen to him." Peter was wrong in not listening to Jesus when He spoke about his death and resurrection.

As they go down the mountain, Jesus turns His thoughts to another mount — Calvary. "Tell no one of the vision, until the Son of Man rises from the dead." His death will end in resurrection, thus robbing death of its power.

San Diego is now the seventh largest city

in the United States. Many of its residents believe that it is big enough. So they have a bumper sticker which reads: "Enjoy San Diego. Then go home."

That too is the story of the Transfiguration: "Enjoy the vision. Then go home." Peter wanted to stay on the Mount. Jesus said, "Go down."

In the Christian life, there are two dimensions: the mount of vision and the valley of service. The mount is where we encounter God — at Mass and at prayers where we are refreshed and strengthened. The valley is the return to everyday life where, strengthened and refreshed, we go down to people to love and serve those who are hurting and in need.

Every Mass, every prayer should bring us closer to God. But we are brought closer to God in order to reach out to others. For, down in the valley of life, there are people who need our love and kindness and faith. They may be in the office or just passersby in the street. So after Mass, the priest says, "Go to love and serve the Lord." In other words, "enjoy the Mass, now go home." Leave the mount of vision to serve others in the vale of tears.

TV host Merv Griffin was interviewing Charlton Heston on his television program. Heston played Moses in "The Ten Commandments" and had starred in "Ben



A WORD FOR SUNDAY

Hur." Griffin asked Heston if any of the characters he had portrayed had changed his spiritual outlook. Heston thought for a moment, then simply said, "Well, Merv, you can't walk barefoot down Mount Sinai and be the same person you were when you went up."

An authentic mountaintop experience with Christ at Mass and prayer leaves us changed persons. These experiences open our eyes and help us see the world as God sees it — a world in need.

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