

Editorial & Opinion

C-J shouldn't reject criticism

To the editor:

I am appalled at your response to Mr. Michael More (C-J July 14: "Lefebvre disputes historian's comparison"). The ministry of the Church is one of healing and reconciliation. Your flat rejection of Mr. More simply compounds the problem. Archbishop Lefebvre's actions may be a tragedy, but the solution certainly is not to kick those who sympathize with him in the mouth when they try to communicate with us. If we cease the dialogue — and this is what you are doing by denying your readers the benefits of knowing what Mr. More stands for — how will we ever heal the current divisions within the Church? Shouldn't we have the opportunity of deciding for ourselves who is right and who is wrong? Do you think you have the monopoly of the truth? What the Church needs at this hour of crisis is not arrogant self-righteousness, but a willingness to negotiate.

I hope and pray that you will change your policy from one of narrow *a priori* rejection of criticism and pledge to be inclusive even of those whose opinions you abhor.

Kevin Sullivan
Bedford Street
Rochester

EDITOR'S NOTE: Questions of healing, dialogue, rejection, reconciliation and negotiation are determined by the Vatican, not the Courier-Journal. And the point is not whether I abhor Mr. More's opinions, but whether he wishes to be a member of the Diocese of

Letters

Rochester, under the Roman Catholic Church headed by Pope John Paul II.

Mr. More has been a regular writer for as long as I've been editing this paper, and my agreement or disagreement with his views has never been an issue. But in his July 14 letter, Mr. More made comments I interpreted as meaning that he no longer wishes to be a member of this diocese.

Frankly, the Courier-Journal receives more letters than it can print in a reasonable time frame. Rather than publish letters months after they lose relevance, we regularly exclude letters from people who do not belong to the diocese (except in unusual circumstances). We'd like to be more inclusive, but we have to draw the line somewhere. Others will have to submit their letters to the daily press — which has seven issues a week to our one — or start their own newspapers. That's not arrogance; it's just being practical.

If I misunderstood the letter, however, I'll gladly reconsider. Mr. More, do you consider yourself a member of the Diocese of Rochester? I'll certainly publish your answer to that question.

Writer disputes opponent's assertion; says people don't really live under communist rule

To the editor:

In responding to my letter of May 5, Mr. Brian Cool seems to have lost his (C-J June 9: "Better communism than annihilation").

Where is it written in stone, for example, that we will all be annihilated unless we destroy our nuclear weapons?

His remark that it is better to live than to die assumes there will be life under communist rule.

This is a false assumption, as millions of communist subjects have been murdered by various communist governments.

In fact the communists have murdered millions of people who opposed or were merely suspected of opposing communist policies.

How many people have died fleeing communist regimes? We know that thousands of Vietnamese boat people and many Eastern Europeans have risked their lives for freedom.

Would these people have put their lives on the line for the mere hope of freedom if they could have had a "life" under communism?

While Mr. Cool may ignore the individual horror stories of those who have lived under communism, others are not quite that foolish.

Remember that when "peace" came to In-

dochina in 1975, more people were killed after the "peace" than during the entire war.

And despite the fact that our president and the Soviet leader have recently signed a peace agreement, the Soviet Union has increased arms shipments to Nicaragua.

This action implies a contempt for a real peace as well as the knowledge that U.S. government leaders, for the most part, will ignore Soviet double talk.

Since the record of Soviet arms compliance is poor, our best hope — after prayer — is President Reagan's SDI (Strategic Defense Initiative, or "Star Wars").

The Strategic Defense Initiative would at least make the success of a Soviet nuclear attack uncertain and could protect us from a missile launched accidentally.

The alternative offered by the "Better Red Than Dead" people is the loss of all freedom, save the freedom to worship the state and a miserable existence particularly for those who cherish religious freedom.

To me that is not much of a choice.

Robert Bart
Ithaca

Liberal and conservative factions contribute equally to progress in Church and society

To the editor:

This letter is in response to Father McBrien's July 14 article on "True Catholics and phony Catholics." First of all, I totally disagree with him on the part that all conservative beliefs are morally right and all liberal beliefs are morally wrong. If you look at our past history, you would find that most of the corruption that happened in our world occurred when people leaned too far on either the left or right. The examples of people leaning too far to the left would be Marxist communists, and the examples of people leaning too far to the right would be the Nazis, Fascists and the Ku Klux Klan. I feel in my opinion that both liberals and conservatives have aided in keeping of our Christian values. Conservatives had done a good job for instance in fighting the immorality of abortion and homosexuality. Liberals on the other hand have done a good job in fighting the sins of racism, laissez-faire capitalism

and McCarthyism. If it wasn't for the liberals, rapists would still be acquitted of their crimes and their victims being women would be looked on as the cause of the crime.

In his article, Father McBrien said that conservatives oppose publicizing social problems like drugs and prostitution because it would make the evil "normal." Well all I can say is that the public can't act on those "evils" if they aren't aware of those "evils." As for people opposing Vatican II all I can say is I wouldn't understand the Masses if they were in Latin. Also in a final note, it isn't liberalism in the Catholic Church that is heresy, but being too liberal or "CONSERVATIVE" that is. Lefebvre is a conservative who was excommunicated by being against the pope.

William L. Eddy Jr.
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Auburn

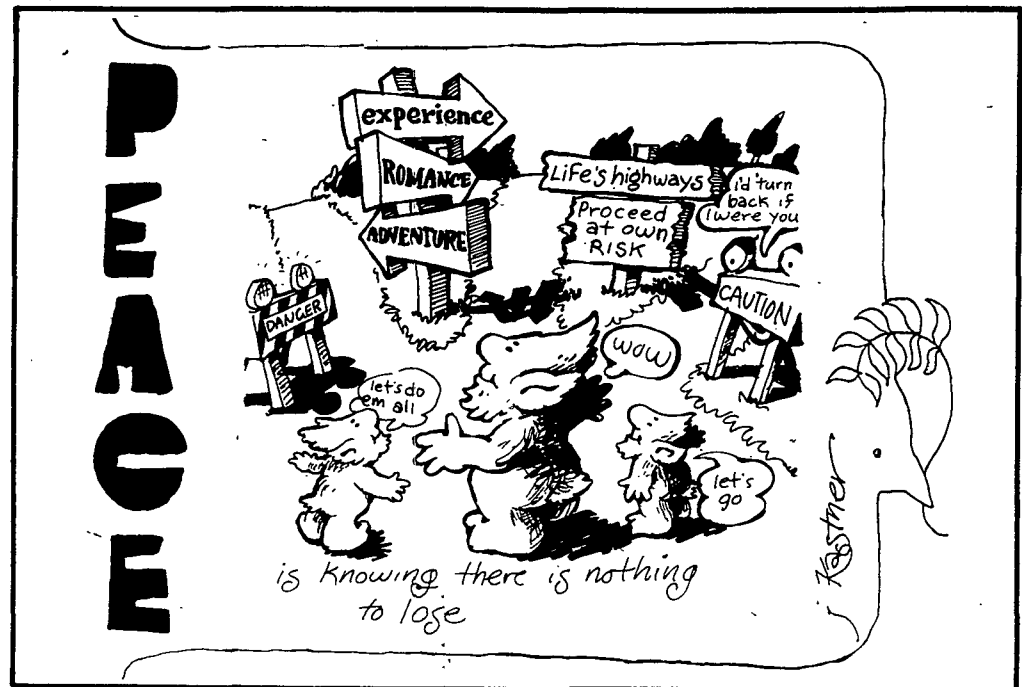
C-J Letters Policy

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: Courier-Journal, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, NY, 14624. Please include your full name as well as telephone number and complete address for verification purposes.



Today's Church continues on path of change in effort to respond to needs of parishioners

To the editor:

I have followed with great interest the controversies surrounding changes that have taken place in the Catholic Church since Vatican II. I view this to be both an exciting and challenging time for the church and thought I would share my views with readers of the Courier-Journal.

Since the Catholic Church is rich in tradition, it is understandable that conservatives within the church were reluctant to accept changes following Vatican II. While a minority of Catholics still cling to pre-Vatican II ideas and traditions, an unfortunate schism has been created in Europe, thereby causing a dilemma of sizeable proportions for the Vatican.

As we progress toward meeting the challenges of the future, issues such as celibacy and ordination of women will certainly be debated, perhaps resulting in further changes for the church. The AIDS epidemic also presents a new dilemma for us. On one hand, we must continue to discourage irresponsible sexual behavior and at the same time, we must show compassion toward those afflicted with AIDS.

In reflecting on modern issues of the Catholic Church, it was necessary for me to go back to the time of Jesus. I have to feel that the Church of today is more in line with the teachings of Jesus than the church of pre-Vatican II. For example, today's Mass is reminiscent of the Last Supper, at which Jesus invited "all" to participate in the Eucharist.

In a similar mode, the relationship between Jesus and women is sketchy in the gospels, but we know that he treated men and women as equals. While the gospel writers sometimes used sexist language in their interpretation of Jesus, the language was reflective of the period and should not imply anti-female sentiment from Jesus. While the issue of ordination has raised some eyebrows among conservative Catholics, it is an issue that is worthy of healthy debate considering the fact that there is a current shortage of male candidates for the

priesthood.

Some conservative elements have charged that the Catholic Church is breaking a covenant with God by making concessions with other faiths. I disagree. While the Catholic Church still strives toward maintaining its individuality, it has also reached out to people of other faiths as a way of easing frictions that have existed for centuries. I am happy to be part of a local Jewish/Christian dialogue group. We meet on a monthly basis to discuss our theological differences in a friendly environment. It is gratifying to see priests, ministers and rabbis, along with lay people, come together for the purpose of understanding one another. A term that is used widely in recent times is "Judeo-Christian." This term implies a common heritage. By working through this common heritage, our dialogue group has discovered, despite our theological differences, that we share similar social concerns.

Some conservative Catholics have still not accepted the English Mass. I am the first to admit that Latin is a very beautiful language, but the fact of the matter is that it is not taught in public schools to the degree it was in the recent past. So in order for the Mass to be more meaningful to those not educated in Latin, Vatican II allowed the Mass to be celebrated in English.

The Catholic Church is in a continuing path of change. As the Church tries to meet the needs of today's parishioners, it is also the goal of bishops to settle differences between conservatives and liberals. I feel that Jesus would be happy with the Church of today, for it was his desire for all to participate in celebration of his life and resurrection. It is also in the spirit of Jesus that the Catholic Church continues to seek new ways of understanding and friendship with those of other faiths.

Raymond A. Grosswirth
Alexander Street
Rochester

Explains use of Latin in traditional Mass

To the editor:

Jim Liebel's question (C-J July 14: "It's not right to say Jesus chose Latin for use at Mass") concerning the use of Latin in the Traditional Catholic Church can be easily explained.

The true Catholic Church uses a dead and therefore, unchangeable language to ensure that the words of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will never be altered. This idea of preserving the Mass without change, however, would not make any sense to members of the New Church since their whole service was changed, transformed, and modernized by the Second Vatican Council so that it no longer resembles a Catholic Mass.

The Catholic Church does not believe that the Mass is a "reminder of the Last Supper and the journey of Jesus to His death on the cross" as Mr. Liebel states, but that it is the Holy Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ. This unbloody sacrifice of the cross is offered to God by the universal Church and should therefore, be celebrated not in man's language, but in the Church's universal language. It should be remembered also that the priest is praying FOR the people, but not to the people. The priest prays to God and God understands in Latin.

Finally, through the use of Latin, the unity of the Church is protected since the Mass is celebrated in exactly the same manner all over

the world. Using the vernacular in the Mass divides the countries as can be confirmed by the now frequently used term, "The American Catholic Church."

Maureen Foley
Devonshire Drive
Rochester

School board member wants more research on questions before schools reorganize

To the editor:

The Diocesan Education Office is looking to consolidate the parish schools in the Northeast Quadrant by the '89-90 school year.

After several years of discussion and planning by involved parents, teachers, pastors and administrators, there are still many unanswered questions.

What about removal of asbestos as mandated by New York State Law, or the problems of finances, which has not been addressed at all?

I can agree that parochialism will not be the wave of the future, but I cannot subscribe to consolidation within the time frame that has been established without more research.

Gerald Kehoe
St. Margaret Mary Catholic School Board