

# Editorial & Opinion

## Letters

### Writers take aim at crusade letter

To the editor:

I've always felt that the *Courier-Journal* is very well-balanced in its representation of all points of view. It was with disbelief, however, that I read John Vincent Waters' letter to the editor in the Nov. 10 issue.

To say Mr. Waters was upset with Catholic participation in the Billy Graham Rochester Crusade is a gross understatement. In his letter, the man is absolutely ranting as he proceeds to:

Name call the Rev. Graham.

Take issue with the fact that a Protestant was instrumental in helping Catholics return to their church,

Criticize Father Mull for his participation in the crusade,

Make an implied criticism of columnist Father McBrien — he does praise fellow columnist Father Paul Cuddy,

Refer to our bishop as "his excellency" in a manner that reeks with sarcasm,

Practically demand that Bishop Clark reply to his diatribe,

State that the church in Rochester is floun-

dering while the bishop is away,

And last of all, applaud others who share his point of view.

Mr. Waters sounds more like a follower of that rebel French bishop than a member of the American Roman Catholic Church under Pope John Paul II. For his own peace of mind I suggest he have a few long sessions with his confessor.

I will not dignify his hateful letter by responding to the individual points he brought up, but I will make the following statements.

1) If the Catholic Church made a practice of granting sainthood to non-Catholics, the Rev. Billy Graham would one day be one.

2) My own life-long experience as a Catholic has been among other good Catholic people, priests and nuns who embrace other Christians as brothers and sisters in Christ, regardless of their denomination.

3) Bishop Matthew H. Clark was once affectionately referred to as "my baby bishop" by the pope, because of his youth and was appointed as a bishop by Rome because of his ability and his fidelity to the Church.

4) Bishop Clark is an outstanding administrator, an exceptional human being, a true Christian as well as a humble and devout priest.

5) Matthew H. Clark is respected and loved by we his flock for his love of us, his love of the Church and his love for the Savior of us all, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Ernest M. De Caro  
Westwood Drive  
Auburn

### God acted through Graham crusade

To the editor:

May I respond to a letter published in the *Courier-Journal* of Nov. 10: "Catholics shouldn't mix with separated brethren," by John Vincent Waters, Camp Hill, Pa.?

To all who, through their deep... love and commitment to the Catholic faith, are viewing the Graham crusade as Mr. Waters, may I be permitted to speak from my own love and commitment to that faith?

Knowing that Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is the Intercessor to the Father in every Mass from the rising to the setting of the sun, can't we assume that He never stops asking the Father what He prayed in John 17: "... that all may be one so that the world may believe?"

It is a fact that on Sept. 14 the Church celebrates the feast of the triumph of the cross. I was present that evening at Silver Stadium and heard Mr. Graham address Catholics, ad-

monishing us to rededicate and commit our lives to what we received in baptism and confirmation.

I was profoundly aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit when Mr. Graham told many thousands that the Catholic Church puts the cross first and then the resurrection.

To me, the climax of the crusade for us Catholics came during the Mass of thanksgiving at the Pastoral Center, when I was sent as representative of my parish, to receive the names of Catholics rededicating their lives to Jesus. Many hundreds were sent back to our Catholic faith communities to be nurtured by our RCIA programs, our Scripture studies, our fellowships.

If God isn't doing this, who is? Why not cooperate?

Dorothy Frederick  
South Clinton Avenue Rochester

### Maybe some pope will canonize Dr. Graham

To the editor:

I feel sorry for the man from Camp Hill who objected to our involvement in the Billy Graham Crusade. He must place Catholics in the same category as Jehovah's Witnesses who believe only they have been saved.

Remember: Christ died once and for all!

Mr. Waters is reading too much into the motivation of the Catholics who attended the crusade. The majority of those who "declared for Christ" had no conscious thought of being "born again" or "confirmed" or "reconfirmed." They simply made a statement: "I believe in Jesus Christ. I'm proud to stand and be counted." There's no mumbo-jumbo in that!

Billy Graham is doing God's work. We would do well to emulate the zeal of his representatives. I hope Mr. Waters doesn't

think only Catholics have access to the Holy Spirit! Dr. Graham is not working for "Protestant evangelization of Catholics." He is non-denominational and has no church of his own. He just asks simple, ordinary people to say, "I believe in Christ. I want to lead a good Christian life." What's wrong with that?

If the gentleman read all of the articles on the crusade, he must understand that those who expressed a desire to embrace Catholicism — including those who had fallen away — were referred to a Catholic church. It is at this point our work begins!

Who knows? Maybe some future pope will canonize Dr. Graham!

Grace B. Carnes  
Eagle Ridge Circle  
Rochester

### Graham reaffirmed faith in Christ

To the editor:

I am writing in response to John Vincent Waters' letter of Nov. 10. Mr. Waters states his questions and confusion about Catholic participation in the Billy Graham Crusade. In doing so, he takes swipes at Thomas Kirchoff, Father Tom Mull and Bishop Clark. I believe Mr. Waters is sincere in trying to understand why Catholics not only participate, but "come forward" in the crusade.

I did attend the crusade programs, was privileged to meet with Dr. Graham and "came forward!" None of these interfere with my Catholicism. To the contrary, my faith in Jesus Christ and in the real presence of the Holy Spirit was enriched. Quite frankly, I believe Mr. Waters' confusion stems from his making things too complicated. I believe it is much simpler. There are clues in the 17th chapter of St. John's Gospel: "Father ... that they may be one, even as we are one"

I found Dr. Graham reaffirming of my belief that Jesus Christ is my personal savior, and with Jesus' help, we are enabled to overcome personal sin. In my meeting with him, I found him sincerely interested in Rochester's homeless people and their needs. I "came forward" to publicly express my commitment to my Lord and as an expression of unity with others who were seeking peace, reconciliation or a deepening of their faith. Tom Kirchoff and I prayed with and for each other and for the people of Rochester.

Sometimes we Catholics can behave almost arrogantly when we imply we have nothing to gain from the insights and experiences of Protestants, or even the Buddhists, both of whom are mentioned by Mr. Waters.

I hope Mr. Waters is able to find peace, since he is obviously troubled by his questions. Perhaps he would find peace in unity with people like Tom Kirchoff, Father Mull, Bishop Clark and me, who continue a genuine search for ways to deepen our faith and who found one of those ways through the crusade.

William H. Privett  
Ross Brook Drive  
Rochester

### Thanks parish, pastor for coming to scouts' aid

To the editor:

I want to take this opportunity to thank St. Mary's Parish in Watkins Glen and their wonderful pastor, Father Kalafsky, for their warm hospitality.

On Saturday, Oct. 22, I led a Girl Scout outing for a day trip to Watkins Glen. Two buses of scouts and leaders left Webster in the rain, only to find snow and more snow the farther south we traveled.

Father Kalafsky graciously offered us their gym in the Parish Center to use for our "picnic lunch" and base of operations. Their rest rooms were a welcome sight to our group of 100.

From St. Mary's we walked to the park and gorge, and to get ice cream before we headed home. Our outing in the snow was truly memorable, and we'll always be grateful to Fr. Kalafsky for salvaging our picnic lunch.

Diane F. Weisskopf  
Webster Division  
Girl Scouts of Genesee Valley

### 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.

