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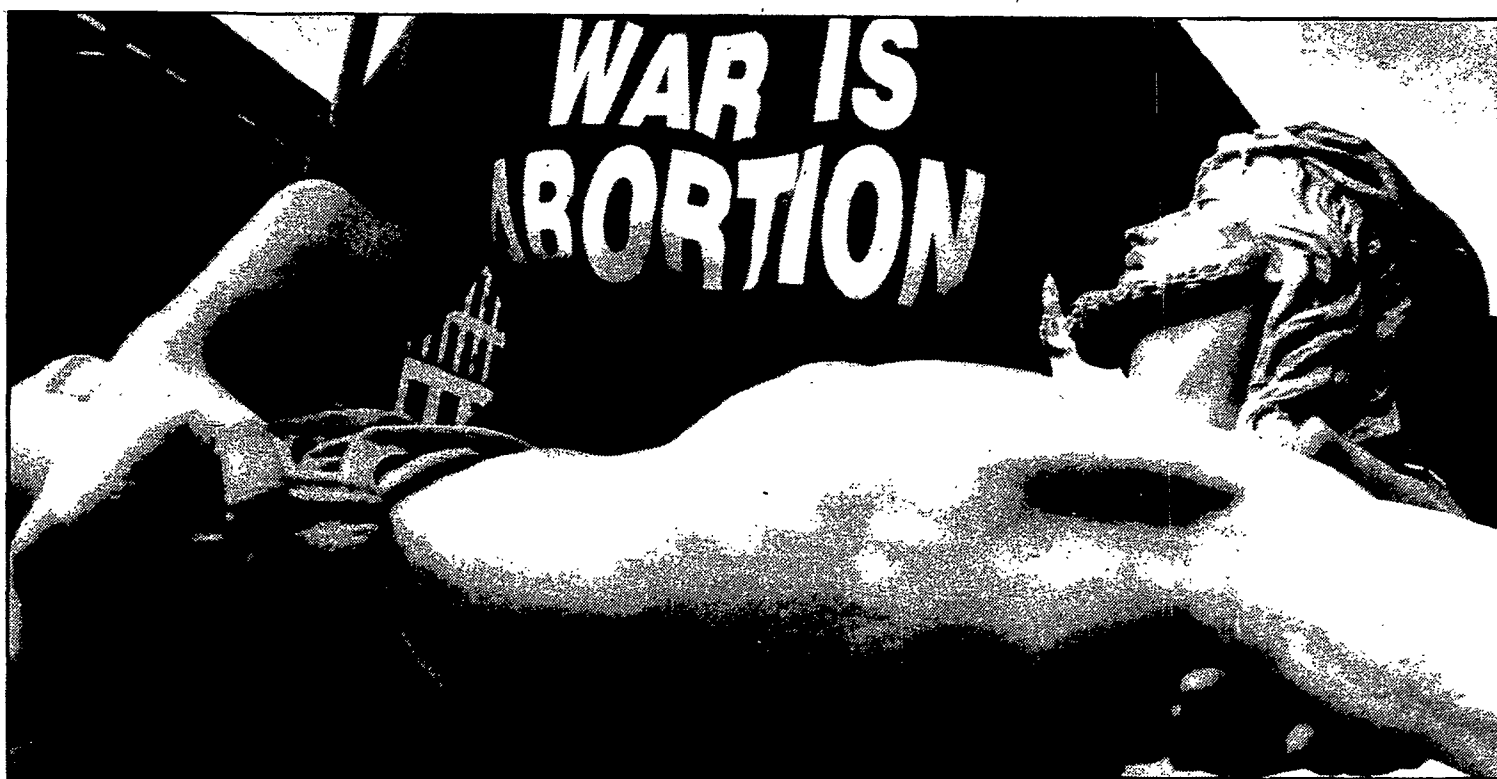
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**Letters Policy**

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.



Babette G. Augustin/Staff photographer

Vivian Rightmeyer holds the corpus used in an Oct. 25 protest at the Kenneth Keating Federal Building, Rochester.

**Protesters targeted both war and abortion**

To the editors:  
We wish to highlight essential elements of the recent civil disobedience at Planned Parenthood (Oct. 26) which may be unknown to readers of your news story, "Father Berrigan among five arrested at protest." (*Catholic Courier*, Oct. 31).

As adherents to the consistent-ethic-of-life, the Faith and Resistance Community staged a similar protest at the Federal Building the previous day (Oct. 25). There, at risk of arrest, we erected a 10 foot by 6 foot crucifix signifying our Christian commitment to speak the truth about U.S. economic injustice and our nation's legalized killing through war and abortion.

The statistic of 1.6 million pre-born U.S. children aborted annually is well known to many Catholics. Less well-known are the statistics of war-related killing. The U.S. is the world's #1 arms merchant, and as such, is responsible for globally abetting wars of massive destruction to life.

Among recent obvious war casualties are the deaths of up to 4,000 Panamanians killed during the U.S. invasion, the 100,000 plus people — including many community leaders, teachers, and religious — killed by U.S. weapons and U.S. trained armies and

police in El Salvador, and by U.S. backed Contras in Nicaragua.

This year's brief war against Iraq utilized 88,500 tons of explosives, the equivalent of just under seven Hiroshimas. It caused the deaths of as many as 400,000 Iraqis, including the thousand of Iraqi children, expected to die by Jan. 1992 — (according to a) Harvard Medical Team Report — from inadequate food, medical care and the availability of only sewage water to drink. While the deaths from such deprivation and its attendant disease continue to mount, our sanctions preventing the rebuilding of Iraq's infrastructure remain in force.

Where are the voices of protest which should be emanating from Christian churches, institutions and schools regarding this carnage?

During the years 1980-1990, we allowed our military budget to rise 37 percent, accompanied by a funding decline of 42 percent in programs for the destitute.

Where are the multitudes of Christians protesting the "massacre" of the "Peace Dividend" which is so urgently needed by our less fortunate sisters and brothers at home — the 31 million U.S. citizens living below the poverty level, the 20 million malnourished, the

3 million homeless and the 20 million illiterate.

We continue to take from the poor and give to the programs which kill people.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. has stated that, "Violence brutalizes the perpetrator." Surely brutality is manifested in our current national priorities and involvements.

We do not suggest isolationism, weakness or passivity in the face of evil. Rather prayer, repentance, and a turning from greed are desperately needed. The imitation of Jesus' self-sacrificial resistance to evil through non-violent love is our authentic Christian tradition and the only remedy for societal ills.

The words of Pope John Paul II, a vocal opponent of both the Gulf War and of abortion, call us to the path of Christian fidelity, "Do not follow any leaders who train you in the ways of inflicting death. Love life, respect life, in yourself and in others."

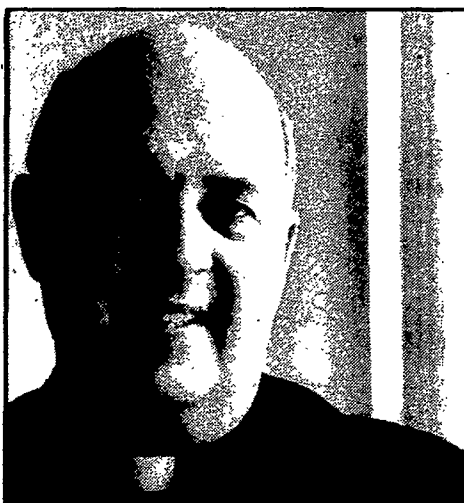
EDITORS' NOTE: This letter was signed by Janet Bezila, Carol Crossed, Donna Kearney, John "Pat" O'Hara, all of Rochester; and Father Daniel Berrigan, SJ, of New York City.

**Fr. Bayer lauded for help at parish**

To the editors:  
We want to express our gratitude and thanks to Father Peter Bayer for all he has done for us and many other members of St. Mark's parish in Greece. Father Bayer has been assisting at St. Mark's since March of 1976.

During these past 15 years, Father Bayer has given his time and energy to helping St. Mark's. He has been an integral part in the lives of the parishioners, young and old, alike. He will be missed by all and we wish him the very best.

Dario and Carol Bevilacqua  
Shoreway Drive, Greece



File photo

Father Peter T. Bayer, chancellor of the diocese and director of diocesan Financial Services, will step down from both positions Dec. 31.

**Father McBrien should recall his own 'big tent'**

To the editors:  
Father McBrien's column of Nov. 7 brought a smile to my face when he criticized Vice President Quayle for saying that the GOP has a "big tent" with room for differing views.

Et tu Father McBrien. You have on occasion mentioned that the Catholic

Church is big enough to accommodate different interpretations of its teachings! What's more, you frequently expose views not in accord with the official body of the church!

Jane Predmore  
Clover Street  
Honeoye Falls

**Sodom doomed by lack of virtue**

To the editors:  
Although Sodom, as Dorothy Williams correctly states in her letter of Nov. 7, was beset by the same lawlessness and immorality as our society, God did not destroy the city simply because of its sinfulness, but because not 10 righteous men could be found.

When God revealed to Abraham his plans for the destruction of the city, where his brother Lot lived, he bargained, "Suppose there are 50 righteous men within the city, wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the 50 righteous that are in it?" Abraham apparently doubted that 50 would be found, for he continued to bargain down: "Suppose 10 shall be found there?" God then answered, "I will not destroy it for 10's sake."

Even those 10 could not be found. And so Lot, his wife and two daughters were reluctantly led out of the city by two angels before the holocaust. (Genesis 18:17-33; 19:1-16)

Betty Tuccinardi  
Clark Road  
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