



CATHOLIC COURIER




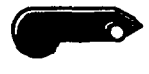


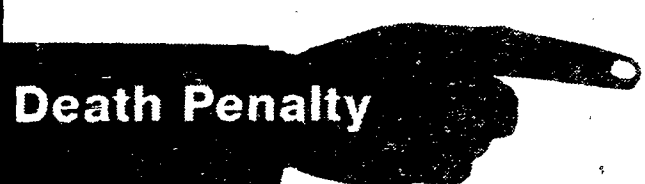





RESPECT LIFE SUPPLEMENT
Health care, abortion, the environment, the elderly and family life are among issues to consider during this Respect Life Month. Pages 1A-4A

Diocese of Rochester

Thursday, October 4, 1990

50¢

24 pages/2 sections

<p>A</p>  <p>Military</p>	 <p>Jack Smith</p>
<p>B</p>  <p>Social Welfare Cuts</p>	 <p>Sally Jones</p>
<p>C</p>  <p>Euthanasia</p>	 <p>Jim White</p>
<p>D</p>  <p>Death Penalty</p>	 <p>John Brown</p>
<p>E</p>  <p>Pro-abortion</p>	 <p>Jane Black</p>
<p>F</p>  <p>Consistent Life</p>	 <p>?</p>

All candidates listed above are fictitious.

Seamless garment poses vote question

Robert Cullivan
Staff writer

Bishop Matthew H. Clark probably never intended running for a state senate seat in 1988.

Yet the bishop garnered at least one vote in the unannounced campaign because of his adherence to the "seamless garment" banner. That banner espouses a consistent "pro-life" stance — opposing abortion, capital punishment, nuclear armament, poverty and anything else that threatens life.

The bishop's lonely constituent wrote the name Matthew Clark on his ballot because the voter was dissatisfied with the Democratic and Republican choices presented to him. For that voter — Ken Maher, director of the Catholic Family Center's Justice and Peace Department — only Bishop Clark stood for all the values a political candidate should encompass to be considered truly pro-life.

Unlike activists in the consistent-life-ethic movement who sometimes choose to vote for a candidate representing "the lesser of two evils" — pro-choice but anti-death penalty, for example, or pro-militarism but anti-abortion — Maher shuns compromise in the democratic process. In a two-way race between such candidates, Maher said he would rather write in a third name than vote for either official candidate.

"I would just be unhappy in conscience knowing I would be responsible for either of them getting into office," commented Maher, a member of the Seamless Garment Network, a nationwide organization of dozens of groups — half of whom are Catholic — that support the consistent life ethic.

The seamless garment or consistent-life ethic has been promulgated by activists — many of them Catholics — since the early 1970s, but did not receive broad public attention until a decade later when it was popularized by Chicago's Cardinal Joseph Bernardin.

In the early 1980s, the cardinal noted that nuclear weapons, capital punishment, euthanasia, poverty and abortion all rend the seamless garment of life that should cloak a society's civic order.

Few political guardians of that order could wear the seamless garment without snagging it on some edge of their legislative rigging. In fact, one might overstate the case somewhat by averring that conservative politicians only care about life while it is still in the womb, and liberals are only willing to help after that life emerges from the womb.

Maher recently moved to a western New

York congressional district that is the home of one of the few U.S. congressman generally acknowledged to care about human life throughout its development — Democratic Rep. John LaFalce. The congressman, first elected in 1974, has chalked up a voting record that often embodies the consistent life ethic.

During the current congressional term, for example, LaFalce voted for an increase in the minimum wage, against tax-exempt status for non-profit abortion clinics, and for the dismantling of Poseidon submarines.

He is one of 58 congressional candidates who enjoyed the endorsement this year of JustLife, a Philadelphia-based national consistent-life-ethic group founded by socially active Protestant evangelicals. A Catholic, LaFalce credited the church with helping him to form his seamless garment stance.

"I think the teachings of the church are correct with respect to poverty and economic justice," he said, adding, "I think they are correct with respect to just war. I think they are correct to abortion ..."

He went on to say that the church positions also "happen to be good public policy." Yet he said the Democratic Party, whose leadership has embraced the pro-choice ethos, could nonetheless make more room for politicians like himself.

"(The party's pro-choice activists) have

unfortunately almost made pro-choice a litmus test of the Democratic Party," LaFalce said, pointing out that "approximately one-third of the Democratic (representatives) vote against public funding of abortion."

Yet, LaFalce, who harbors no ambition for higher office, acknowledged the impact of pro-choice "peer pressure" on Democrats who do aspire to political advancement.

"Before Jesse Jackson was interested in the presidency, he viewed abortion as genocide," LaFalce recalled, alluding to Jackson's switch to a pro-choice stance when he ran for the Democratic nomination.

But adopting the consistent life ethic need not politically cripple a Democrat, LaFalce argued:

"I think there are a great many individuals who respect me tremendously because they know I'm a man of individual views. There are some people who are strictly party people," he said. "There are other people who you can't quite get a grip on, and I'm one of them."

LaFalce's comments point to the outstanding characteristic of seamless-garment propo-

Continued on page 11

'I think the teachings of the church are correct with respect to poverty and economic justice. I think they are correct with respect to just war. I think they are correct (with respect) to abortion...'

— U.S. Rep. John LaFalce

In both church and secular works, local sculptor Marie Cellura attempts to reveal the sacred through mundane objects and images.

8

McQuaid, Notre Dame, and DeSales, all fell from the unbeaten ranks in football action last weekend while Bishop Kearney lost to Aquinas.

12

Nazareth College lacrosse players learned the importance of helping the community after building houses as Habitat for Humanity volunteers.

14