

COLUMNISTS

Pre-emptive strike policy deserves our scrutiny

In his commencement address at West Point on Saturday, President Bush appeared to initiate a significant shift in U.S. strategy regarding terrorism. His words suggest movement toward a first-strike policy. He stated, "If we wait for threats to materialize, we will have waited too long." As one newspaper observed, "The president had not previously advised Americans 'to be ready for pre-emptive action, when necessary, to defend our liberty and to defend our lives.' Aides said that was a newly articulated component of his policy."

This is a new stance by our government, and surely deserves our scrutiny. We realize that we have come under attack and that there are individuals and groups who seek to harm us. We know that the type of threat we face is unprecedented in our history because our enemies remain anonymous and faceless, attack us by stealth, never openly confront us, do not inform us of their grievances and never openly declare war against us. Their "war theater" is not the battleground or military installations, but the city and civilians. Their weapons are not military tools of destruction, but domestic aircraft.

Our government has an obvious duty to protect its citizens. However, the rules that have governed conventional warfare seem out of step with the present circumstance.



the
moral
life

By PATRICIA SCHOELLES, SSJ

In the matter of pre-emptive strikes, considerable thought has sought to understand when this type of conduct is justified. Some reflection on this considerable body of material may help us to be better and more faithful citizens as we weigh the actions of our government in the days to come. We need to ask what acts count as threats serious enough to justify war? Clearly, it is not possible to supply a simple list of such actions, since every action takes its meaning from the context surrounding it.

Among behaviors rejected in the past as sufficient reasons to initiate a first strike are boastful rantings of political leaders, provocations and insults and military preparations entailed in an arms race. These political behaviors do not impose injury nor violate treaties or agreements,

and do not automatically or of themselves indicate the intent to make war.

In considering a more serious range of actions — such as troop mobilizations, border incursions, naval blockades or the formation of hostile military alliances — there has also been an effort to remain cautious. These actions may identify potential enemies, but moral consensus has consistently held that pre-emptive strikes may only be launched against states that are actively engaged in harming us.

A threat great enough to justify a first strike must meet some fairly restrictive criteria: evidence of a clear intent to injure, preparation of plans that entail a clear and positive danger, and a situation in which waiting, or employing means other than fighting, will magnify the risk.

Most important in weighing threats is a clear emphasis on the present, that is, on a time span in which we are capable of making choices. A nation cannot engage in a first strike because of previous signs of warmongering or previous attack. Current and obvious signs of imminent danger are necessary. Actual preparations for attack must be under way, not just vague threats or unidentified activities in the direction of harm. The present danger must be intensifying in intolerable ways.

Though the present situation makes

new demands on us and the old rules probably won't fit, some past moral wisdom will help us sort out our present situation. Michael Walzer's formula for analyzing the justification of a first strike is: "States may use military force in the face of threats of war, whenever the failure to do so would seriously risk their territorial integrity or political independence."

I certainly don't know what members of the current administration know regarding the seven or so countries they have named as potential threats. Political leaders must make judgments and citizens ought not to uniformly condemn these.

We are under grave responsibility now, however, to weigh our own potential for evil in the days ahead, a responsibility intensified because of our status as the world's only superpower. There is no countervailing force to hold us in check. It is intensified as well by the potential for our actions to take on the appearance and character of aggression. If that becomes, or even is perceived to be, our mode of operation, we will be guilty of moral culpability. Moreover, our actions in the name of peace will surely come back to haunt us in the years ahead.

Sister Schoelles is president of St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry.

Valid reasons exist for a celibate priesthood

10th Sunday of the Year (June 9): (R3) Matthew 9:9-13; (R1) Hosea 6:3-6; (R2) Romans 4:18-25.

Today in the discussion on the priesthood, we often see specious solutions offered. One is that if celibacy were removed, we'd have more vocations to the priesthood and less defections."

Of course, this is a specious and groundless solution.

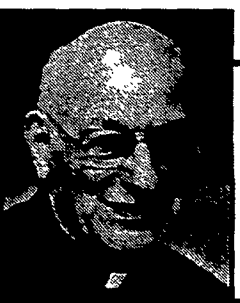
The celibacy controversy is not something new in the church. It has been around since the Council of Elvira in A.D. 306. Three Lateran Councils — the Councils of Vienne, Constance, Florence, Trent — all have discussed it and reaffirmed celibacy in the Latin Church.

The Second Vatican Council championed celibacy for the West in its Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests (No. 16). Then canon law renewed that commitment to celibacy (Canon 277).

The celibacy controversy probably won't die because there is no essential, inherent connection between celibacy and priesthood, as the ancient practice of a married clergy in Eastern churches attests.

The first reason for celibacy is christological: the priest is another Christ and Christ was celibate.

A second reason is ecclesiological. To



a word
for
sunday

By FATHER ALBERT SHAMON

priests is entrusted the task of upbuilding the church by word, worship and witness. Celibacy makes for greater pastoral availability (1 Cor 7:32). One is free "from" in order to be free "for." The celibate priest renounces marriage because he wants to employ all his spiritual, moral, intellectual, psychological and physical energies for Christ and for the church. Ghandi, at 31, with the consent of his wife, became celibate. "I wanted to devote myself to the service of mankind, so I had to retire from household cares."

Thirdly, celibacy is eschatological, that is, it is meant to be a sacred sign reminding people that we do not have here a lasting city, but look for one that is to come (Heb 13:14). The Roman collar should be a reminder to people of a life

beyond this life where the resurrected "neither marry nor are given in marriage" (Matt 22:30).

Jesus recommended celibacy (Matt 19:12). He promised great rewards to those who practiced it (Luke 18:28-30). Ghandi once said, that "Because of clerical celibacy, the Roman Catholic Church will remain eternally young."

Celibacy is a special gift of God, given to a candidate for priesthood. Only persons so gifted does the church consider for ordination. She does not ordain a person and then ask for celibacy.

The contemporary world finds it difficult to understand the gift of celibacy, because egoism and materialism often make man less sensitive to understanding the authentic values of life.

Celibacy is not a put down of marriage. Comparisons are odious. To argue about celibacy and marriage is like arguing about which leg is better: the right or the left. Both are needed. St. Thomas More and St. John Fisher are, respectively, classic examples of high sanctity in marriage and in the priestly state.

Society needs good marriages and good priests. We can get these by understanding what these two great states of life are and praying to God to give us

good marriages and good priests.

I have been a priest for more than 62 years, and I cannot thank God enough for so great a vocation. Pray for me and for all priests that God will bless us and give vocations to our youth.

Father Shamon is administrator of St. Isaac Jogues Chapel, Fleming.

Daily Readings

Monday, June 10

1 Kings 17:1-6; Psalms 121:1-8;

Matthew 5:1-12

Tuesday, June 11

Acts 11:21B-26, 13:1-3;

Psalms 98:1-6; Matthew 5:13-16

Wednesday, June 12

1 Kings 18:20-39; Psalms 16:1-2, 4-5,

8, 11; Matthew 5:17-19

Thursday, June 13

1 Kings 18:41-46; Psalms 65:10-13;

Matthew 5:20-26

Friday, June 14

1 Kings 19:9A, 11-16; Psalms 27:7-9,

13-14; Matthew 5:27-32

Saturday, June 15

1 Kings 19:19-21; Psalms 16:1-2,

5, 7-10; Matthew 5:33-37

Holl's Inn

"An Old-Fashioned Summer Family Resort"

Since 1935 • 68th Season

- The Family Resort on Fourth Lake
- Open June 30 thru Labor Day
- Swimming, Boating on premises
- Golfing nearby
- Rates from \$65-\$160 per day/per person (includes 3 meals daily)
- Weekly and Family Rates, as well
- All rooms with private baths
- New! Housekeeping Cottages

Located in the Central Adirondacks

(65 miles north of exit 31, Utica, NY)

Preseason: 315-733-2748

Summer: 315-357-2941

S. Shore Rd. • PO Box 417 • Inlet, NY 13360

www.hollsin.com



Mr. Dominic's

Smoke-free, dining room
(off street parking available)

FATHER'S DAY
Sunday June 16th
Serving 3-9 p.m.

Delicious appetizers, soups,
veal dishes, vegetarian,
chicken, fish, and homemade pasta

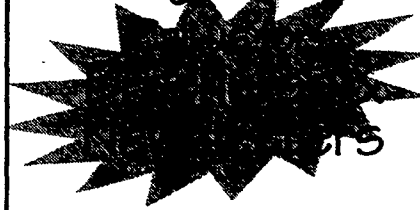
10% SENIOR DISCOUNT
ON REGULAR PRICED
DINNERS WITH THIS AD!



Lunch: Tues.-Fri. 11-2
Dinners Daily
from 4:00-9 p.m.

4699 Lake Ave.
(585) 865-4630
www.mrdominics.com

Looking for Quality Printing?



Through a special arrangement between Wayuga Press and the Catholic Courier Graphics Department, you can now get quality, affordable typesetting and printing.

Give us a call for your next job!

COURIER GRAPHICS • 716-328-4340

WAYUGA PRESS • 315-754-6229

WE NEED TO LAUGH!

If "LAUGHTER IS THE BEST MEDICINE"... she provides a healthy dose!

REVEREND MOTHER...

Innovative...

Hilarious...

Unique



Phyl Contestable of "Nonsense" fame makes house calls. She'll crash the party, wedding, bar mitzvah, birthday, reunion, anniversary, retirement ... any special occasion - a ROAST they'll long remember

CALL 585-442-4363 NOW!

To Reserve Reverend Mother

Last minute/long range events
revmotogo@aol.com