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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.



File photo  
Trappist theologian and author Thomas Merton wrote his best-selling autobiography, *The Seven Storey Mountain*, in 1948 — 20 years before his death at age 53.

**Merton later modified views  
in regard to Catholic schools**

To the editors:

I am grateful, for a number of reasons, to Mary E. Quinn for calling attention (*Catholic Courier*, Feb. 20: "Merton would mourn Catholic school closing") to Thomas Merton. She quoted from *The Seven Storey Mountain* — a book published in 1948 — a passage in which Merton speaks of the responsibility that Catholic parents have to send their children to Catholic schools. It so happens that Merton had occasion to refer to that very same passage almost 20 years later. In 1967 a 16-year-old high school student who corresponded with him asked what he would do if he were to rewrite that book. His answer: "If I had to rewrite *Seven Storey Mtn.*, I'd cut out a lot of the sermons, I guess, including the sales pitch for Catholic schools and that."

I don't quote Merton against Merton to suggest that if he were alive today, he would not have been interested in Catholic schools. I quite agree with Ms. Quinn that he would surely have been concerned that they survive. I don't think, however, that he would have felt that the only way to have Catholic schools is the way we have had them in the past. He would, I believe, have seen the problem of escalating costs and decreasing enrollments as a diocesan problem needing to be addressed at that level. He would, I think, have been supportive of the efforts the diocese is making to do precisely that. He was not afraid to face hard questions and to seek new answers when the old no longer sufficed.

Monsignor William H. Shannon  
East Avenue  
Rochester

**Non-Catholic recalls Father Cuddy's kindness  
during stay in Ithaca hospital five decades ago**

To the editors:

I am a non-Catholic, but as a subscriber and reader of the *Catholic Courier* for many years I would like to comment upon my friend Father Paul J. Cuddy. I first met him at Briggs Memorial Hospital, Ithaca, New York, on a March day in 1938. I had broken my back as a teenager and here I was at Briggs enclosed in a full split plaster case which I was to occupy continuously for the next five years. Father Cuddy came in one morning, he saw me ... and introduced himself. He said he knew how I was feeling but he had something which would help me. Next day he returned and pulled out of his pocket three objects: a small wooden Crucifix, a thumb tacker and the book *The Red Rose of Suffering*. Now I could only look at the wall opposite me, so

he hung the Crucifix exactly where my eyes would see the wall. "This will help," he remarked. So I looked at the Crucifix and suddenly one day everything changed. I felt happy and the pain seemed to lessen.

Father and his friend, Father Robert L. Kress, were friends for years, even when Father Cuddy went in the Armed Forces as a Chaplain. I have never forgotten their concern and Christ-like compassion.

I was saddened when they both passed on but I am sure they went into eternal glory and rest. These memories live on in the minds and hearts of many whose lives they touched. I will never forget.

Jerome E. Kamminga  
Cedarwood Towers  
Rochester

**Washington trip  
was time to fight  
for unborn lives**

To the editors:

Ten of our Cluster Parishioners (St. Anne's Palmyra/St. Gregory's, Marion) were among the 100,000 people who were in March for Life Jan. 22 in Washington, D.C.

We thought the bus ride — eight hours each way — was long, but not when you consider some spend 30 hours.

The group attended 7 a.m. Mass, upon arrival, in St. Peter's Church on Capital Hill. Our Communion offered up for the unborn babies. Thanking God for a safe trip and to accomplish our mission to end abortion.

We heard from a variety of speakers, Congressmen, Pro-Life Leaders and clergymen. John Cardinal O'Connor from New York City always gives an inspiring speech. He commented, although we ourselves become weary sometimes, but don't give up the fight to release these unborn babies from bondage, from being slaughtered.

I am sure we all felt good inside knowing we had come to Washington, D.C., to fight for our unborn baby brothers and sisters.

Rena B. Camblin  
Meadow Drive  
Palmyra

**Men need to seek out  
more spiritual renewal**

To the editors:

The Diocesan Synod has announced that six themes are to be addressed by six committees who will develop documents analyzing the needs of the Church in light of the Gospel and Church teachings. Of the 60 people chosen on the teams, it is interesting to note that 36 percent are men and 66 percent are women. Of these people five out of six writers are women.

There may be a need to extend the synod to include a seventh theme, seven being an ancient number symbolizing completion. That theme could be, "how do we get more men involved in personal, spiritual renewal in the Church of Rochester?"

It is "not" likely that the Holy Spirit is calling more women rather than men into vocal, leadership roles in the Church. If more men become humble, holy servants of Jesus, would not these Christian men, like St. Joseph, make a generous contribution to the betterment of society? I have never met a woman who would not have liked to have married or to have known St. Joseph, head of the Holy Family for 30 years. If we form modern men into a "faithfilled, charitable, Christian man," how many of the social ills addressed by the Synod would disappear? Many!

Frank Nettl  
Weedsport-Sennett Road  
Weedsport

**Kids' page applauded**

To the editors:

I am writing in regards to the "Kids' Chronicle" in the *Catholic Courier*. I think it's great! It's a good way to include kids in a very fun and positive way. The older kids feel "grown-up" reading from the "paper." And for the younger non-readers, it's a way to enrich our faith with parent-child interaction that goes beyond the daily prayers, the Mass, etc.

Thank you and Cindy Bassett.  
Mary Myers  
Cedar Swamp Road  
Phelps

**Q & A**  
If the Hebrews wanted to be God's special they had to promise they the Ten Commandments. What did promise in return for?

**Kids' Club**  
**Talking to God**  
**The Bible Times**

**Kids' Chronicle**