

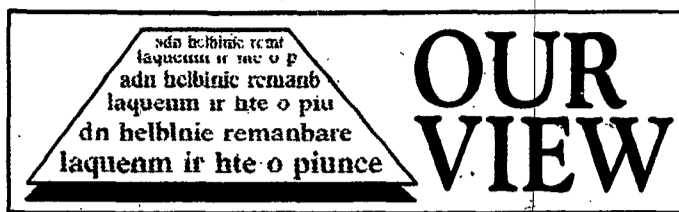
# Catholics need guidance on troubling issue

In mid-August, Pope John Paul II announced that the question of celibacy as a requirement for Latin-Rite priests will not be addressed during the world Synod of Bishops. The theme for the synod, which convenes in Rome later this month, is the formation of priests.

In making the announcement, the pope observed that Christ "guided his church in choosing this way" and "invited his apostles to commit themselves to this gift." He said, furthermore, that the challenge to "leave everything" to follow Jesus "means renouncing the formation of one's own family."

The synod will deal with celibacy only in the context of the Second Vatican Council's reaffirmation of it, the pope said, noting the council Decree on Priestly Formation's statement that Latin-rite seminarians "should be very carefully trained" for celibacy.

We cannot advocate dropping the celibacy requirement because some clerics — as evidenced by the sex scandals shaking the United States, Canada and Mexico in recent months — have not maintained fidelity to their vows. Doing so would be much like asking the church to condone widespread divorce because few



couples ever truly attain the ideal of Christian matrimony. Jesus, after all, did not call us to a discipleship of ease.

But neither can we overlook the seeming inconsistency contained in the requirements for secular (diocesan/non-monastic) priesthood. The vow of lifetime celibacy was not required of secular priests until the early Middle Ages, when the theology of monasticism became the dominant force in the Western church. And while secular priests have long shared with their cloistered counterparts the vow of obedience, the church has never imposed upon them the third monastic vow — poverty.

Thus, the pope's statement that mandatory celibacy is based on the call to "leave everything" appears to raise a logical conundrum: Based on this same call,

shouldn't the church likewise require all of its priests to renounce cars, boats, cottages and mutual funds?

Clearly, few if any priests in this diocese — or beyond — live lives of material excess, but the question concerns those aspects of priestly life dictated by canon law, not those determined by personal choice or circumstance.

Another quandary is raised by predictions that celebration of the Eucharist will become less and less frequent as the number of celebrants declines dramatically during the coming years. Eucharist, the very center of our faith, may thus become a rare privilege, as we cling to a disciplinary practice that — while highly valuable as a countercultural witness — is not essential to the faith.

This question, in particular, is troubling to many Catholics fearful of "priestless Sundays" in the not-too-distant future. We hope, therefore, that church leaders will continue their discussion of celibacy beyond the topic of seminary preparation, and will take the opportunity of a future synod to offer all their people some much-needed guidance on this complex issue.

— The Editors

## Father addresses errors in article about new foundation

To the editors:

On Thursday, June 14, 1990, an article appeared in (the Graduation '90) supplement of your newspaper that was for the most part, in total error. The article ("Memory of friend inspires senior") concerned my son's fatal automobile accident and the foundation that I started in his memory. If I am to maintain any kind of credibility with the Jaimie Foundation, it is extremely important that everyone know exactly what we are, and what we are not.

Just to clarify our status, we are, as of

October, 1989, a small business in Monroe County, and are presently engaged in the legalities of becoming a "not-for-profit" foundation. We are continuing to raise funds but have for the most part withheld any major dispensing of them until we become incorporated. These funds will be used to provide support for teens with chemical abuse problems.

Now, to set the record straight, on the night of the accident, Jaimie had been drinking, but he was never formally charged with driving while intoxicated. He had

however undergone treatment for chemical dependency at Park Ridge and after 18 months of sobriety, had what is called a slip.

Further, references were made stating that we were affiliated with Park Ridge Chemical Dependency Center, that \$2,000 was raised during a school fundraiser, and that money was given to Park Ridge in return for substance abuse information. This is also in error, as it pertains to Park Ridge. We did in fact raise \$2,000 partly because of a \$1,000 matching check from

Wegmans Corp., and all of this money, went into the Jaimie Foundation. We are not affiliated with Park Ridge Chemical dependency, and we did not give them any money, nor did we receive any information.

Another reference was made to the fact that we sponsored a "sober barn" which is in fact not totally accurate. We tried to form a merger with the Brighton Sober Barn, to place another facility in the town of Greece, but because of legalities and lack of funding, were unable to reach an agreement. Many people were aware of this attempted merger, and it would be unfair to them to think that any money they might have donated was used for a non-existent Greece facility.

This rebuttal is not made in any attempt to discredit anyone involved in the original article, it is only to set the record straight as far as the "Jaimie Foundation" is concerned, because it is my personal goal to have "honesty and integrity" as the bywords associated with our foundation.

Frank M. Musolino  
Program Director  
The Jaimie Foundation

## Atlanta scandal prompts reflections on 'romance'

To the editors:

Like everyone else today, I race to the morning newspaper with the curious mixture of heartsick dread and rapt fascination ... I'm afraid my interest is stimulated less by the nobility of the present patriotic rage than by the more immediate small-town scandal of lust-run-amok in the Diocese of Atlanta. I'm referring, of course, to the advent of the latest figure to gain national prominence in the ever-changing sphere of human psycho-sexual history, Vicki Long...

In addition to giving (the scandal concerning Long's affair with Archbishop Eugene Marino) the woman's cause tag, many people both in and out of the church are using the scandal to support their criticisms of what they view as an outdated, irrelevant mandatory celibacy rule for Catholic religious. Unfortunately, though, the celibacy rule is only the tip of a very confused iceberg of sexism and intolerance, which has and will continue to freeze untold numbers of valued souls out

of the Catholic Christian community. But that is another, longer story, and one that is not sufficient to tackle the specifics of this case.

In the final analysis, I'm most saddened by the unfortunate regret of this episode. Had the principals been a tad more graced with objective intelligence, emotional self-control, and firm courageous resolve, perhaps we'd be staring down the face of an improved and gently maturing Christianity — not to mention the love story of the 90's — but we're left with no heroes. Vicki and Eugene, who could have been a beacon of hope and personal courage to many, have fallen instead into the all-too-frequent abyss of the "outlaw" lovers: victims of an unhealthy structure of institution and society, lost in the wash of despair and madness. In the end, we will have all been exploited.

For now, the ex-archbishop is sequestered in the psychiatric ward of a hospital in New York, under a suicide watch, and Vicki continues on in progressive

mental illness, with the full cooperation of a morbidly interested world. Nowhere on a dilapidated Atlanta street corner, on the crumbling side of an abandoned building, is the bittersweet pledge of an inspired graffiti-artist: Eugene & Vicki, True Love Always.

The bell is tolled. Romance is dead.  
Martha A. Kelch  
Westway  
Rochester

EDITOR'S NOTE: This letter has been edited to comply with the Catholic Courier's Letters Policy.

## Effort begins to get EWTN on local television

To the editors:

Television programming in the Greater Rochester Area is limited for those seeking religious or inspirational programming. It would almost appear that Program Management goes out of their way to ensure that almost all programming available is of a nonreligious nature. This is unfair treatment to the Christian and Catholic majority that resides in the Greater Rochester Area.

Efforts in the past, to get alternate programming in the area, have been unsuccessful. Cable management have been reluctant to make a cable channel available to Christian programming, unless they get a significant response for their internally controlled survey. Unfortunately the timing of the survey is never known in advance, and the method of presentation used, make the religious program listed appear to be nonreligious. It would almost appear that Cable Management is unwilling to give Christian programming a fair shake.

To rectify this matter the Knights of Columbus, in conjunction with the Bishop of Rochester and the Diocese of Rochester, are planning to conduct a campaign to iden-

tify the level of interest that exists in the Greater Rochester Area for a Catholic cable program. An information program and signature gathering campaign will be conducted in all the churches served by Greater Rochester Cable (GRC) during the period September 1, through October 14, 1990. The purpose of this campaign will be to identify all of the families who would be interested in having the Eternal Word Television Network on the GRC Network.

Details of the campaign will be available in local parishes about Labor Day, and will continue for the next six weeks. The support and help of all Catholics in the Greater Rochester area is needed if we are to have a Catholic program on local TV. Contact your local pastor and volunteer to help. Write your own "Letter To The Editor," or write to the President of Greater Rochester Cable, 71 Mt. Hope Blvd., Rochester, N.Y. 14620, to express your concerns and desires. If you wish further information, contact Paul Alfano at 716/381-5771.

Paul J. Alfano, President  
Finger Lakes Chapter  
Knights of Columbus

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