

### Peaceful pageantry?

Assisted by her grandchildren Sam and Ellie LeBlong, first lady Barbara Bush puts a star atop the National Christmas Tree at the Ellipse in Washington, D.C., Nov. 30. The tree, part of the 1990 Pageant of Peace, will be lit by President and Mrs. Bush on Dec. 13.

## Write letters to leaders so war can be avoided

#### To the editors:

At this time when most U.S. policy makers are heavily invested in military funding and war rhetoric, how can an ordinary citizen reach the president, senators and congressmen with the message, "Bring our troops home. Alive!"?

"This is no Granada or Panama caper," the pastor of our church, a World War II veteran, wrote in the parish bulletin on Sunday, Armistice Day. His homily invoked the powers of prayer and letter-writing before its too late. Mindful of World War I, he said, "A small excuse might be all that's needed to plunge us into war again." Meanwhile, the U.S. Catholic Bishops, meeting in Washington, raised profound

questions about the precipitation of a Persian Gulf War. Their concern: innocent, non-combatant populations, densely populated areas and the principle of proportionality in the Just War Theory or Standard. The bishops called for a national debate.

Our veteran's cemeteries and hospitals, notably psychiatric, long have been overflowing. In barely a decade, our national debt has doubled, tripled and shall soon quadruple while we and our children and our children's children struggle to pay off past wars. Can we and our leaders evade the Savings and Loan crisis by going to war?

for this conclusion: if mankind and this planet - not only the Iraqi people and 400,000 U.S. troops — are to be spared chemical and nuclear devastation, we, the people of this country, must convince the president and Congress to stop plans for further invasion and withdraw from occupation of the Persian Gulf. A Middle East War would make Vietnam look like a backyard game of firecrackers by comparison.

As it is, tens of thousands of U.S. citizens - our fathers, sons, brothers and sisters - await dismemberment, incineration, burial in desert sands or having their bodies stuffed in body bags for efficient stacking aboard USAF cargo planes homeward bound.

The same letter of support or dissent that you write to the president also can go to the editor of the Courier or the daily or weekly newspaper. I mailed my concerns first to Mrs. Barbara Bush and made copies for the spouses of Secretary of State Baker, Senators Movnihan and D'Amato and Congressmen Horton, Houghton and McHugh, all of whom have constituencies in the Rochester Catholic Diocese.

I asked them top convey my plea to their husbands and thanked them with all my heart.

> Frank Carver **Cayuga Street** Trumansburg

Each passing day reveals new evidence

# Sexist' letters violate fairness and church teachings

#### To the editors:

A little over a year ago I wrote the Catholic Courier regarding its editorial policy. The policy states that only letters written in the "spirit of fair play" will be printed. After reading the letters from Dorothy Williams and John F. Starkweather (Catholic Courier, Nov. 29). I wonder once again what constitutes "fair play." I am especially concerned about

rational statements. In particular, I am compelled to raise the issue of discrimination against women when such letters are printed. One has to ask if letters exhibiting other forms of discrimination are printed as well?

The bottom line is that sexism is a sin which has oppressed women - and men for centuries. To print letters which lash

## Rules exist for displaying of flags

### To the editors:

We read the letter in the October 11 issue audience. The right side being the side of matory letters. There is not a hierarchy of Still, one person's enforcement of policy concerning the presence of the flag in the honor, in both cases. values when it comes to discrimination. At may well be someone else's censorship. Church. Unfortunately the November 1 Thus, whenever the potential for error ex-The incident in the Scriptures about a time when the oppression of women is in issue with response by Jerry Helfer Jesus, the Pharisees and the Roman coin the forefront in both church and society the ists, we choose to let that error fall on the Catholic Courier has a moral responsibility ("Flags symbolize 'divinely established' where they tried to catch Him did not work side of freedom of expression. as He told them to give to Caesar what is authority") was misplaced and we did not read it until this week. His response was Caesar's and to God what is God's, tells us Writer distorted image of sisters excellent. Here is a bit of information that about his feelings. Our belief based on some people do not know about. The in-Jesus' teaching above and elsewhere, are To the editors: structions regarding flying and placing the that we should obey our governments -work for the Lord and the Lord alone. Not American flag. If two flags are put on the City, County, State and National insofar as I take great offense at the letter from one sister is working for personal gratificathey do not interfere with our Christian Dorothy Williams (Nov. 29) about people tion. The Sisters share their gifts so many same pole, the American flag must be on who are supposedly disrupting our Roman ways to fulfill whatever people's needs are top. The exception in the rules is the Chrisbeliefs. Thus we believe it is appropriate to have both flags in the Church when they Catholic Church. First of all, dear TODAY. Every time I feel my Faith tian flag which is to be in the top position. Dorothy, "Judge not, least yea be On interior positions the rule for Churches are properly placed. weaken, it is a Sister who holds me up and judged." Lucille and Gordon Hollis is that the Christian flag is to be on the carries me along and shares my burden right side at the front of the sanctuary so **Rockview Terrace** Second of all, when you include the with me. Sisters - nuns - in this faith bashing long as it is not on the altar. On the altar it Rochester I don't know where you get your inforbusiness, my heart starts to pound and my mation, but get to know a Sister of St. blood pressure rises! For the last 10 years I Joseph or an Agregée and you might be have worked side by side with the Sisters writing a different letter to the editor in a Bishop Matthew H. Clark, President of St. Joseph in our Catholic Schools. The very short time. Sisters have allowed me to become a Sandra Schading Bishop Dennis W. Hickey, Gen. Mgr. "companion on the journey" of Faith with Lyceum Street Karen M. Franz, Editor/Asst. Gen. Mgr. them as an Agregée. The Sisters I know Geneva Boycott the TGA, but give to other charities Rochester, New York 14624 • 716/328-4340 1150 Buffalo Road To the editors: and decline in the national economy **Editorial Department:** organizations and charities more than ever. Now that we are in the middle of the Richard A. Kiley, Managing Editor (Thanks Giving Appeal) drive and many of need our support. Consider a direct con-Lee Strong, Staff Writer • Rob Cullivan, Staff Writer us are balking at supporting Bishop Clark's tribution to a food cupboard program, a and the Diocesan Organization. I fear that Barbara Ann Homick, Staff Writer daily bread fund or the charity of your this reaction to the Bishop and his methods choice. Babette G. Augustin, Photographer will adversely impact the amount of money You can still protest the Diocesan's ac-**Business Department:** available to support the many charitable tions however don't protest the cause of Mary E. Bittner, Office Manager 
Bernie Puglisi, Advertising Manager causes in the community. charity. Consider an alternative charity Jeanne A. Morin, Circulation Mgr. • Kathy Welsh, Ad. Account Executive May (we) suggest that instead of a zero rather than no contribution at all. **Production Department:** Karen and Ray Brecker contribution consider contributing directly **Culver Parkway** Lorraine Hennessey, Graphics Mgr. • MichaelFleckenstein, Graphic Artist to the charity or cause or your choice. With Rochester the rise in unemployment, rise in prices

is to be on the right side of those facing the

blatantly sexist. In printing the letters, the sin of sexism is perpetuated rather than discrimination elucidated for the general public. Other areas of discrimination are treated far differently in my estimation. For instance, would the Catholic Courier print a letter which is blatantly racist, anti-Semitic, pornographic or obscene? Most likely not. However, you continue to print letters which defame and demean women.

If you decry sexism in the same that you decry all other forms of discrimination, then it is time to stop printing such inflam-

a grave injustice which diminishes the life of both women and men. In the name of justice please re-evaluate your definition of ''fair play.''

#### Sandra Clark Arrington Sandringham Road Rochester

EDITORS' NOTE: We have no doubt but that we sometimes err in the application of the ''fair play'' clause of our Letters Policy, which was intended to protect individuals from deliberate misrepresentation and/or vicious personal attack.

Thursday, December 13, 1990

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