

I would like to thank my colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA), for his leadership in bringing this bill before the House today to honor this great leader, this great American, John Cardinal O'Connor.

□ 1145

Mr. BACHUS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, Cardinal O'Connor's prayers, his sacrifices, and his personal chastity are a model of how to achieve personal fulfillment and happiness for all of us. As the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE) has said, the Pope has praised Cardinal O'Connor as a strong shepherd of men. In fact, Cardinal O'Connor has been called a spokesman for the Pope in the United States.

Cardinal O'Connor led the negotiations to restore relations between the Vatican and Israel, and he has proclaimed the Pope's message against a culture of death. But more than a spokesman, he has been a living witness to the civilization of love, which is at the heart of the Pope's message for the new millennium.

Among those that he has shown particular love and sacrifice for are the disabled and their caregivers; for victims of racism, whether from race or religion; the elderly; innercity youth; AIDS victims; the unborn; military personnel; and those with mental illness and alcoholism.

To close, Mr. Speaker, I will simply say this, today, by honoring Cardinal O'Connor we honor all those who put their faith into action each and every day to build a new civilization of love, to treat all men and women of each race and culture with the respect and dignity that is their right as persons made in the image and likeness of God.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA), the sponsor of this bill, and I commend him and the New York delegation.

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BACHUS) for yielding me this time. I want to thank him again for his leadership and the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) and especially Speaker HASTERT, Majority Leader ARMEY, and all of my colleagues, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. LAFALCE), the ranking member, for their support of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, we have heard it all. Cardinal O'Connor is a tremendous man, and if we could all be like him, what a wonderful world this could be.

In just a few weeks, Mr. Speaker, there is a spectacle that takes place in New York City called the Saint Patrick's Day Parade, which people come from all over the world to witness. One of the highlights of that parade is just passing by Saint Patrick's Cathedral and the Cardinal will be there with his smile and greeting the parade goers and wishing us all well. I look forward to that day.

I look forward to the House passing this, as well as the other body, in honoring a true great American.

Mr. LAFALCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, one might think that Cardinal O'Connor had no critics in life. He had many critics, but underlying all of that criticism, in my judgment, was his innate belief in what he and others have called a consistent life ethic.

Senator Hubert Humphrey, a great liberal, a great Democrat, once said that the moral test of government and the moral test of individuals is how they treat those in the dawn of life, our children; how they treat those in the shadows of life, the disadvantaged, our handicapped; and how they treat those in the twilight of life, our seniors, especially those dying.

From the very beginning of life to the very cessation of life, Cardinal O'Connor was consistent in his belief that all deserved justice under the law and as much human love as mankind was capable of. For that, we honor him today.

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 3557. At the same time, I rise in total support of, and with complete respect for, the work of Cardinal O'Connor. Cardinal O'Connor is a true hero as he labors tirelessly on behalf of the most needy and vulnerable in our society; promotes racial and religious harmony; advocates the best education for all children regardless of race, religion, or financial status; ministers to the poor, sick, and disabled; all the while standing up for that which he believes even in the face of hostility.

I must, however, oppose the Gold Medal for Cardinal O'Connor because appropriating \$30,000 of taxpayer money is neither constitutional nor, in the spirit of Cardinal O'Connor who dedicates his life to voluntary and charitable work, particularly humanitarian.

Because of my continuing and uncompromising opposition to appropriations not authorized within the enumerated powers of the Constitution, several of my colleagues felt compelled to personally challenge me as to whether, on this issue, I would maintain my resolve and commitment to the Constitution—a Constitution, which only last year, each Member of Congress, swore to uphold. In each of these instances, I offered to do a little more than uphold my constitutional oath.

In fact, as a means of demonstrating my personal regard and enthusiasm for the work of Cardinal O'Connor, I invited each of these colleagues to match my private, personal contribution of \$100 which, if accepted by the 435 Members of the House of Representatives, would more than satisfy the \$30,000 cost necessary to mint and award a gold medal to the well-deserving Cardinal O'Connor. To me, it seemed a particularly good opportunity to demonstrate one's genuine convictions by spending one's own money rather than that of the taxpayers who remain free to contribute, at their own discretion, to the work of Cardinal O'Connor as they have consistently done in the past. For the record, not a single Representative who solicited my support for spending taxpayer's money, was willing to contribute their own money to demonstrate the courage of their so-called convictions and generosity.

It is, of course, very easy to be generous with other people's money.

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to join in supporting this legislation which will grant long overdue recognition to an outstanding American, one who I am especially honored to call a friend.

This legislation authorizes the President to present, on behalf of the Congress, to His Eminence, Cardinal John O'Connor of New York a gold medal in recognition of his accomplishments as one of our outstanding religious leaders. The medal pays tribute to Cardinal O'Connor for his roles as a priest, as a chaplain, and as a humanitarian.

For most of our colleagues in this chamber, John Cardinal O'Connor is a living legend. His dedication to God and his religion is well known throughout our nation.

However, for those of us who have the honor of representing Districts within the New York Archdiocese, Cardinal O'Connor is more than a legend. He is a living personification of love for one another, for peace, and for living up to the ideals of our Judeo-Christian heritage.

In my Congressional District, Cardinal O'Connor is ubiquitous. He is always on hand for school graduations, for cornerstone layings, and for religious services. Cardinal O'Connor personifies the trait of looking to the future, rather than the past, and his message is consistently a message of hope.

Cardinal O'Connor is a native of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It is there that he entered the priesthood in 1945. The Cardinal studied at a number of institutions of higher education, and holds advanced degrees in Ethics, Clinical Psychology, and Political Theory. Cardinal O'Connor served as a chaplain with both the Navy and the Marine Corps for a total of 27 years. After leaving military service, His Holiness Pope John Paul II ordained him a Bishop for the Military in 1979. After serving as Bishop of Scranton, PA, he was promoted Archbishop of New York in 1984. He was raised to the position of Cardinal a year later.

The motto on Cardinal O'Connor's personal coat of arms summarizes the philosophy of this outstanding leader: "There can be no love without justice."

Mr. Speaker, His Eminence, Cardinal O'Connor is known for promoting racial and religious harmony, and for advocating the best education possible for all children regardless of race, religion, or financial status. No one in America should forget that Cardinal O'Connor welcomed AIDS patients into the Catholic hospitals of New York back at a time when other institutions of medicine were turning them away. In New York, His Eminence is well known for ministering to the sick and disabled, and for being a friend to the poor.

It is regrettable that in this day and age Cardinal O'Connor has been harassed by elements of our society who feel comfortable attacking those institutions which continue to uphold our