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Letters Policy

The *Catholic Courier* wishes to provide space for readers throughout the diocese to express opinions on all sides of the issues. We welcome all signed, original letters about current issues affecting church life.

Although we cannot publish every letter we receive, we seek, insofar as possible, to provide a balanced representation of expressed opinions and a variety of reflections on life in the church. We will choose letters for publication based on likely reader interest, timeliness and a sense of fair play. Our discerning readers may determine whether to agree or disagree with the opinions of the letter writers.

We reserve the right to edit all letters. Mail them to: *Catholic Courier*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, New York 14624. Please include your full name as well as telephone number and complete address for verification purposes.

Differing views on violence

Amid aggression, Jesus would fight to protect others

To the editors:

Regarding the alleged pacifism of Jesus: I'm not a New Testament scholar, but I have read it often enough to know that nowhere in the Gospels do we find an example telling us how we ought to respond when a third party is the object of aggression. Nowhere in the Gospels does Jesus confront such a situation.

There are two incidents which approximate such a condition; but neither really provides us with a guideline. The first incident is the well-known one where the woman taken in adultery is about to be stoned by a mob. How does Jesus act in her behalf? He disperses the crowd by the mere power of his presence and moral authority.

The second incident occurs when Jesus is being arrested. Peter draws his sword and lops off the ear of the High Priest's servant. In this case, the violence apparently happens too quickly for Jesus to take pre-emptive action. So, how does He act in behalf of the injured party? He heals the man's ear.

In the first case, Jesus takes pre-emp-

tive action before the attack takes place; in the second, He acts to heal after an attack is made. But, nowhere in the Gospels does Jesus come across an attack in progress.

What do you think He would have done, though, in behalf of, say, Rodney King had Jesus happened on the scene when the officers were clobbering him? Or in behalf of Reginald Denny when thugs were turning his face into bone-dust? Does anyone really think Jesus would have stood off at some nice safe distance and simply yelled out "Hey, Rodney — or Reggie — remember what I taught you: turn your other cheek"?

I'm sorry, I don't. The Jesus I believe in — the Jesus who chased an entire crowd out of the Temple with a mere whip made of ropes — would have picked up a rock or a stick; and if someone else on the scene had provided Him with it, He would have gone after the attackers with a shotgun. In fact, I believe He wouldn't have shrunk from using even deadly force if that's what it took to stop either of those beatings.

... Furthermore, I can't speak for anyone else; but I'm certainly not perfected enough in holiness to disperse a crowd of thugs by the mere power of my presence and moral authority...

... Maybe someday every one of us

Catholics will be that holy; but, in the meantime, I continue to rely on our military to safeguard this country, and our law enforcement officers to safeguard our neighborhoods...

Finally, those who oppose capital punishment and the notion of a just war — on the grounds that it "isn't the way of Jesus" — make the mistake of imagining the State as a metaphor for Jesus when He Himself is the target of aggression. That, indeed, is the Jesus who endures in silence and forgives them "for knowing not what they do."

But, if we're going to use religious metaphor at all, then we ought to see the State as a metaphor for "Jesus-in-the-thick-of-it." I'm sure He loves and forgives the officers who beat Rodney King as well as the thugs who beat Reginald Denny. But, in-the-thick-of-it, when the violence is in progress, His first concern is to stop the aggressors — at whatever cost to those aggressors.

That, as it turns out, is the legitimate role of the State which, because of Original Sin, will always be faced with aggressors and is, thus, always "in the thick of it."

Michael L. DeLorme
Park Avenue, Rochester

EDITORS' NOTE: This letter has been edited to comply with space limitations.

It's time to abandon the 'just-war' theory

To the editors:

The Spirit is indeed moving in our Diocese though it remains to be seen how the Synod process will effect its mysterious action.

There is a growing sense abroad that pastoral concern for the diocese demands a choice be made between "just war theory," the operative reality in the Church for the last 1,600 years, and non-violence, the now marginalized practice of our first 300 years. As the U.S. poises itself to enter yet another war and threatens to widen the war on the unborn, the choice needs to be made in terms even the simplest soul can understand.

Those who hold to non-violence are now saying with great urgency that Jesus presented us with a particular way. This is the way of non-violent love of especially enemies that became crystallized in the events of Holy Week. It is

central to an understanding of Jesus and the Eucharist. We say with anguish that the "sword" Jesus came to bring in Matthew 10:34 is not the sword that Peter tried to wield to protect the most innocent and just One from violence. Matthew's "sword" is one that clearly separates our two choices leaving only the non-violent option viable for those who would follow Jesus beyond Gethsemane.

Some would say that we should further pursue the quest for the "just war" because Christians must admit the possibility of ending some of the terrible evil in the world through government sponsored killing. This is to deny or ignore the example of many martyrs who resisted and suffered just such violence but refused to hate their enemies or join the army of the empire to hate its enemies. Thus the martyrs "... share his sufferings by reproducing the pattern of his death. That is the way I can hope to take my place in the resurrection of the dead" (Philippians 3:10-12).

It is easy to understand how rational-

ized war entered the church. Constantine delivered on ending the persecutions of Christians and even gave the Church a prominent place in his empire, though Christians were a small minority. Tricked into a devil's bargain! Those who would now like to see the Church opt out of the bargain might well expect renewed persecutions and loss of place in the "New World Order" as well as being labeled impractical and naive.

After all, the greatest violence of this century has been carried out by baptized Christians with such little resistance, or worse, from the Church. Such is the prerogative given to the government.

Now is certainly a time of conflagration, when Gandhi said inaction was inexcusable. Those who believe in non-violence must know that God has set aside some special part for them to play in renewing the Church in the image of Jesus. Let us try not to hold back when our time comes.

Mark Scibilia-Carber
Cold Springs Road, Trumansburg

Don't let PP destroy children of the inner city

To the editors:

I for one, am not surprised at Planned Parenthood's building an abortion clinic and its strategic location. For anyone who has read about Margaret Sanger, PP's founder, knows that it would be located on University Avenue inside the Innerloop, accessible to "inferior races," as she called the poor.

Sanger did not just target the poor. In her *Birth Control Review*, (12/21), she targeted any population of "human weeds" — Slavs, Latins, Hebrews — she targeted the weak, the deformed, the handicapped.

Sanger's eugenic goals were well known. Birth Control must ultimately lead to a "cleaner race." In 1933, her *Birth Control Review* included an article by the Director of Human Genetics under Hitler's Reich.

Planned Parenthood still touts this perverse woman in their brochure. The "Sanger Circle" are those prestigious members of the Rochester Community who give a hefty contribution. She liked

the rich, you see.

The United Way, which is raising money for this racist organization, may wish to know that Sanger said in her *Pivot of Civilization*, "The most insidiously injurious philanthropy" is the care given to poor women. The blind, deaf, and imprisoned were "dead weight of human waste."

Here's Margaret's version of choice: "Give dysgenic groups in our population their choice of segregation or sterilization."

In order to accomplish her "choice," Sanger's Birth Control Federation of America (Planned Parenthood's original name) began The Negro Project in 1939. Amazingly, Sanger was able to induce prominent Black clergy and doctors to help spread her message of "More children from the fit ... Less from the unfit" (BCR, 1919).

In a letter to The Negro Project's Director (Dec. 10, 1939), she writes, "The most successful education approach to the Negro is through the religious

appeal. We do not want the word to go out that we want to exterminate the Negro population, and the minister is the man who can straighten out that idea if it ever occurs to any of their more rebellious members."

That's why the "Negro Project" was undertaken only two months later in Nashville, Tenn., the home of Meharry Medical School where over half of all Black doctors in the country were trained. And even today, Sanger's influence reeks there: Nashville's abortions are done in a Planned Parenthood, funded as a member agency by United Way of Nashville, the only registered UW in the U.S. to do so. Rochester will be only the second, out of over 500 UWs.

Well, PP of Rochester, listen to one of those rebellious members now: You and United Way will not destroy our children. Not now. Not ever.

Lydia Jones
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