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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.

**Dismayed
by photo**

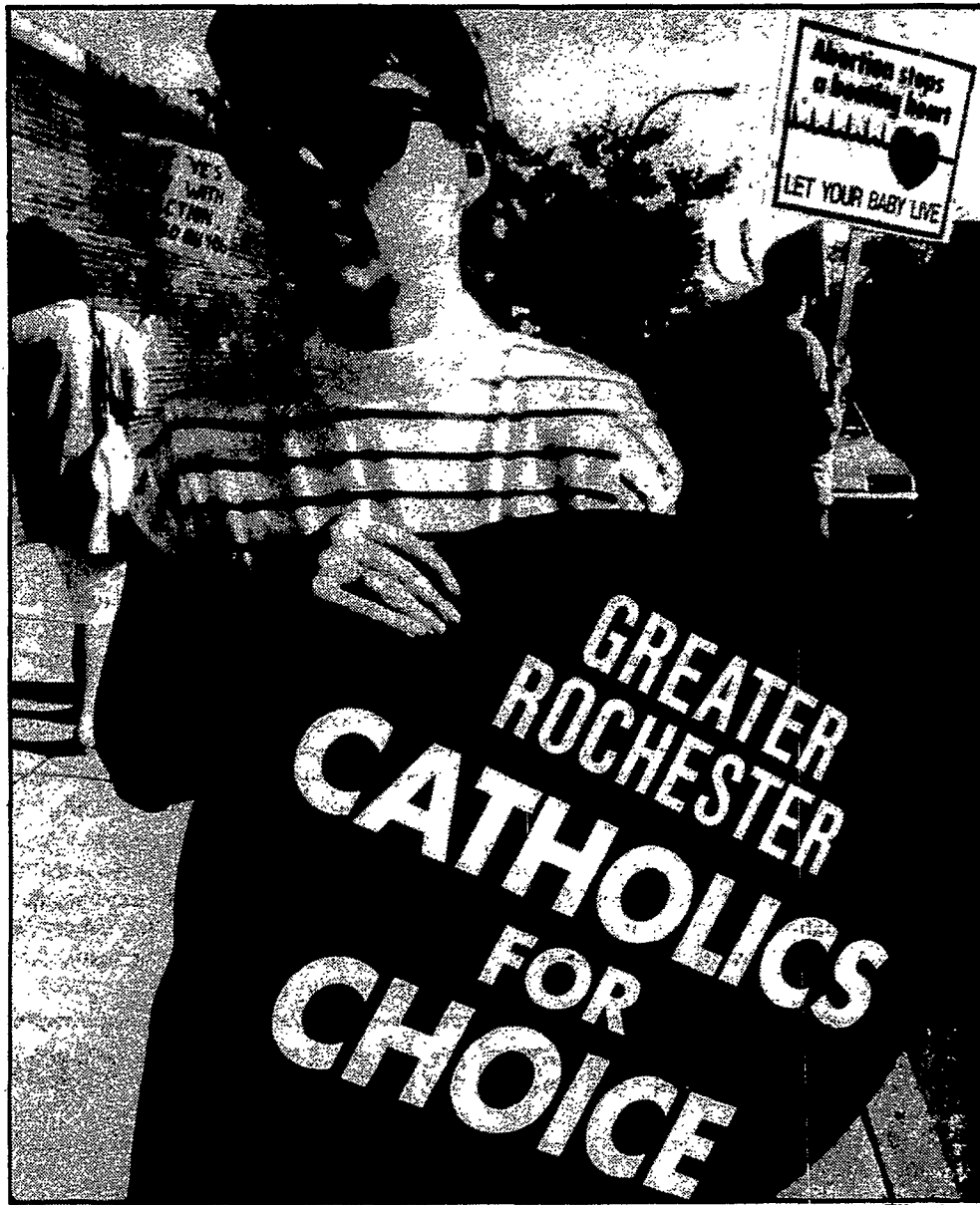
To the editors:

In the May 16 issue of the *Catholic Courier* there was a picture of a woman holding a sign that said "Greater Rochester Catholics for Choice." The picture looks like the *Catholic Courier* is in support of the so-called Catholics who are pro-death. The caption is worded in the same way it would have been in a pro-death or secular newspaper. I showed this picture to a few people and they were shocked to see that it was in a Catholic paper.

If bishops and priests aren't speaking out against the horrors of abortion on a regular basis and continue to allow pro-death Catholics to impose their position, then there will be many more Catholics who will accept abortion. What do these pro-death people think Jesus would say to the slaughtering of unborn babies? I guess they don't really care what he would think. I am deeply disappointed in the *Catholic Courier* for allowing Pro-death Catholics to view their position.

Kathy Heimbueger
Timothy Court
Rochester

EDITORS' NOTE: The *Catholic Courier* does not support *Catholics for Choice*, but neither does it slant the news to favor its own or any other position. The photograph in question — and the caption that accompanied it — indicated that pro-choice activists outnumbered pro-life activists at the demonstration. We did not take pleasure in that fact — but we did acknowledge it as a fact. If more pro-life activists had turned out for the event, the situation would have been different and our coverage would have reflected that difference.



OFFENDING PHOTO — Writer Kathy Heimbueger took umbrage at this photo and its caption. The caption stated, in part: "Pro-life demonstrators — including Jim Burke (right, rear) — were outnumbered nearly three-to-one by pro-choice demonstrators also marching in front of the 19th Ward Association building Monday afternoon, May 13."

Arguments against ordination lack basis

To the editors:

... It was with utter dismay that I read Father Shamon's column in the July 11 issue of the *Catholic Courier*, a column entitled "Jesus chose not to ordain women." While I respect the author as a person, I must raise strong objections to his message. ...

... At the outset, to avoid the all-knowing attitude of Father Shamon's message, I profess to be certain of very little. Just this. We are surrounded by a God of ineffable goodness, who loves us immeasurably beyond our comprehension, beyond our deserving. Who created us, stamping the uniqueness in each of us with a satisfying "Ahh...!" Who embraces, pokes, prods, challenges that uniqueness to emerge and develop beyond our wildest imaginings. Who often calls the least likely — by human standards — to be prophet, to be leader. Yes, this God of ours calls the Moses who claims not to speak well, the Jeremiah who claims to be too young, the Samaritan woman who claims to be a Samaritan — foe of a Judean and a woman besides. How can this be? Only God knows for sure. And we discover only gradually the nature of our own call as we get in touch with our deepest yearnings, those claims on our heart that we will die for, and our God given gifts as others say to us,

"Did you know you were good at that?"

... Father Shamon's article abuses Scripture, that faith filled account of the love relationship between our God and our ancestors in faith, both Jewish and Christian. As a person who has led weekly Bible study for several years and who has come to deeply love and appreciate the beauty of Scripture, I am pained by the article's cavalier approach to Jesus on the cross. It is quite one thing to imagine how this person or that person in Scripture might have felt. Often such imagining helps connect the living Word of Scripture to our own lives. But, it is quite another to presume to know the mind of God, especially when it is nowhere to be found in the Scripture. I am referring to Father Shamon's imaginings of "the Father's" words as Jesus was dying on the cross. Surely it is an abuse to equate our imaginings with the canon of Scripture.

Father Shamon's article abuses theology. As a student of theology, I learned that scholars today who explore and explain the nature of Church — ecclesiology — have rejected the "blueprint ecclesiology" rampant in this article. Such ecclesiology holds that Jesus left us all the details of church in an eternal plan. On the contrary, scholars today explain that Jesus left us few commands — among them, to "love

one another as I have loved you," to do Eucharist in memory of Him, "to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them" in the Trinity, to teach, to "proclaim the Good News to the whole of creation," to preach "repentance and forgiveness of sins." Jesus left no blueprint of the details, just a promise to be with us always. Scripture tells us how this worked in the early Church. In the Acts of the Apostles (15:1-35), we read about an early controversy. Should Gentile males who are becoming Christians be circumcised as were their Jewish brothers? The decision was no, this was unnecessary. "For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to impose on you no further burden than these essentials" (15:28, emphasis added). Scholars today agree that the Church has indeed changed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit ...

Finally, this article abuses women. While I do not claim to know the mind of Jesus or the will of God, it is clear in Scripture that Jesus sent women to proclaim the Good News. Mary Magdalen was sent to tell the disciples about the resurrection. In a real sense, she was an apostle, which means "one who is sent." Furthermore, we do not find in Scripture that Jesus ever ordained anybody to the priesthood. And it is clear that Paul considered Prisca and Aquila to be workers with him in Christ (Romans 16:3). Furthermore he referred to Phoebe as a deacon of the church at Cenchrae (Romans 16:1). Throughout the centuries and into the present time many gifted women have served and continue to serve as leaders in our Church. Teresa of Avila (in) 16th century Spain is only one shining example among many. To deny that such women exist is abuse. To claim that Jesus would never want women to be ordained is also abuse.

Gloria Ulterino
Stone Road Pittsford

EDITORS' NOTE: This letter has been edited to comply with space limitations.

Abortion ends unborn's promise, potential

To the editors:

What is so rare as a day in June? These words of the poet make me think of all the wonderful summer creation around us including butterflies and Northern Lights.

These are some of the natural joys babies will never know who have been killed by abortionists in abortion chambers.

When we do know that babies are killed without ever being given any anesthetic or any pain killer we know what a great evil abortion is.

And we do know that the baby killing in-

dustry exists with money as its only motive.

Any pretense by Planned Parenthood of compassion for anyone is exactly that — propaganda by pretense.

Christ showed us compassion by dying on the cross for us!

We can show compassion for all pre-born babies by joining a Right to Life or similar group and helping to fight the American Holocaust!

Mary Rita Crowe
Main Street Rochester