

Pope's view on women priests less than heavenly

Being the foremost religious leader in the world, you would expect Pope John Paul II to be a reasonably fair guy.

While the rest of the world races closer and closer to the 21st century, the Vatican progresses so sluggishly that if it were moving any slower, it would be going backward.

Sister Teresa Kane, the American nun who publicly challenged the pope about this issue during his 1979 U.S. visit, said, "We cannot as women have access to decision-making without ordination."

And, clearly, Sister Kane is right. The Vatican's refusal to allow women to advance and progress into leadership positions within the Church is a gross example of sexism.

In a 116-page document titled "On the Dignity and Vocation of Women," the pope's reasoning contains so many

inconsistencies that the paper is virtually invalid as an argument.

Consider these points made by the pontiff:

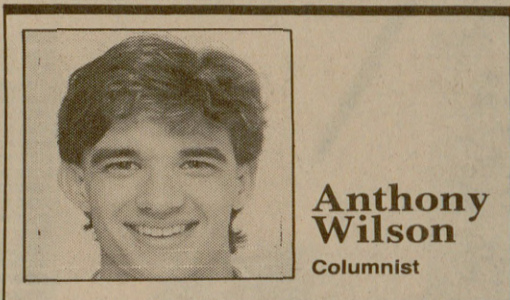
The pope pointed out that Christ called only men to be his apostles. Although the inclusion of women would have been socially taboo, Christ never conformed to social norms, meaning he specifically chose men for a reason.

The apostles are definitely central figures in Christianity, but women's roles in the Bible should never be understated. After all, within the Catholic religion, the Virgin Mary is a strong focal figure.

The pope readily admits that the achievements of Christian women have had a significant impact on the life of the church as well as of society. In fact, he conferred sainthood on an 18th-century Italian woman Oct. 3.

If Pope John Paul II recognizes women's achievements enough to canonize one, why won't he let them advance, continue to grow in responsibility and make more of an impact within the Church?

Holy Communion was directed to the 12 disciples at the Last Supper. "This is clear and unambiguous when



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the sacramental ministry of the Eucharist, in which a priest acts in persona Christi (as Christ), is performed by a man," the pontiff said.

True, not only was it only men who broke the bread and prepared the wine, but it was also only men who received it, because no women were present.

John Paul II said that men and women share equal dignity because "both were created in the image and likeness of the personal God."

This statement seems to imply that both sexes share the same God-like qualities without many, if any, differences. And if this is true, then it shoots down his male apostle argument because Christ could just as easily chosen all women to be his disciples.

The pontiff said there is an "essential richness" in femininity.

Certainly, no one would argue this,

just as no one would argue that there is an essential richness in masculinity. But the pope goes on in his article to describe the special relationship women share with the people with whom they come in contact because of their femininity.

Because the priesthood involves a great deal of personal counseling, these qualities are unquestionably conducive gifts to helping troubled people. Many parishes allow nuns to do counseling, but none allow them to hear confessions.

The pope said women were correct to reject the biblical passage "he (man) shall rule over you."

Is not the pope a man? And is he not ruling over women by not allowing them to pursue a career that obviously means a lot to them? This is a huge contradiction.

Lastly, the Church argued that the exclusion of women from the priesthood is part of the it's permanent teachings.

Although this is one of the Catholic Church's permanent teachings, one Cardinal admitted in a Dallas Morning News article that there is no infallible definition regarding the ban of women priests. When I read this, the first thing

I thought of was when I was young, my parents refused to let me do something with the "Because I said so" mentality.

Although just as many Catholics as the ban as who do not, you have to wonder about the supporters' reasoning. Religious teachings have always been something most people accept unquestioningly. But ask those same people whether women should be treated in the same manner in other areas — business, politics and education, for example, and you'd probably be greeted with a resounding "NO!"

When Gen. Earl Rudder admitted women into Texas A&M in 1963, he protested with "Because it's always been that way!" as their only ammunition. That line of reasoning was as weak as it is now. Rudder realized the progress times demanded the change. The Catholic Church should do the same.

Women have so much more to offer the Church. As Sister Mariana Wood, Houston said in a Houston Chronicle account of the issue, "It's a seeming contradiction to talk about sexual equality but to continue to deny full ministry to the church on the basis of sexuality. The real question is ministry and the use of the gifts God has given people regardless of gender."

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Mail Call

ACLU caters only to Constitution

EDITOR: It is apparent from Mark Shipman's letter in defense of Bush's ACLU-bashing that both he and Bush have entirely missed the point of this organization.

The ACLU will come to the aid of any group whose constitutional rights are under attack. It is currently defending the fifth amendment rights of two Reagan sidekicks, Lyn Nofziger and Oliver North, and in 1977 it risked losing a huge percentage of its members when it defended the constitutional right of the right-wing Nazis to march in Skokie, Ill.

Many prominent conservatives, including Dwight D. Eisenhower, have been card-carrying members. (Was Ike "soft on crime"?) Attorney General Richard Thornburgh was a chapter leader who helped set the ACLU's policy.

Even so, Mike Dukakis opposes the ACLU on many items, including church tax exemptions and pornography. In fact, the Massachusetts ACLU went so far as to sue Dukakis for supporting a bill which would give criminals longer prison terms.

In any case, the ACLU does not engage in party politics. Its only act is defense of the Constitution. But since many government officials have lately seen fit to ignore the Constitution, let us bring this argument down to the intellectual level of the average Republican by asking the simple and patriotic question, "Would the founding fathers of this nation support the ACLU today?" The answer is yes.

Our founding fathers would undoubtedly have been card-carrying members of the ACLU, an organization designed to uphold and protect their own Constitution. And they, like the ACLU, would agree with George Bush on one item — that extremism in the defense of liberty is no vice.

Melanie Shouse '90

SAA stereotyping uncalled for

EDITOR: How ironic it seems that the self-appointed Moral Majority should brand Students Against Apartheid a "left-wing fringe group." I was offended by the blatant narrow-mindedness and stereotyping employed by Scot Kibbe and 11 others whose insecurity leads them to imply that SAA threatens baseball, Mom and apple pie.

First of all, according to every available reasonably unbiased poll and survey, Chief Buthelezi, while chief of a large group of blacks in South Africa, is not well-respected by South African blacks, who regard him as a tool of the conservative white South Africans. The fact remains that the most respected black leaders, including Nobel-prize winner Desmond Tutu and Nelson Mandela, have been pleading for Western sanctions for years.

Second, SAA cares deeply for this campus, but our love of A&M transcends brick and mortar. The role of the shanty lies in encouraging students to question apartheid and other worldly matters. Correct me if I'm wrong, but isn't the purpose of a college education to better understand this wonderful world the Lord created, and when problems arise to intelligently deal with them?

Also, the label of flag burners is way out of line. How dare Kibbe slur every member of SAA with this derogatory characterization. The group is interested in the anti-apartheid cause not out of self-righteousness, but because it remains a blatant system of legalized racism that our country supports economically and militarily.

Finally, this type of right-wing extremism threatens us all, because it serves to constantly and incessantly give heat to the fires of apartheid and prejudice in both South Africa and the United States.

David Luckenbach '91

Letters to the editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length, but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the classification, address and telephone number of the writer.

Conservative collegians with boring behavior ruining old hippies' fun

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. — There I stood on stage at the University of Alabama field house. There were 4,000 in attendance, mostly students.

Everybody else has been taking presidential polls, so I decided to take one for myself.

"How many of you support Michael Dukakis and Lloyd Bentsen?" I asked.

The Democratic ticket got maybe 10 percent of the crowd.

"And Bush and Quayle?" I went on.

Thunderous applause. Wild cheering. Whistles, and somebody got up and yelled "Roll, Tide!", Alabama's answer to "How 'Bout them Dawgs!", "Hook 'em, Horns!" and "Gig 'em, Aggies!"

I should have expected that. I was in a strongly conservative part of the country where anybody from Massachusetts is geographically undesirable in the first place.

Add to that the fact this individual is said to hold certain liberal views and you've got somebody about as popular as a canker sore.

What is truly amazing to me, however, is that those collegiate years ran



Lewis Grizzard Columnist

smack through the middle of the 60s, is how obviously conservative college students have become.

One Alabama campus leader said to me, "The faculty here, believe it or not, is more liberal than the student body."

And it's not just happening in the South. Recall the students at the University of California at Berkeley heckled Walter Mondale when he campaigned there in 1984.

It's got to be money. Students in the 60's wanted peace and love and justice.

Students in the 80's want a starting salary of \$35,000, a personal home computer and car with initials for name.

What angers me is now that I'm an adult, I don't have a lot of young people doing things that truly disgust me.

Think what kind of youth adults of the 60's had. They had hippies with

long hair who wore sandals and did not bathe.

They had rock concerts and free love and LSD and vans with peace signs painted on the sides.

An adult can get thoroughly disgusted with something like that in hours at a time.

Yes, there are still a few punk rockers around today with orange hair and piercings who dress like there's been a riot and they grabbed whatever they could get out of the closet, but I expect they'll eventually be wiped out by large cats that think they are some new hybrid. So how can I stir up much resentment for them?

I had looked forward to being able to say, "These young people today are going to hell in a handbasket."

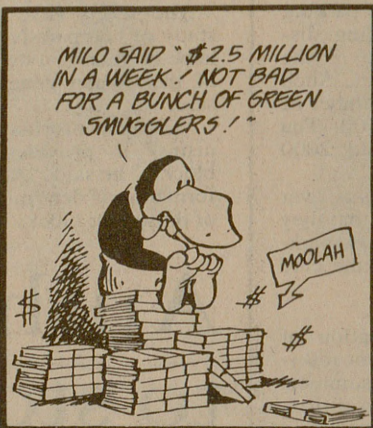
Where most of today's young people are going is to find a good financial planner.

Maybe their kids will wear flowers in their hair, support liberal Democrats and show up on the evening news kissing their American Express cards.

It's what they deserve for ruining my fun.

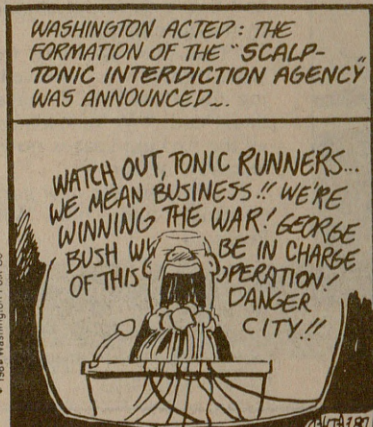
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BLOOM COUNTY



by Berke Breathed

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