

1150 Buffalo Road
Rochester, NY 14624
716/328-4340

President

Bishop Matthew H. Clark

General Manager

Bishop Dennis W. Hickey

Editor/Asst. Gen. Mgr.

Karen M. Franz

Editorial Department

Managing Editor

Richard A. Kiley

Staff Writers

Lee Strong

Finger Lakes

Rob Cullivan

Monroe County

Photographer

Babette G. Augustin

Photo Interns

Philip Archer

Brian Crites

Business Department

Office Manager

Mary E. Bittner

Circulation Manager

Jeanne A. Morin

Advertising Manager

Bernie Puglisi

Advertising Account Exec.

Kathy Welsh

Receptionist

Amy Fortier

Production Department

Graphics Manager

Lorraine Hennessey

Graphic Artist

Michael Fleckenstein

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.

Abuse is commonly misunderstood

To the editors:

I appreciated the two articles on domestic violence you published in your September 19 edition ("A Sea of Violence" and "Teens conceal abuse in dating relationships"). Both articles made many important points.

After speaking to several readers of the articles, however, I feel I should clear up some possible misconceptions.

The first article devotes considerable space to Bethany House, which is a wonderful and caring shelter for homeless women, but may leave your readers with the impression that it is a battered women's shelter.

This may be a good opportunity to clear up a common misconception in the Rochester community. While there are several fine women's shelters here, some transitional, and many housing abused women at times, there is only one domestic violence shelter — Alternatives for Battered Women.

What makes a battered women's shelter? First, all ABW residents are women and children who need safety from dangerous abuse. One of its primary concerns is security, and confidentiality of location. Careful monitoring of its perimeter, is part of this concern.

Second, it is an emergency shelter, with the ability to take in victims of abuse at any hour. In New York state, we are licen-

sed as a domestic violence residential program.

Third, an integral part of a battered women's program is the 24-hour crisis hotline, staffed by counselors trained to provide crisis counseling, court information, referrals, advocacy and safety planning.

Fourth, a battered women's program like Alternatives for Battered Women (ABW) has an array of counseling services for victims and survivors of battering, both women and their children, individually and in support group.

Fifth, part of its mission is to educate the community and its professionals about domestic violence. ABW's Speakers Bureau provides about 200 presentations each year, plus those to students as part of the Dating Violence Education Program.

If any of your readers suspects he or she is living in an abusive relationship, a call to the ABW hotline (716/232-7353) may save a life.

One other point: the second article indicates that teen abuse is "just as likely to happen against males as females." While abuse certainly can go both ways in younger teens, by late teens, girls and young women are the primary victims. By adulthood, domestic violence becomes the single largest cause of injury to women — more than rape, muggings and auto accidents combined.



So many women live with fear, self-blame, humiliation and hopelessness. You have given them the information that may become a window of hope. Thank you.

Phyllis S. Korn, CSW
Executive Director
Alternatives for Battered Women, Inc.
Rochester

Commends diocese for initiating dialogue

To the editors:

I was a participant in the Pro-Life/Pro-Abortion dialogue over the past 2 years. Unlike others on both sides of the debates, I am not "frustrated" by its conclusion (*Catholic Courier*, Aug. 15: "Both sides frustrated in talks over civil disobedience").

I would like to commend the Diocese of Rochester's staff who participated in these difficult dialogues. Many hours and I'm sure many dollars were spent in the effort to bring the two differing views to some common ground. I would also like to thank the Bishop for sending a representative of his and of the Diocese of Rochester to speak in support of a parental notification amendment before the Monroe County

Legislature. Although it's passage failed this time, I believe it's passage is very near. It is important for us to start educating ourselves on all issues concerning abortion. I would like to ask our Bishop to appoint a Director of Pro-Life Activities for the Diocese of Rochester and have this office and/or person work with and coordinate activities with the many Pro-Life groups throughout the Diocese, State of New York and all the other Dioceses throughout the U.S.

I thank Bishop Clark for his statements on Civil Disobedience, I thank all other leaders of our Church for their support and participation in Operation Rescue and "rescue those who are being dragged to their deaths" (Proverbs 24:11)

I also thank Dr. (Eric) Schaff for his honesty and I admire his firm stance on his beliefs. I would like to ask Dr. Schaff if he thinks he would have trespassed, blocked a train arrest by the local authorities sworn to obey the law in Germany in the early 1940s if he thought the possibility existed that the people on that train — maybe not all of them but probably some — were being dragged to their deaths? We all know there were differing views concerning the worth and dignity of different classes of beings back then.

God forgive those who knew and didn't act in that manner.

Bob Dorscheid
Aspen Drive
Penfield

'Appeasement' policy contributes to church malaise

To the editors:

Fr. McBrien's column (*Catholic Courier*, Aug. 29: "Many find sexual teachings simplistic") called to mind a quotation attributed to Anglican writer Harry Bloomires — "We do not need a horned devil, scattering lies to lead us astray. A theologian, speaking selected truths, can do it just as easily."

Father McBrien's comments regarding abortion reflect the unacceptable consequentialist moral theory — a theory that holds the moral malice of actions is ultimately determined by the effects or consequences, rather than by the intrinsic nature of the actions (*Catholic Encyclopedia*)

He divides the moral reasoning that makes no distinction in the aborting of "an embryo, a non-life fetus or a fully developed fetus," inferring that the dispute over when life begins remains questionable. This, despite his Church's position, the conclusion of the 1967 First International Conference on Abortion, and the scientific community's testimony at the 1981 Congressional hearings that life begins at conception.

Further, if the Church's teachings on human sexuality are "ineffective" and "fall on deaf Catholic ears" — as Father McBrien contends — he should look to himself, his dissenting fellow theologians,

radical feminists and their women-church network, and the appeasing American Episcopacy as major contributors to the malaise. Fortunately, not all Catholic ears are so afflicted.

Father McBrien and his school of modernist theologians are quoted as considering themselves a "second magisterium," to guide and direct the Holy Father and the Vatican magisterium. Such a presumption should lead us to pray: St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle and protect us from the intellectual elitism of modernist theologians.

A.J. Annunziata
Holiday Drive, Horseheads

Corruption may emanate from distortion of humanity's nature

To the editors:

Mr. Richard Hussar in his letter (*Catholic Courier*, Aug. 29: "Naturalism corrupts Catholic institutions") raises some points I'd like to question. At the outset, it would have been helpful had he defined what he understands by naturalism. A revered teacher once told me that the further one gets from nature, possibly the farther one gets from its author, God. Certainly all nature shouts and sings to us about Him.

Perhaps instead of church corruption, it is we ourselves who have been corrupted

by allowing the distortion of our human nature: we no longer tend to live reflective, contemplative lives. It may be that we give the gentle breeze of the spirit little opportunity to show us that natural causes originate with God.

We probably should examine the "isms" to discover which of God's truths may be hidden or exaggerated in them, but why continue to waste energy denying this once its discovered? For example, why deny God the right to use evolution in his creation process if he so chose? Forty or fifty years ago his Spirit allowed the Jesuit

Father Chardin insight into a Catholic Christian understanding of this possibility!

Similarly, Mr. Hussar's emphasis on the Holy Roman Catholic Church as the "sole road to heaven" in the perspective of Pope Pius XI and Leo XIII seems to ignore completely the Spirit's inspiration unfolded for us by the Council of Vatican II.

Finally, it seems likely that Christ will come to reign publicly when he reigns privately in enough hearts.

James Connor
Ontario Center Road
Ontario