

Rocky Mountain High in Denver

The recent papal visit to Denver gave the phrase “Rocky Mountain high” a whole new meaning for the hundreds of thousands of participants and the millions more who followed the event on TV.

The “aftershocks” have reverberated through the media for well over a month and have made for some very interesting reading.

Denver area reporters seemed to be in awe of the young people who attended. In the wake of gang violence and a rash of murders this past summer, our smiling young Catholics must have been a breath of fresh air. The media couldn’t seem to say enough in praise of the youthful exuberance and genuine Christian charity exhibited by these young people.

New York Times Religion editor Peter Steinfels wrote an especially good reflective piece on the aftermath of the papal visit. On Sunday, August 15, the *Times* published a major excerpt from a new book taking liberals and the liberal media to task for their disdain of religious beliefs.

Our thanks goes to the many members who sent in clippings of local coverage. An extra big thank you goes to Dr. James J. Martin of Colorado Springs who sent every article about WYD which appeared in the Denver area print media.

Crime in the Denver area plummeted and dire predictions of massive traffic jams and other disruptions failed to materialize.

Some members of the fourth estate – many of them well after the fact – took their colleagues to task for negative reporting and ill-disguised efforts to seek out “dissident Catholics” in order to satisfy their own preconceptions about the Church and Catholics.

The electronic media in particular paraded out whatever garbage they happened to have “in the can” for the occasion. *60-Minutes* rebroadcast a tawdry piece on pedophilia. Catholic League president Bill Donohue dropped them a note and asked sarcastically if the broadcast was just a coincidence.

Proposition 174

On Nov. 2, the country will be watching intently as Californians go to the polls to decide whether or not to embrace education vouchers.

Proposition 174, the Parental Choice in Education Initiative, would require the state to provide a voucher for \$2,600 per year to students wishing to transfer out of the public-school system to help defray the costs of private school education.

Under the terms of 174, for the first three years only, students transferring from public to private schools would be eligible for vouchers; after that, vouchers would be available to new students wishing to enroll in private schools.

Proponents of 174 contend that its passage would allow parents to exercise choice in the matter of educating their children while saving the state money. Some people, though, have expressed concern that once federal money is used for private education, federal control of private schools will follow.

The Wanderer reports that the Catholic bishops of California have not taken an official stand on the initiative because they do not consider themselves experts in this matter. The bishops are encouraging parents to discuss the issue and a video explaining 174's details has been circulated.

According to *The Wanderer*, the NEA and the California Teachers' Association are engaged in an all-out effort to defeat the initiative which, if passed, would make significant inroads into the public education monopoly.

Proposition 174 is supported by business leaders who are dismayed by the large numbers of poorly educated young people entering the work force. Echoing these concerns, former California Governor George Deukmejian endorsed school choice as "our best hope for substantially improving the quality of education for all children in California."

It is likely that even if proposition 174 passes, it will be subject to constitutional challenges which will delay its implementation.

National columnists back Parental Choice in Education

California vote gets national attention

George F. Will (*Chicago Sun Times*) and Stephen Chapman (*Chicago Tribune*) have come out strongly in favor of proposition 174. Pointing out that private schools often show better results than public schools while spending less money per pupil, Will maintains that as more students use vouchers to attend private schools, the state will save money. Will characterizes the frantic efforts of the NEA and the California Teachers' Association to defeat proposition 174 as spreading "hysteria" about the so-called evil of parental choice. Many of the people who oppose educational choice (for example the Clintons) send their own children to private schools.

Chapman urges Californians to reply “It’s about time” to critics of proposition 174 who warn that its passage will sound the death knell of public education as we know it. Because proposition 174 is about rewarding success and punishing failure, Chapman agrees that it may pose a threat to many California schools which are unfamiliar with success. The alternative to proposition 174, says Chapman, “is to go on subsidizing failure, which is a sure way to get more of it.”

Puerto Rico experiments with parental choice

Meanwhile, on September 3, Puerto Rico’s governor Rossello signed into law legislation creating an education voucher program. Framing the matter in terms of good schools versus bad schools, rather than private schools versus public schools, the governor said that families would now have the power to determine which was which.

According to *The San Juan Star*, the new law, called the Special Scholarships and Free School Selection Program, gives students the option of choosing which public school to attend or to attend a private school. On the other hand, private school students are encouraged to attend public schools, and the law offers high school students a chance to take university-level courses. The vouchers are limited to \$1,500.00 for each child, with the estimated cost of attending private schools set at \$1,000.00 to \$1,500.00 per student.

FOCA dead; “access” bill lives

They’re not saying it very loudly, but supporters of the Freedom of Choice Act are privately conceding that the bill is

dead for this session of Congress and perhaps mortally wounded.

Another piece of legislation, tagged the “clinic access bill,” is alive and well, however, and would make it a Federal crime to block abortion clinics or threaten or kill abortion providers. The access bill has a strong likelihood of passage and has taken on “front burner” status for the pro-choice camp.

While all segments of the pro-life movement united to kill FOCA, the movement is sharply divided on the propriety of clinic demonstrations and all but a lunatic fringe few would not condemn threats against or the killing of abortion providers.

While there have always been serious questions raised about the propriety and effectiveness of clinic demonstrations, the Catholic League has entered the legal arena on more than one occasion to defend the *free speech rights* of pro-life demonstrators.

The Hyde amendment, which has restricted federal payment for abortions since 1977, is also a likely target for challenge next year, but given its overwhelming passage this year, those who would seek to eliminate it or reduce its impact face the prospect of bloody congressional infighting.

Vermont printers' case drags on

A Vermont judge has denied a defense motion, refusing to throw out the case against Chuck and Susan Baker, Catholic owners of

a printing business who were sued by the ACLU when they refused to print membership materials for Catholics for Free Choice, a pro-abortion group.

The ACLU claimed that the Bakers' refusal to print the job violated a state antidiscrimination law and filed suit seeking an injunction which would force the Bakers to print the objectionable materials and an award of attorney fees.

The Bakers argued at a hearing in March that their refusal to print the membership cards was not an act of discrimination, but rather a matter of principle because they would not have printed pro-abortion materials for anyone, "whether 'Catholics for Choice' or 'Jews for Choice' or 'Protestants for Choice.'"

Unfortunately, the court did not accept the Bakers' argument and refused to dismiss the case. By denying the Baker's motion for summary judgment, the court has paved the way for the matter to go to trial. A trial date has not yet been set.

The Bakers have been represented in their ordeal by Dan Lynch, a local attorney; the Catholic League, Free Speech Advocates, Christian Advocates Serving Evangelism and the American Center for Law and Justice have joined in the Bakers' defense.

On August 22, in a broadcast debate with Massachusetts executive director Joe Doyle, Frances Kissling, president of Catholics for Free Choice, admitted that her organization was "not a membership organization." In light of that public admission one might ask just what the Bakers were supposed to print.

League rips mass disruption by gays

Responding to the disruption of a Mass being celebrated by Bishop Thomas V. Daily at St. James Cathedral in Brooklyn by members of the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project, Catholic League President Bill Donohue quickly issued a news release condemning the actions of the demonstrators.

According to *The Tablet*, 29 demonstrators who were protesting Bishop Daily's recent pastoral letter on homosexuality came to the bishop's regularly scheduled Mass. They stood up at the beginning of the Bishop's homily and turned their backs to the altar. The protestors left mass during the recitation of the creed and remained outside of the church where they spoke to members of the press. Spokespersons for the group asserted that Bishop Daily's statement that homosexuality is "a strong tendency ordered toward an intrinsic moral evil," would encourage violence against homosexuals. The bishops letter simply restated church teaching and included the statement that homosexuals are "always worthy of the church's care and love."

In his statement, Catholic League president Bill Donohue denounced the disruptive tactics of the demonstrators. "Those who differ with the teachings of the Catholic Church, on any matter," Donohue said, "have many legitimate avenues of discourse available to them. Not among them, however, is the disruption of the holy sacrifice of the Mass. There is no right to trespass on the right of Americans to exercise their First Amendment freedom of religion."

CHAPTER NEWS

Chicago Chapter

The chapter hosted League president Bill Donohue at its August advisory board meeting.

While in town Donohue was interviewed by the *New World* (Archdiocese of Chicago) and the *Northwest Indiana Catholic* (diocese of Gary).

Effective October 1, the chapter office and executive director Tom O'Connell (A.K.A. *Midwest Regional Director* O'Connell!) will be relocating to a new office. Please make a note of the office address and new phone number. Easy access to public transportation and parking make this new location a winner. Anyone with clerical or computer skills interested in volunteering a few hours on a regular basis should contact Tom O'Connell.

The chapter has once again obtained two round-trip tickets to Warsaw, Poland compliments of LOT, the Polish national airline. Area members can shortly expect to be offered an opportunity to purchase chances to win this great trip.

The chapter is launching a major parish-based recruitment drive. If you can be of help, call Tom O'Connell at his new office. The goal is to more than double chapter membership over the next year.

California Chapter

The chapter is gearing up for a visit from League president Bill Donohue who will address its annual dinner on Friday, October 22. Several meetings and media appearances are being scheduled around Donohue's visit.

An IBM employee upset at his company's support of ACT-UP has obtained copies of "Stop The Church" from the League

office and hopes to educate corporate officials as to the true character of that organization.

Both the chapter office and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles Public Affairs office have taken KFI Radio to task for promotional pieces seeming to imply that Michael Jackson and all Catholic priests are sexual deviants. The pre-recorded spots promoted the station's "Tammy Bruce Show."

Massachusetts Chapter

The chapter is pleased to announce that Fr. James M. DePerri, parochial vicar of St. Agnes Church in Arlington, and an enthusiastic League supporter, has accepted appointment as chapter chaplain.

Catholic League president Bill Donohue will be visiting with the chapter leadership in early October.

The Rutherford Institute will be filing an amicus brief in support of the South Boston Allied War Veterans, embattled sponsors of the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade which has been marred in recent years by the forced inclusion of gay and lesbian marchers.

Washington, D.C. Chapter

Chapter executive director Dr. Patrick Riley has moved back to Wauwatosa, Wisconsin where he will continue writing for League publications and serve as Director of Research for the League.

The chapter is being restructured on a volunteer basis. Watch this newsletter for further developments.

Long Island Chapter

Invitations have gone out to more than 1,800 members and friends of the Catholic League for this year's Awards Dinner-Dance on Saturday, October 16 at the Powell Council Knights of Columbus hall.

Brother Syriac reports that the Chaminade High School chapter has 65 members this year.

The Write Stuff...

NEW YORK NEWSDAY

9/8/93

I read with amusement Gabriel Rotella's Cityscape column, "Catholic Bashing: The Cry of Cowards." As president of the nation's largest Catholic civil rights organization

... I can assure Rotella that the Catholic League does not object to criticism of the Catholic Church. But that doesn't mean that we don't object when militant gays disrupt a mass.

And for the record, the disruption of a church service by gays has not been limited to one occurrence at St. Patrick's. Indeed, gays disrupted a mass said by Bishop Daily on Aug. 29, fully three days before Mr. Rotella's piece appeared. In short, his piece was as erroneous as it was embarrassing.

-William A. Donohue

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

9/5/93

Once again I must ask the editors of the *Tribune* to look inward toward what appears to be the continued bashing of Catholics. I speak of the cartoon depicting the pope ... presiding over a church that is out of control. The cartoon was so offensive that our office received a barrage of phone calls voicing disapproval of the cartoon. To be ridiculed by

Rob Rogers, a cartoonist for a Pittsburgh paper, is injury upon insult. The interesting part of this cartoon is that it continues to lampoon the Holy Father rather than salute his efforts to bring the youth of the world his message of peace. A cartoon of ridicule that portrayed the Jewish hierarchy or African-American leadership in the same vein would result in justified outrage. Please consider the way you choose to show the Catholic faith and its leaders. In our opinion, the manner in which you have addressed this issue is ridiculous.

– Tom O’Connell

Mid-west Regional Director

BOSTON GLOBE

9/16/93

It is sad and petty, and rather vindictive, that on the happy occasion of the pope’s visit to the United States, a major newspaper serving a largely Catholic community could not resist the temptation to deliver a slap at the Catholic Church. (“The pope’s catholic church,” Aug. 12 editorial).

The Globe’s assertion that the Catholic Church was last officially recognized in Mexico when it was allegedly “the ally of dictators and landowners,” is not only gratuitously offensive but historically inaccurate.

The Holy See last enjoyed diplomatic recognition from Mexico in 1865 during the liberal and somewhat anticlerical monarchy of Maximilian. Most of the dictators in Mexico’s history have been violent persecutors of the church.

It is unfortunate that the Globe chose to repeat a piece of anti-Catholic propaganda that has been used to justify repression against the Catholic Church in Mexico. One might not unreasonably infer that the editorial writer views the Catholic Church as an ideological opponent to be relentlessly attacked, no matter how remote the pretext or how inappropriate the occasion.

– *Daniel T. Flatley*
President, Massachusetts Chapter

PITTSBURGH POST-GAZETTE
8/22/93

Whether Rob Rogers is just another anti-Catholic bigot working in the media or someone who hasn't evolved from adolescence, I do not know. But his cartoon portraying Pope John Paul II as presiding over a church that is out of control was so offensive that I received a barrage of phone calls from Pittsburgh Catholics.

The cartoon also misrepresents the level of dissension within the church. Most Catholics are no more prepared to abandon their church today than they were in the past. Indeed, as a proportion of the population, Catholics have actually gained ground in the last few decades, making suspect the charge that the pope is presiding over a recalcitrant flock.

If church enrollment is up, and if the most orthodox seminaries are registering the largest increases, it suggests that Mr. Rogers does indeed have something to worry about. That's right – we're here, we're everywhere and most important, we're not going to take it anymore.

– *William A. Donohue*

BOSTON HERALD
9/21/93

Margery Eagan persists in giving theological advice to a religion she neither comprehends nor believes in ("Annulment flap points up flaw in church doctrine," Sept. 9).

Eagan's assertion that the Catholic Church should recognize divorce is just one more example of her willingness to exploit any opportunity, even the tragedy of a broken marriage, to pursue her relentless ideological vendetta against the church.

The church's defense of the sanctity of marriage is not rooted in policy or politics, but in the words of Jesus Christ: "What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." It is a teaching that is 2,000 years old, and it is not likely to be changed because some disaffected ex-Catholics in the feminist subculture find it objectionable.

Within the United States there are nine major Protestant denominations, unions of the Reform, Conservative and Orthodox jews, and 14 Eastern Orthodox churches.

It would be a refreshing exercise in diversity if we could hear Eagan express her views on a religious body other than the Catholic Church for a change.

Daniel T. Flatley

President, Massachusetts Chapter