

Easter praise for extremists

As we celebrate Easter, the season of darkness and light, death and triumphant resurrection, take a moment to contemplate our local church in all its angry splendor.

Diocesan Catholics are fighting tooth and nail over the issues of Catholic school governance and planning.

Pro-choice and pro-life factions confront each other almost weekly on the front lines of the abortion battle and, less visibly, across conference tables as they search for some common ground.

Altar girls and artificial contraception are lightning rods for debates between traditional Catholics, who alternately plead for and demand faithfulness to the Holy Father, and liberals, who are equally implacable in defending their freedom to dissent from non-infallible teaching.

Our own editorial page is more often than not a site of combat among writers who passionately debate the merits of rescue missions, U.S. policy in Central America, women's ordination, priests' sabbaticals and, yes, even whether people who sneeze in church transmit disease while exchanging the sign of peace.

Perhaps only in our diocese would a member of Catholics United for the Faith paraphrase Father Charles Curran in support of an argument to grant permission for celebrating the Tridentine Mass — noting that Father Curran said the Catholic Church is

all about "and."

Our strength as a church has indeed been our ability to encompass the extremes at either end of "and" — grace and nature, faith and reason, authority and collegiality, Scripture and tradition. Catholics have somehow managed to make room in the same church for Mother Teresa and Father Andrew Greeley, CUF and the Women's Ordination Conference, Holy Rosary Parish and Corpus Christi Parish, and everyone who falls in between.

It would be easy to focus on the lack of charity, the narrowness and outright evil for which Catholics at both extremes of the ideological spectrum have been responsible during the past several months.

Instead, for just a moment, let's stop denying the right of those who disagree with us to call themselves "Catholic;" let's relinquish our own monopoly on truth and recognize our opponents for what they are — people who care deeply.

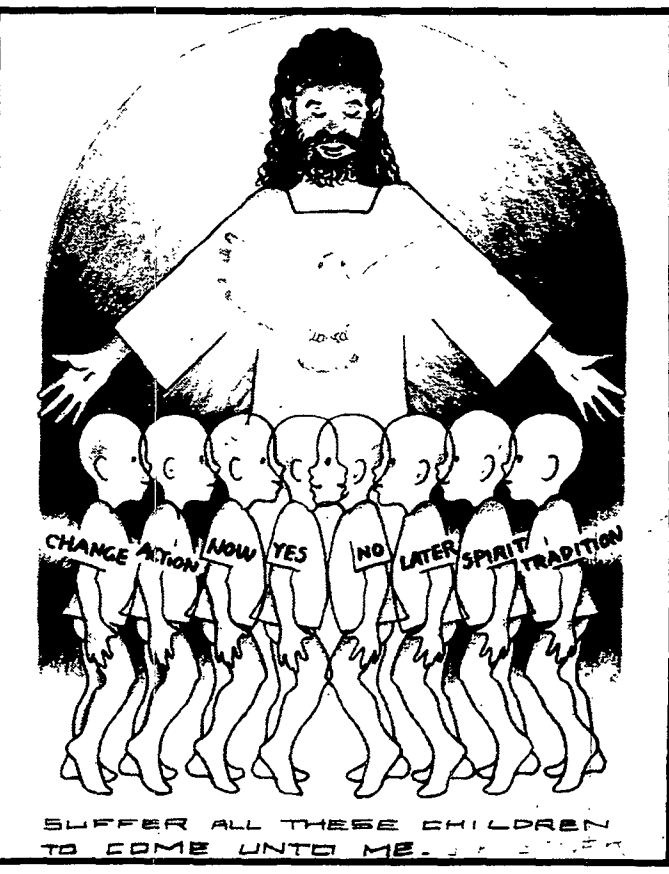
Let's thank God for those who attend meetings, protest and write letters, and raise their concerns again and again, even when it seems no one is listening.

Let's call an Easter truce and pray that despite the pain and incivility of most of our methods of discourse, each of us can focus on the truth we hold among us and that keeps us together.

Then, let the debates resume.

— The Editors

OUR VIEW



File photo

Violeta Chamorro, victor in the Feb. 25 presidential election in Nicaragua, hugs a supporter during her campaign.

Sandinistas should give democracy a chance

To the editor:

Reading the headline status given to the letter of John Milich on March 22, I was surprised and disappointed that this self-proclaimed socialist and apologist for communist aggression would merit such consideration in an allegedly Catholic newspaper.

Whining about the needs and suffering of the poor, Mr. Milich predictably attacked U.S. Central American policy.

It is evident though that despite Sandinista control of the media in Nicaragua, the opposition won because the people were tired of religious persecution, hunger, lack of freedom and forced service in the Sandinista military.

What happens now to the party of Violeta Chamorro depends on the San-

dinista losers who are reluctant to give up their power.

With billions of dollars worth of Soviet-made weapons the Sandinista army is larger and more powerful than all of the Central American armies combined.

It should be pointed out that during this Soviet-sponsored military buildup the poor were neglected by the Sandinistas. The Sandinistas, on the other hand, were well fed, drove Russian automobiles and lived in rent-free houses supposedly confiscated from the deposed Somoza government.

The election cry of the Sandinistas: *Todo será mejor* (everything will get better), will be a reality when the Sandinistas turn in their guns and give democracy a chance in Nicaragua.

Robert W. Bart Ithaca

Nicaragua's election marked loss for Sandinistas, liberation theology

To the editor:

Your newspaper is truly amazing! Your March 22 edition features two pictures on its front page: one of a Sandinista rally, and the other of Daniel Ortega. Yet the Sandinistas were soundly defeated by the people at the ballot box and Mr. Ortega repudiated. The name of the winner, Violeta Chamorro, was simply ignored. You featured the story of a Sandinista lady — Ann Rosa — who recited a litany of those killed under the Somoza regime. The least you could have done is share with your readers the fact that the Sandinistas oppressed the Church — expelling a bishop and several priests — and that, while the Sandinistas were holding their rally, the victors were in the Church celebrating a Mass of thanksgiving.

I can understand your chagrin. For

An unjust law allows abortion to claim babies

To the editor:

Karl Denninger's letter (CC: March 15) had just one sentence I felt required a response: "If I'm unhappy with the 35-mph speed limit on Lake Avenue, I don't try to get that law changed by driving through red lights." His point is that profilers are not breaking "unjust laws" when they break trespass laws to participate in a rescue.

The "unjust law" rescuers are breaking is not the abortion law, but the unjust application of the trespass law which makes it illegal for someone to protect a child in danger. To adjust Mr. Denninger's analogy to fit this situation, let us say that Lake Avenue has a lot of children who frequently get hit accidentally by passing

Who should aid schools?

To the editor:

One's age or position in life (childless or raised children) should not be a criterion for help in aiding less fortunate parishes in education. The ability to pay is what counts. This parallels our firemen, policemen, school teachers, etc., in regard to a decent wage. They are expected to be dedicated so as to keep our taxes from increasing.

I, too, wish we had 1933 prices with today's wages. What a utopia!

Thomas H. Dady
Brett Road
Rochester

years, you portrayed the Sandinistas as heroes. Liberation Theology — of which the Sandinista revolution was an experiment — lost the election too. Too bad for you, too bad for the Sandinistas. The people spoke, all you can do now is commiserate with each other at Buffalo Road and Corpus Christi. This year Nicaragua, next year El Salvador.

What kind of Catholic paper are you? What kind of Catholic diocese is this?

Jose I. Rodriguez
Bedford Street
Rochester

EDITOR'S NOTE: Much of the information you claim was missing from our front-page story on the Nicaraguan election was offered in earlier stories, including "Chamorro's upset win raises hopes of exiles," (CC: March 1, 1990).

cars. Mr. Denninger picks up a child who has been hit and rushes her in his car to the nearest hospital, speeding all the way. At this point, Mr. Denninger is breaking a just law. If a police officer pulled him over and arrested him for speeding, not letting him get help for this little girl, that would be an unjust application of the otherwise just law. This child will die in a matter of minutes if he obeys this (now unjust) law. Mr. Denninger would be perfectly justified in disobeying the officer and rescuing the child anyway. This is precisely the situation that rescuers are in. The babies rescuers try to save at abortion mills will die in a matter of minutes if the unjust law which says people cannot protect children slated for abortion is obeyed.

Amy Dorscheid
Aspen Drive
Rochester

Thanks for annulment edit

To the editor:

The "Our View" column of the March 1, 1990, issue of the *Catholic Courier* was excellent. I have frequently tried to explain the annulment process. Rarely have I done so with your brevity and completeness. I would like to duplicate this article for distribution among my parishioners. Thank you.

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