

Farewell to a respected colleague and friend

I first met Associate Editor Teresa A. Parsons just over five years ago in a basement office on Rochester's South Union Street. I had been with the newly restaffed *Courier* for only a few days, and — alone in that office — had only begun to realize the enormity of the task I had undertaken.

Terri came to the *Courier* with what I have come to know as a characteristically quiet-but-unyielding persistence. She was determined to obtain a reporting job with her diocesan newspaper and, once hired, she went about that job like a dynamo. With her as a partner, I soon found my job far more manageable.

The rest is history, as they say. But the history of our partnership drew to a close last week, as Terri bade farewell to the *Courier* and its staff.

Several months ago, her husband, Jim, former anchorman with Rochester's News 8, took a position with Buffalo television station WGRZ-Channel 2. Since that switch, Jim has been commuting daily from Rochester — an arrangement that has placed considerable strain on Terri, Jim and their two small children.

The Parsons reluctantly decided to relieve that strain by moving this week to the Buffalo area. We at the *Courier* have known for some time that this moment was coming, but it caught up on us with unexpected speed Friday, Aug. 3, as we said our good-byes.

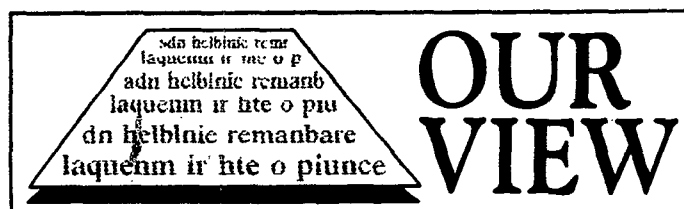
Although we know this move is best for Terri and



Teresa A. Parsons

her family, we wish she did not have to leave. Were it not for her, the *Courier* would not be the newspaper it is today.

Terri's contributions to this newspaper — and through it, to the Diocese of Rochester — are well-known to readers. Winner of numerous awards for insightful writing, Terri has skillfully conveyed the



pains and joys of the diocesan community through five years of finely crafted news and feature articles. For the past several months, she has spoken on behalf of all three *Courier* editors through thought-provoking "Our View" editorials.

Perhaps lesser-known — but suspected by many, I am sure — is the vast contribution Terri has made within the *Courier* office. Her humor, sensitivity and unflagging idealism have been a major force in forging the *Courier's* editorial vision.

And she has been our friend.

Knowing Terri's aversion to sentimentality, I won't carry on about how much we will miss her, but miss her we shall. Along with each of you, we ask God to richly bless the Parsons as they settle into their new home.

And, Terri, we wish you the best of luck in your career. The newspaper whose staff you join will be a fortunate publication, indeed.

Keep in touch!

— Karen M. Franz

Seminarian lauds example set by Bishop Matthew Clark

To the editor:

This letter is in response to Mr. Brian Sullivan's letter which appeared in the July 26, 1990, *Catholic Courier*.

I was greatly disturbed by Mr. Sullivan's assertion that men responding to a call to priesthood seek ordination in other dioceses because of "Bishop Clark ... and those who have his frame of mind, are the problem." As a seminarian of the Diocese of Rochester, I would like to assure Mr. Sullivan and your readers that I am a seminarian for this diocese because, in one respect, of Bishop Clark's witness.

To discern a call to priesthood is not an easy matter. Contrary to the belief of some, one does not just decide to become a priest. This decision is usually made after years of intensive prayer, spiritual direction, study and the encouragement of a faith community. My own discernment journey began about the age of 16 culminating with my "yes" to God at the age of 26. While on this journey, I experienced the bishop of this diocese to be a man of faith, love, kindness, compassion,

justice and peace. Are these not the virtues Christ himself embodied? Are these not the virtues to which we are called as Catholic Christians? ...

Mr. Sullivan refers to the ordination of three Legionaries of Christ in a context of loss to this diocese. We must be aware that the call to religious life is distinctly different than the call to diocesan priesthood. As for going outside one's home diocese to seek ordination, this seminarian's native diocese is Albany; yet, I have found a home and faith community in Rochester for the last nine years. The working of the Holy Spirit sometimes goes beyond human convention or tradition and sometimes leads one to journey to a new place.

Finally, and most importantly, Mr. Sullivan failed to mention the necessity for a faith community to encourage discernment in ministry as he reflected upon priesthood. For the past two years, I have been the Catechetical Leader of St. Anne Church in Rochester. The people of this parish not only affirmed my Catechetical

Ministry, but encouraged me to consider ordained ministry. My response to a call to priesthood was certainly helped by the faith of the people of St. Anne Church, by their belief in me and my gifts, and by their prayers. Mr. Sullivan, the call to ministry is the responsibility of all Catholic Christians, not just the Bishop. The shortage of ordained priests is a world-wide issue, not exclusively a Diocese of Rochester issue.

I have stated on numerous occasions to a

large number of people that one of the many reasons for my choosing priesthood with this diocese is the model and example of priestly ministry of Bishop Matthew Clark. When I was faced with the question, "Is it priesthood; and if it is, where?" the solution was to look here, for in God's infinite wisdom, God provided.

Lee P. Chase
Lorimar Street
Rochester

Cuomo called to act like a Catholic

To the editor:

Catholic Archbishop John O'Connor of the Archdiocese of New York City has recognized a serious difference of opinion between Mario Cuomo's public approval of abortion and the Catholic Church's sincere disapproval of abortion and has suggested the Governor change his approval of abortion or be excommunicated from the Catholic Church. The bishop wants commitment. In matters of politics, a politician can be equivocal, even to the extent that sidestepping an issue can be considered a virtue; but in matters of one's church, a spiritual vicar can demand that there be no doubt about a member's sincerity concerning the spiritual beliefs of that church.

It's fortunate Archbishop O'Connor has the courage to challenge the governor's public hypocrisy by calling to our attention that the governor is still accountable to his church when he promotes acts of legisla-

tion which are contrary to the laws of that church. The governor is being told that to be a member of the Catholic Church, a member must toe the line.

I think the governor could become reckless to his own self-serving interest by judging for himself what is and isn't a sin, for example, the sin tax on alcohol and tobacco. Isn't it naive to believe if a person would levy a tax on one special segment of society he would stop there, and for his own political popularity, find another group with beliefs contrary to his political base and again, to enhance his political popularity disregard what they find sacred? How long before all principles are forgotten at his convenience? ...

Before Mario Cuomo decides he is the judge for what is sinful and what sin serves him best, he should be reminded that to be a Catholic, he must act like a Catholic.

Joseph Blanda
Rutgers St. Rochester

Oversight flaws sisters' death-penalty stance

To the editor:

The noteworthy congregational statement of the Sisters of Mercy opposing the death penalty is unfortunately flawed by what it fails to mention (CC: July 12).

They completely ignore the statement of Pope Pius XII of Sept. 14, 1952, in his formal address to the First International Congress of Histopathologists of the Nervous System given at Rome: "Even when it is the question of the execution of a man condemned to death, the State does not dispose of the individual's right to live. It is then reserved to the public power to deprive the condemned of the benefit of life, in expiation of his fault, when already, by his crime, he has dispossessed himself of the right to life."

In ignoring the Pope's statement the Sisters are in good company since the bishops of the United States in their national statement and in their individual provinces' statements have also studiously ignored this statement of Pope Pius XII.

I believe that our Catholic people and others are being misled when statements like the nuns' statement fail to convey clearly that you may be for capital punishment or you may be against capital punishment, and in holding either position

you are not violating Catholic Doctrine.

In speaking to the Chaplains of the American Catholic Correctional Chaplains Association at his Philadelphia Cathedral in August of 1979, Cardinal John J. Krol, no mean jurist in his own right, pointed out: "Hence, Catholics are free to favor or oppose capital punishment on a practical basis, but not on a basis that it is either demanded by or contrary to the natural law." Too often today the impression is given that if you are for capital punishment you are in opposition to Catholic doctrine. That is simple nonsense.

Lastly, writing as an advocate for the silent incarcerated inmate, may I say the "life-without-parole sentence" of Governor Cuomo, while glib, overlooks the reality that murderers who do life sentences instead of being executed pose a very serious threat to their fellow inmates to whom life is just as dear as to the people on the street. Something is dreadfully wrong when we allow cold-blooded murderers to live, and then when they kill in prison as many of them do, we merely give them another life sentence and renew their license to kill.

Father James P. Collins
Elmira

**CATHOLIC
COURIER**

Bishop Matthew H. Clark, President
Bishop Dennis W. Hickey, Gen. Mgr.
Karen M. Franz, Editor/Asst. Gen. Mgr.

1150 Buffalo Road • Rochester, New York 14624 • 716/328-4340

Editorial Department:

Richard A. Kiley, Managing Editor • Teresa A. Parsons, Associate Editor
Lee Strong, Staff Writer • Rob Cullivan, Staff Writer
Babette G. Augustin, Photographer • Lynn A. Thornberry, Photo Intern

Business Department:

Mary E. Bittner, Office Manager • Bernie Puglisi, Advertising Manager
Jeanne A. Morin, Circulation Mgr. • Kathy Welsh, Ad. Account Executive

Production Department:

Lorraine Hennessey, Graphics Mgr. • Wayne A. Holt, Graphic Artist