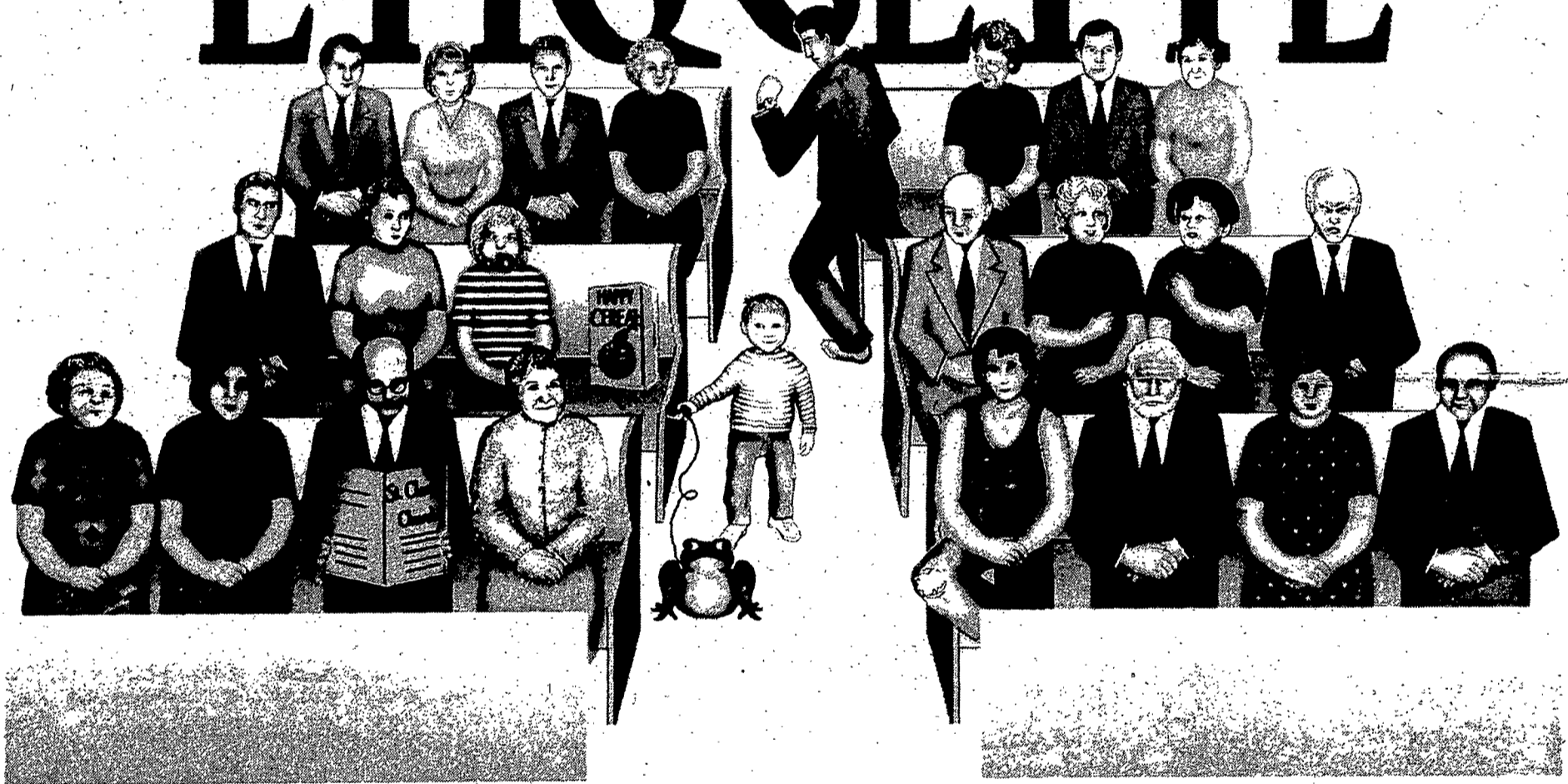




Catholic Courier

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Church ETIQUETTE



Actions can speak loudly

How annoyed do you become when worshippers do any of the following at Sunday Mass?

- Enter late and/or leave early.
- Chew gum.
- Continually whisper or talk to each other.
- Socialize in the worship area before and after Mass.

Margaret Ryan said these kinds of actions are so upsetting, they interfere with her ability to worship. At St. Mary of the Lake Church in Watkins Glen, she claimed, the incessant talking and laughing after the 10 a.m. Sunday Mass prevent her from focusing on her private prayers.

"There's too much noise in church. They've lost a sense of reverence," Ryan said. "It sounds like a dance hall."

Ryan went on to say that she has no issue with people who wish to socialize, "but they're in the wrong place." In addition, she said, she has witnessed several instances of children running down the aisles during Mass.

Yet Judy Shafer, who also attends St. Mary of the Lake, said she doesn't find this atmosphere at all disconcerting.

"These are God's people, whether they're young or old, or appropriate or not appropriate," Shafer said.

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Story by Mike Latona • Illustration by Linda Jeanne Rivers

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