

# My faith, not yours

## Bishop shouldn't dictate individual beliefs

I was born and raised a Roman Catholic — Baptism, Holy Communion, Confirmation and last but not least, I spent my entire youth in a Catholic school system.

My childhood was fine and dandy, except for one irreversible element. I was forced to attend a Catholic school — wearing uniforms, going to mass three times a week and putting up with a rigid curriculum that confused me and made me skeptical of the teachings.

Eight hours a day, five days a week, I was subjected to a methodical brainwashing.

Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz — a man with a mission, by all accounts — has warned all Roman Catholics in the Lincoln Diocese that they will face excommunication if they are members of certain organizations.

These groups include Planned Parenthood and Catholics for a Free Choice, which have pro-choice positions on abortion; the Hemlock Society, whose Nebraska chapter is sponsoring a bill permitting physicians to help terminally ill patients die; Call to Action and its Nebraska affiliate, organizations promoting Catholic dialogue on such issues as women in the priesthood and clerical celibacy.

The Bishop said any Catholics "in or of the Diocese of Lincoln" who continue membership in these groups after April 15 are "under interdiction and absolutely forbidden to receive Holy Communion."

If these people are associated with these groups for one month after the 15th, they will be excommunicated.

For the past month, at least once a week, the Daily Nebraskan letters to the editor have been plagued by oversensitive Catholics who just can't believe what they are reading about their beloved Bishop and his



**Bob Ray**

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tyrannical demands.

I can't forget to include the cartoon that ran the other day; it was just so darn offensive — I'm so mad that someone would make fun of such a serious guy like Bishop Bruskewitz.

Is this the most oversensitive campus, or is it just me? It's only a cartoon, and it's only an opinion; get a sense of humor.

Bishop Bruskewitz is a lost soul, and so are those supporting his asinine demands. Why can't he and his followers get a grip on reality, people and what real faith is?

Before people make a decision on religion, they must be in touch with their own personal happiness and the groups or organizations they want to belong to.

If someone told Bishop Bruskewitz that he couldn't belong to a dinner club, or something like that, he would most likely be upset, right?

What this Bishop has to realize is that everyone has his or her own

faith and his or her own way of showing love for God — no matter if it's in the Catholic Church, Methodist or whatever.

Belonging to an organization like Planned Parenthood is a positive thing, and if he can't come to that realization, then the Bishop should go live in a '50s sitcom.

By telling people that they will be excommunicated, he is only making a fool out of himself.

This man is telling people of the Catholic faith that they can no longer act as individuals — isn't that great?

All of my life, I grew up with the notion that if I didn't follow holy straight-and-narrow, I would not go to heaven.

Within the last four or five years, I have come to the realization that my religious schooling was nothing but a joke, and that I want nothing to do with the Catholic religion — Bishop Bruskewitz affirms my reality.

I recently went to a Methodist service with a friend. The experience was terrific. The minister was helpful, thoughtful and easy to listen to.

Bishop Bruskewitz needs to realize that America has never had a peasantry, that there are no longer high priests and nobles, and that he can no longer dictate demands to a group of people doing nothing but great things for their community.

Since the beginning of time, matters of religion have caused rebellions, wars and tyranny — Bishop Bruskewitz should put down the scriptures for one minute and take a lesson in history.

I believe he'll learn that religion mixed with intolerance often leads to suffering, and little more.

Ray is a senior broadcasting major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

# Our Special Guest



## Bombing memories can't be forgotten

**Jennifer Swanson**

*"For the first time, I was forced to sit up and realize that these people had friends, families ... people close to them who couldn't just close the paper, wash the ink off their hands and go about their daily business."*

I understood.

I had never experienced pure panic until that day.

It was six hours before my dad got through to me to let me know everything was OK. Six hours of pure torture that I will not forget. In the weeks that followed, I would mourn for those who were not so lucky — the 168 victims and their families, the 39 children who are now orphans. Names that I had heard during conversations with my mother now scrolled down the screen and were chronicled in books. To this day, I cannot hear Live's "Lightning Crashes" without getting chills. They no longer play it with the news broadcasts dubbed in, but I hear them just the same.

Yes, the bombing affected me personally, but more than that, it threatened my passivity. It's all too easy to read the papers, full of tragedy every day, and to file the events as "history" and move on. For the first time, I was forced to sit up and realize that these people had friends, families ... people close to them who couldn't just close the paper, wash the ink off their hands and go about their daily business. I remember how angry I was when, after a couple weeks, the O.J. Simpson trial resumed its place in the media, and the bombing became old news.

Snuggled in our security blanket of Midwestern life, it is easy to tune out what is going on in the rest of the world. It's easy to think "it could never happen here."

We have learned now that it can.

So please, sometime in your busy day, take the time to remember that the victims were not just numbers that rose in front of our eyes during the weeks after the blast. They were people who led their lives very much like we do.

Many Oklahomans will not work today. They will be remembering their loved ones, their parents, their children, as they deserve to be remembered. They will be honoring the dead, as they deserve to be honored.

Swanson is a Junior English major.

# A plan

## The world's sorry state needs improvement

What the world needs now is a 10-year plan.

A good one, I mean, one that culminates in something we can all agree on — like peace.

But first we need to bring the major players into line ... what would it take, do you think, to buy off the Pope?

All we need him to do is agree to the pill — but other key figures may be harder to persuade. Presidents and kings have history to contend with, particularly their own place in it. Maybe they'd all be satisfied to be hosts of TV talk shows. A movie deal for Saddam. Sitcoms for everyone!

Clinton would probably settle for a personal introduction to Mayor McCheese.

And once we've taken care of the big-and-little wigs, what do the rest of us require?

I myself want a personal robot servant and official embossed stationery.

The easy things like food and shelter can already be supplied to most of the world. Once the population begins to drop off, the rest of us can live high on the hog and sip cafe latte in the shade and fly around in jet planes, visiting one another.

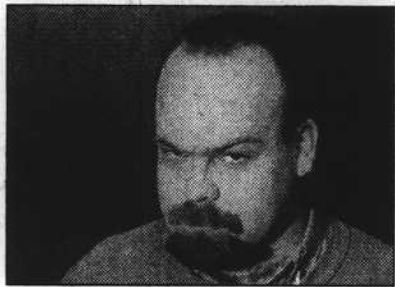
It's entirely possible, so why not go for it? What forces stand in our way?

The problem is, no one's driving the big, complicated truck we call the world.

We hurtle blindly through time toward an unknown destination, arguing over who gets to steer and who gets to work the pedals.

It's gotten so that a kook like the Unabomber is considered a hero by some people; they want to see the bigshots taken down a peg, and rightly so.

But I'm convinced the world produces bigshots like a plague victim produces pustules. No one is making us behave like petulant children, it's just the way we like to be.



**Mark Baldrige**

*"Who wants to play techno-serf to Microsoft? Anyone? Anyone?"*

Leave rats alone and they exhibit remarkably rat-like behavior. You can write it all down and become the leading expert on rats; it's simple.

So in the distant laboratory where the gray aliens tabulate their results on us, the Book of Human Nature can be read, in weird, squiggly letters: "THIS SPECIES BREEDS TYRANTS."

It's what we do best.

And let me tell you, the whole world is bucking for a hated and feared Beloved Dictator to come along and put its house in order. We're begging for it. Our own inability to get along and play fair, to behave like respectable adults, has put us in this precarious position.

Someone will come along and seize the wheel, and we'll thank them for it!

It's pathetic.

That's why we need a 10-year plan, to bypass the dreamed of age of will-to-power dreamed up by brain-dead punk rockers and ignorant hooligan savages in Montana (who will be the first against the wall, in any case, when the revolution comes).

We need a plan to circumvent the inevitable rise of the corporate feudal state. Who wants to play

techno-serf to Microsoft? Anyone? Anyone?

Well, then, let's get to it.

My plan calls for a gradual merging of the races; intermarriage is to be the order of the day.

Once everyone is nice and beige, maybe we can finally put aside our insane obsessions about what amounts to these tiny little genetic markers.

I mean, detached earlobes are a genetic trait too, but you don't see anyone ready to kill and die for them.

Also, we will need to go to other planets.

As it stands now, all it takes is one big asteroid and —BAM!— Homo Sapiens is just so much chard.

We need other planets to exploit, other ecologies to wreck. And if the other planets don't have ecologies already, we'll build them from scratch to wreck at our leisure.

To do that, of course, we're going to have to know all about ecology, so we might as well get started here. That means we'll have to pump billions of dollars into studying the ozone, reroofing the world.

The fact that this may lead to an unwillingness to go on wrecking our own environment in the future can't be helped. Think of it as an unpleasant side effect.

Lastly, my plan calls for a judicial review board before which each legal case must be examined to see if justice has been done. Each verdict that cannot be called justice by a two-thirds majority of the 1,000 reviewers must be overturned in favor of mercy.

Nobody knows when justice is served, but mercy is an entree that always arrives on time.

What? You don't like my plan? You think you could do better?

Let's you and me settle this outside.

Baldrige is a senior English major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

### BE OUR GUEST

The Daily Nebraskan will present a guest columnist each week. Writers from the university and community are welcome.

Must have strong writing skills and something to say. Contact Doug Peters c/o the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588, or e-mail at letters@unlinfo.unl.edu. Or by phone at (402)-472-1782.