



Bishop Matthew H. Clark

Along the Way

The vocations situation

The problems and opportunities presented by our current vocation and ministry situation continue to emerge in a variety of ways:

1) Tom Valenti, our diocesan vocation director, informs me that we will begin this school year with 11 candidates in preparation for the priesthood, at the level of the first-year of theological studies or above. The figure includes nine candidates who will be engaged in full-time studies this year and two others, now ordained deacons, who will be doing a year of parish ministry prior to priesthood next spring.

At the very best, we will ordain two priests a year for the next five years. It is inevitable that, at the end of that five-year period, we'll have experienced a substantial loss in the number of our priests through retirement, death and resignation from ministry.

2) A pastor wrote to me recently to express concern that: a) he and his parish community were losing the services of an esteemed parochial vicar (we once called them assistant pastors) who would not be replaced, and b) the manner in which the decision was made left the pastor and the parish community less prepared for the change than they would have liked to have been.

The pastor raised some good questions, which we are already pursuing. He also highlights for all of us our common responsibility to make the adjustments — often sacrificial — that we need to make, in light of the fact that, for the short run, we will have fewer and fewer priests.

3) The recent exchange about St. Bernard's Institute in the pages of the *Courier-Journal* reminds me strongly of our need to maintain the level of excellence in training for ministry that has been a hallmark of the Diocese of Rochester from our very inception.

We will fail both to honor that tradition and to meet present-day needs, if we do not take seriously our obligation to ensure the best possible formation for ordained and lay ministers in our community. St. Bernard's Institute is a rich resource ready and willing to serve that purpose. I believe that its importance to the ongoing development of well-trained church ministers is critical. For this reason alone, it deserves strong support from all of us.

Vocation and ministry themes have been demonstrated in our local Church and beyond in several other ways, as well. I won't mention anymore here, but I shall be returning to them from time to time through the year.

For now, let me ask you to pray often that we, as a community, will have the wisdom to know what we must do and the courage to do it.

I shall soon be asking our pastors and their colleagues in ministry to take leadership in the education and formation of local parish communities, so that we can respond with faithful creativity. Many people in our community have worked hard to research the issue and make recommendations. The time has come now to take action. I have no doubt that your response will be generous.

Peace to all.

The Editor's Desk

The high price of 'free speech'

On August 4, the Federal Communications Commission abolished the Fairness Doctrine, a controversial 1934 regulation that required broadcasters to seek out and broadcast contrasting viewpoints on controversial issues of public importance.

The regulation did not require broadcasters to make editorial statements, nor did it force them to accept paid advertisements concerning controversial subjects. But when stations did broadcast such editorials or commercials, the doctrine required that equal time be given to those who opposed the opinions thus presented, regardless of whether the opponents could pay for their rebuttal time.

Print media are not required to abide by the Fairness Doctrine because they use privately owned property — e.g., a printing press — and operate without governmental licensing. Those who disagree with a newspaper's position can easily distribute their own views by means of "publications" ranging in cost from a simple mimeographed flyer to a four-color glossy magazine.

In order for broadcasters to operate, however, they must compete for a limited number of FCC licenses, which entitle them to use the publicly owned air waves. People who oppose the opinions expressed on broadcast stations, therefore, are physically and legally unable to broadcast alternative viewpoints.

For this reason, the government has long held that broadcasters are obliged to operate in a manner beneficial to society. This is the same rationale by which the FCC governs — albeit poorly — the content of television and radio broadcasts.

In announcing abolition of the doctrine, FCC Chairman Dennis Patrick said the decision "should be cause for celebration. The Fairness Doctrine chills speech ... and contravenes the First Amendment and the public interest."

As far as I'm concerned, that's nothing but hypocritical Constitution-waving. I don't recall the Constitution giving corporations any rights, least of all a "right" to sell and broadcast commercials. The First Amendment was designed to give citizens the right to freely express their opinions. The founders' objective wasn't media profits, but the free exchange of ideas, and that's exactly what the FCC decision cuts off.

Perhaps the Fairness Doctrine's passing seems unimportant to you. But imagine for a moment that an abortion clinic decided to advertise its services, saying in a series of paid ads on Channel X that abortion is the only sensible alternative to an unwanted pregnancy. Under the Fairness Doctrine, anti-abortion groups could make a pretty strong case for free rebuttal time on Channel X. But without the doctrine, these groups would have no chance for rebuttal, unless they were able to pay the considerable price of paid commercials.

As I see it, abolition of the Fairness Doctrine is tantamount to a reinterpretation of the First Amendment. In effect, the FCC has ruled that when it comes to broadcasting, the only constitutionally guaranteed "free speech" is paid speech.

C-J Letters

Column hurt Courier's credibility

To the editor:

I was appalled by the column written by Father Paul Cuddy in the July 23 issue of the *Courier-Journal*. I found it extremely revolting that Father Cuddy would push his column to make value judgments about St. Bernard's Institute that would serve his purposes only and which would mislead the public. I also am shocked that the *Courier-Journal* would allow such a derogatory article to be printed.

It would seem to me that the *Courier-Journal* should be promoting and publicizing the excellent quality of education that St. Bernard's has to offer for leadership training in pastoral ministry. To use the paper to destroy the credibility of a major religious institution such as St. Bernard's would only serve to question the caliber and integrity of the *Courier-Journal*. St. Bernard's stands as a monument of hope for the future education of our Church, rooting us

in our Judaeo-Christian heritage, and teaching us what is true and relevant. This is the significant information that the *Courier-Journal* should be publicizing about St. Bernard's. Father Cuddy's article was totally out of place in your paper and destroys the caliber of the *Courier-Journal* because it destroys what is true and relevant.

I am a student at St. Bernard's Institute entering into my third year. I have a full-time job in the inner city of Rochester, which is very demanding, but because I believe in what St. Bernard's has to offer, I am taking the time to attend classes. I am most grateful for the existence of St. Bernard's in the Diocese of Rochester, because it offers me simultaneously the opportunity to work and to sharpen my skills for ministry. I had been looking for an educational institution that would offer me the biblical foundation and meaning for my work in the inner city. I found it at St. Ber-

nard's, in the quality of its professors and courses.

Whether it is a "seminary" or "institute" is irrelevant. What is significant is that it is a first-rate theological school.

Another positive feature of St. Bernard's is its tuition assistance. It would be very difficult for me to attend St. Bernard's without this aid. I appreciate this assistance as I am sure many others do who are training for leadership in the Church.

The credibility and integrity of the *Courier-Journal* is to be questioned when articles such as Father Cuddy's are allowed to be printed. As a vehicle of communication for what is true and significant, I would suggest that you be more selective in what you print.

Sister Grace Miller, RSM
Fernwood Park
Rochester

St. Bernard's a 'source of growth' for priests

To the editor:

Father Paul J. Cuddy's column in the July 23 issue of the *Courier-Journal* demonstrates a lack of understanding and respect for the work and ministry of St. Bernard's Institute.

He states that it is not a seminary but "a kind of successor," whatever that means. He implies that St. Bernard's Institute is no longer in the ministry of the education of priests. He is misinformed.

St. Bernard's Institute has been for me a tremendous source of growth in my ministry as a priest. I have taken courses at St. Bernard's for the past

two years as a part of the Continuing Education Program for Priests. These courses have helped me to keep up my responsibility to study and hopefully be a better priest to the people.

There were times I wasn't able to pay the full tuition, but with the help of Father Sebastian Falcone and the staff, I was able to take the courses. I expect to continue in my studies at St. Bernard's Institute and am grateful that the diocese is able to provide me the opportunity and a place at which to continue my studies.

Father Cuddy needs to do more research and have more understanding

before he makes such a poor judgment as he did concerning St. Bernard's Institute. I would continue to encourage people to financially support the institute, which provides education not only for priests but also for permanent deacons, religious and lay ministers.

Thank you Father Sebastian Falcone and all the faculty and staff at the Institute. May the Lord continue to bless your ministry.

Father Neil R. Miller, Pastor
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church
Rochester

'True Church of Christ' must be Catholic

To the editor:

In response to Father Richard P. McBrien's column in the *Courier-Journal* of July 16: Father McBrien says if there is "one true Church of Christ" it is the whole Body of Christ — Catholic, Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox. I disagree on the basis that:

1. From 1962 to November of 1964 the bishops, together with Pope Paul VI's draft of *Lumen Gentium and Unitatis Redintegratio*, testify to a clear affirmation that the Church of Christ

and the Catholic Church are not two realities but only one.

2) It is affirmed that the Lord Himself is the founder of this one Church.

3) In 1973 the bishops state in *Mysterium Ecclesiae* that Catholics are bound to profess that by the gift of God's mercy they belong to that Church which Christ founded; (this) is a fully accurate and a concise restatement of the intention and teaching of the Church in Council of Vatican II. This Church established

and ordained as a society in this world — or "subsisting in," as the documents phrase it — the Catholic Church governed by the successor of Peter and the bishops in communion with him, although outside her bodily structure, there are found many elements of sanctification and truth which, as gifts proper to the Church of Christ, impel to Catholic unity.

Nicholas Renna
Pearson Lane
Rochester

Staff at St. Anthony of Padua kept school spirit alive

To the editor:

The closing of St. Anthony of Padua School on June 16 took place with very little said about the impact upon students and teachers alike.

Having taught there for many years, first as a kindergarten teacher and more recently as a substitute in all grades, I view its closing with great sadness. Not only was this heartbreaking for the children who no longer can attend, but also for the very giving and concerned faculty and secretary, some of whom had been there several years.

The last few months have been extremely difficult for them, having to face the children every day while trying against great odds to keep "school spirit" alive. Excellent programs were continued as usual, however, and well-organized plans carried out under the administration

of one of the most dedicated teachers and principals I have ever had the privilege of working with, Mr. Frank Vaccaro.

St. Anthony's will be terribly missed, but the children, I'm sure,

will remember the good people who were not only their instructors, but loving friends as well.

Mary Kathryn Gordinier
Rye Road
Rochester

St. Elmo credited with St. Ermo's Fire

To the editor:

In response to the letter from John Yuhus (C-J Letters, June 25: "St. Elmo's fire kindles spark of curiosity in reader's mind"), my small encyclopedia has this to say about St. Elmo:

"St. Elmo's Fire: Tip of light caused by discharges of atmospheric electricity, occasionally observed on pointed objects such as church spires or masts of ships. The name is der-

ived from a corruption of the Italian St. Ermo, patron saint of the Mediterranean sailor."

F. B. Kelleher
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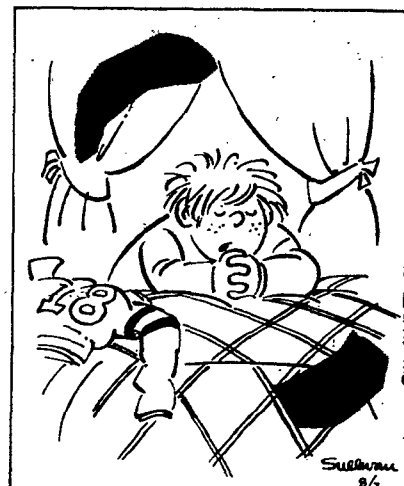
C-J Letters Policy

The *Courier-Journal* wishes to provide space for readers throughout the diocese to express opinions on all sides of the issues. We welcome all signed, original letters about current issues affecting Church life.

Although we cannot publish every letter we receive, we seek, insofar as possible, to provide a balanced representation of expressed opinions and a variety of reflections on life in the Church. We will choose letters for publication based on likely reader

interest, timeliness and a sense of fair play. Our discerning readers may determine whether to agree or disagree with the opinions of the letter writers.

We reserve the right to edit all letters. Mail them to: Letters to the Editor, *Courier-Journal*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Please include your full name as well as telephone number and complete address for verification purposes.



"MOM AND DAD SAID I SHOULDN'T JUST PRAY FOR MYSELF, SO I'M ASKING YOU TO KEEP SCHOOLS IN THE WHOLE WORLD FROM OPENING NEXT MONTH."