

Displaced teachers merit mention

To the editor:

The students are enrolled in their new schools. The Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of St. Joseph have moved on to new positions in their respective orders. The Brothers of Holy Cross have left town and are beginning their new tasks this week as well. What about the lay teachers? What are they doing this week? As far as I know, fifty percent of them will be teaching in new schools, but what about the other fifty percent? I am 35 years old and this teacher — for the first time in 30 years — will not be walking through the doors of a parochial school tomorrow or any school for that matter. Instead, I will be walking through the doors of the Unemployment Office after actively seeking a teaching position for the past four months.

I have a B.A. in mathematics, an M.S. in education, and fourteen years of teaching experience, but have never signed a contract for \$20,000 or more per year in my career. The Brothers take the vow of poverty, but who really practices it? The diocese will be \$9 million richer in a few weeks when the sale of Cardinal Mooney High School is closed. Will their be any severance pay for the teachers who were laid off? There have been several proposals made, but no guarantees or firm offers have been made.

What will the \$9 million from the sale of Cardinal Mooney be used for? A diocesan

official stated on television at the time of the closing that the money would stay in education. Does that mean that some of this revenue will be used to give the teachers in the diocesan grammar schools a substantial raise? It would seem only fair since these teachers are more underpaid than their colleagues in private parochial high schools.

In protest, should we stop giving to the Bishop's Thanksgiving Appeal? The answer is "No." The Bishop's Appeal is not really an appeal, it is a "tax." Our parishes must give to the Bishop's Appeal whatever amount it is assessed. If our parish does not meet its assigned quota, money is taken from other parish funds. Consequently, just by giving our usual weekly donation, we are contributing to the Appeal whether we want to or not.

Cardinal Mooney High School was a first class operation and I am proud to say that I taught there. At the time of the closing, everyone was concerned about what would happen to the young people. I was concerned too, but no one was saying anything about the teachers who had dedicated many years of service to the school and to the community. I thought it was about time someone did and Labor Day seemed to be the most appropriate time to do so.

Kevin J. Ward
Wicklow Dr.
Rochester

Prayer, support from bishop and clergy could answer troubling abortion, hostage problems

To the editor:

The abortion issue is one of the most troublesome topics of our days. For years it has been debated. Now we the people will have the chance to vote our conscience. The pro Choice people have lots of money and are getting their people to talk to Legislatures demanding agreement with their opinions. But the Rite to Life People are sitting in jail, or marching in cold and wet weather, and we never hear a word of praise for their efforts. I think it is time for our Bishop and Clergy to speak up and support these courageous people. We do

not have the money, but we have something better. Why don't we have prayers every Sunday after every Mass for proper legislation to protect the unborn?

Another thing we are all worried about: our Hostages. Why can't we have a day of prayer for their safe return? It seems to me that we are afraid to admit that we pray. There is no easy answer to either of these problems. We are taught that prayer is always answered. Why don't we try it?

Mrs. H. Pikuet
Portland Ave.
Rochester



Erb's abortion views should reflect the flock he serves

To the editor:

I am neither a Democrat nor a resident of the city of Rochester, but the mayoral primary has caught my attention.

John Erb has recently stated his "change of heart" on the abortion issue. John now has a pro-choice position. In 1979, John had the endorsement of the Right-to-Life party. Being a Democrat, his new position is understandable ... Being a pro-choice deacon would seem to present a problem among the Catholic faithful.

I hope John will become honest with himself and his constituents, and serve the flock that he chooses. If he can't make that decision, our diocese should make it for him.

Stephen J. Fisher
Honeoye Falls

Present both sides of Holocaust history

To the editor:

I take a special interest in ethnic groups and immigrant groups. In my reading of Polish history I have tried to learn about the long and extensive contact between Jews and Poles. The conflict at the Auschwitz convent drew my attention.

I think it should be noted that the convent was established as a place of prayer for victims of the death camps. I don't see this as being an affront to Jewish victims, although it is in conflict with Jewish tradition and has thus sparked controversy.

I do take strong exception to the letter from the Simon Weisenthal Center stating that the church is trying to claim a symbol that isn't theirs. The letter states: "Here the church is trespassing on the greatest Jewish cemetery in all of Jewish history." One would assume from this that no Christians died at Auschwitz.

There is certainly no shortage of instances where Poles exhibited anti-Semitism, but to present this side of the story exclusively does an injustice to the Poles and severely distorts the history of the Holocaust. I would highly recommend Richard C. Lukas' book *The Forgotten Holocaust Poles Under German Occupation 1939-1944*, in which he gives a clearer picture of the three million non-Jewish Poles who died under Nazi persecution. I don't understand why scholars and historians aren't doing more to present a more balanced view of this very controversial and tragic period in world history.

Ed Nizalowski
Berkshire, N.Y.



Changes in emphasis are facets of living faith

To the editor:

I would like to comment upon the thoughts raised by a recent letter in the *Catholic Courier* evaluating Father Callan (August 24: "Faith in progress serves to preclude honest discourse"). I will confine myself essentially to three points. I have the feeling that the author raises important questions, but the focus seems unclear to me. For example, is determinism always a pejorative term? Father Callan's "determinism" seems to me to be of a Scriptural sort.

If one believes God is at work in the world, in ourselves, and in the church, does one not have to believe in a progression towards a God-seen goal? What else is the Kingdom? If it be of God in us, the world and the church will not be stifled!

The second question is that of liberation. I submit that neither time, nor will, nor as the letter's author suggests, "respectful discourse" will bring it, because Jesus brought it to us already. But it does take the passage of time and human effort to allow this liberation to become a reality lived out in time. November will come, but only if we hold October lightly.

Our faith is sometimes compared with an unfolding flower. Each petal may show us an unexpectedly new focus, an unsuspected relationship, a different emphasis. In the past, the church has emphasized certain teachings, values, practices, attitudes at the

expense of others felt to have been less important in that day. This practice continues today.

Remember how important that celestial "bank account" of indulgences used to be when some of us were growing up? There may have originally been good reasons for this emphasis, but for many of us it only succeeded in skewing our faith and blurring the awareness of who was saving whom.

Lastly, regarding the "... liberation from (what is perceived as) ... the arbitrarily imposed authority of the Holy Father." If faith is living, guided by a Spirit which brings fire and sword, unfolding new facets of its Treasure throughout time, in order that its central thrust may be ever renewed and vitally true, then to insist upon attachment to the beauty of the still enfolder bud, or the comfort of past emphases which may no longer speak clearly to current need, may suggest the absence of faith and trust in God, rather than its presence.

Again, if it be of God, it will prosper and like November it will come. But even November needs our help in coming for we have to work at letting go of October when November's time comes.

James G. Connor
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Ontario, NY

Catholic Courier Letters Policy

The *Catholic Courier* 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: *Catholic Courier*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, New York 14624. Please include your full name as well as telephone number and complete address for verification purposes.

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