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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.

**Knights back prayer effort on abortion**

**To the editors:**

This month is Respect Life Month. Abortion is looked upon as a scourge on Society and a sword through the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Prayer is our shield against the wickedness of sin and the works of Satan.

Our Council is sponsoring the Prayer To Stop Abortion. It is a prayer that has the approval of our Bishop, Matthew H. Clark, and the support of the Finger Lakes Chapter (Diocese of Rochester) of the Knights of Columbus as well as our State Deputy, Raymond P. Pfeifer. We offer this prayer to the people of our Diocese knowing that its widespread use will bring help from above. Anything can be accomplished through prayer. Let us remember the unborn saints who have gone before us through no fault of their own.

John J. Niziurski Jr.  
Grand Knight  
St. Leo's Council #9461  
Hilton

**Prayer To Stop Abortion**

*Oh God, Forgive us for the atrocities of abortion.*

*Forgive those who have the chance to help the unborn but turn their backs.*

*Breathe the Wisdom of the Holy Spirit into our lawmakers and judges.*

*Give courage and strength to those who must choose whether to terminate a pregnancy.*

*Give all of us the stamina to fight those who advocate abortion.*

*Help us to respect the Sanctity of Life as an extension of your Divine Love.*

*We ask this, as always, through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.*

**Synod should address catechetical needs**

**To the editors:**

Your article "Bishop Clark unveils six themes for diocesan synod" (*Catholic Courier*: Sept. 5) proffers a list of spiritual symptoms which indicate that the diocesan Church is undernourished in many ways.

Evidence of this is quite apparent in the frequency of such occurrences as (1) cessation of church attendance, (2) defections to the Fundamentalists, (3) defections from the priesthood and convents and (4) drastic withering of vocations to the religious life.

It is my hope that the above cited specifics are somehow allocated serious consideration by the Synod under one or several of the six themes.

I am firmly convinced that much of the undernourishment noted above and in the six themes is the result of not applying the

brick and mortar of a vital catechetics program to building our Diocesan Church structure. Today we are or should be aware of many weaknesses in that structure.

If the riches and vibrancy of genuine catechetical instruction are thinned down by indifferent, casual teachers and/or the use of techniques and material enfolded in the "inductive method," we find that it sidetracks at best the teachings of the Faith and substitutes the development of personal relationships of the child or student with his family, classmates and others.

The final result is we have a child or student filled with a humanism that is unsymmetrical because it is essentially based on secularism. There is no dimension in it that really leads to God and therefore the student has a blind spot in

his character which types him as abjectly ignorant of the wellspring of true humanism and a dolt on the basics of the Faith. Proper inculcation of the Faith will of course naturally do away with both deficiencies.

For these reasons it seems appropriate to suggest that special attention be directed by the Synod to all the facets — content, implementation, instruction — of catechetics in the Diocese.

The extent that this area will be reviewed by the Synod is not clear to me from the account in the *Courier*. If it is neglected or insufficient, the Diocesan Church will continue to be undernourished and wavering and the Synod will have failed.

William T. Hammill  
Clardale Drive, Rochester

**'Disappointed' that article did not mention agency**

**To the editors:**

As the agency that sponsored the September 11th presentation by Frances Kissling, national president of Catholics For a Free Choice, we were more than a little disappointed that we did not receive so much as a mention in your article of September 19th ("Speaker warns of 'civil war' over abortion").

It took a great deal of effort to bring Ms. Kissling to Rochester, as well as a commitment to furthering community dialogue on this divisive issue. Kissling's message was an important one: in order to find the middle ground on this issue, we

must begin to listen to each other, and we must discuss the ways to prevent the need for abortion in the first place, such as healthier attitudes towards sexuality education and birth control.

We were also disappointed that out of approximately 200 people in attendance that evening, the only person interviewed (other than Ms. Kissling) was Father Anthony Mugavero. While Father Mugavero is involved in ongoing dialogue on this issue on the local level, not one of the many pro-choice Catholics in attendance was interviewed for a comment. And in fact, not only was Planned Parenthood not men-

tioned, there was no acknowledgement of the local chapter of Catholics For a Free Choice, even though they were on hand that evening.

No sour grapes here, because the lack of mention was probably an oversight. But with so much "Planned Parenthood bashing" going on in the "pro-life" community, people ought to realize how hard we work to continue discussion on this issue — an issue that isn't going to just go away.

Sarah Grace Frisch  
Community Affairs Coordinator  
Planned Parenthood, Rochester

**What source — except abortion — could provide tissue for research?**

**To the editors:**

In her July 26, 1991 letter to physicians stating that she was pleased to have voted to authorize federal funding of human fetal tissue research, Louise M. Slaughter (D-30th District) seemed to gloss over the moral implications of the use of human tissue for research in favor of possible benefits. How would this tissue be collected? Would the subject benefit from the research? Would the subject still be alive when the tissue is collected? Who could validly give consent to the use of the hu-

**man fetal tissue for research?**

If the fetus were the victim of an unavoidable miscarriage, its life not jeopardized by the taking of the tissue and permission given by mother and/or father, I believe she would have a valid argument. However, her letter indicated that the fetal tissue in mind would come from unborn children deliberately killed by abortion.

Once the killing of the unborn was legalized, it became apparent that it would only be a matter of time before those who did not value unborn life *per se* would

covet the bodies for research or other useful purposes.

If Louise Slaughter represents you, and you are alarmed by her position, I hope you will act accordingly.

Jeanne D. Sweeney  
Nob Hill, Rochester

**EDITORS' NOTE:** Rep. Slaughter's letter — a copy of which was provided to the *Courier* by Mrs. Sweeney — does not explicitly state that tissue for the proposed research would be derived from abortions.