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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.

Homosexual priest bound by vows

To the editors:

In regards to your March 26 column "Essays in Theology: Two views on homosexuality," Father McBrien speaks of basic Christian principles and values that gays and lesbians deserve the same respect as any other human being. Where did you get your information on this, Father McBrien?

Granted, attacks and physical abuse are not advocated by any means plain and simple, but blatantly disregard Biblical teachings that homosexuality is an abomination, is evading the issue at best. You then go on to say that "40 percent or more of the candidates for priesthood are gay." For a candidate to enter the priesthood, he would be required to remain celibate as a priest. If a homosexual or heterosexual priest

violated their celibate pledge to God, he would be guilty of adultery in its worst form. Since the Catholic church is a conservative church by its nature and those who enter the priesthood understand these values, this example is more of an exception than the rule. For a priest to actively participate in an act that is against God as stated in the Bible, is a sin that must never be justified at any cost. However, to know an act is wrong and to avoid it as such by living a life of discipline, obedience, self-denial and not giving in to every dark desire, is worthy of God's blessings.

We must get back to the basic sound values of a healthy church and not give in to these liberal ideals. In the book, *Our Lady Speaks to Her Beloved*

Priests ... I present this passage that seems appropriate:

"The confusion grows greater even within the church and now spreads to every part of the world. The first to be stricken are the priests. Each day, the number of those who allow themselves to be misled by the error which leads to infidelity grows greater and greater."

Please Father McBrien, don't help add to the confusion rampant in our society on church matters. Please don't be misled by a few of this "40 percent" who would have you believe that they are the majority.

**Michael P. Valerio
Malin Lane
Penfield**

Fr. McBrien created 'fog' with column

To the editors:

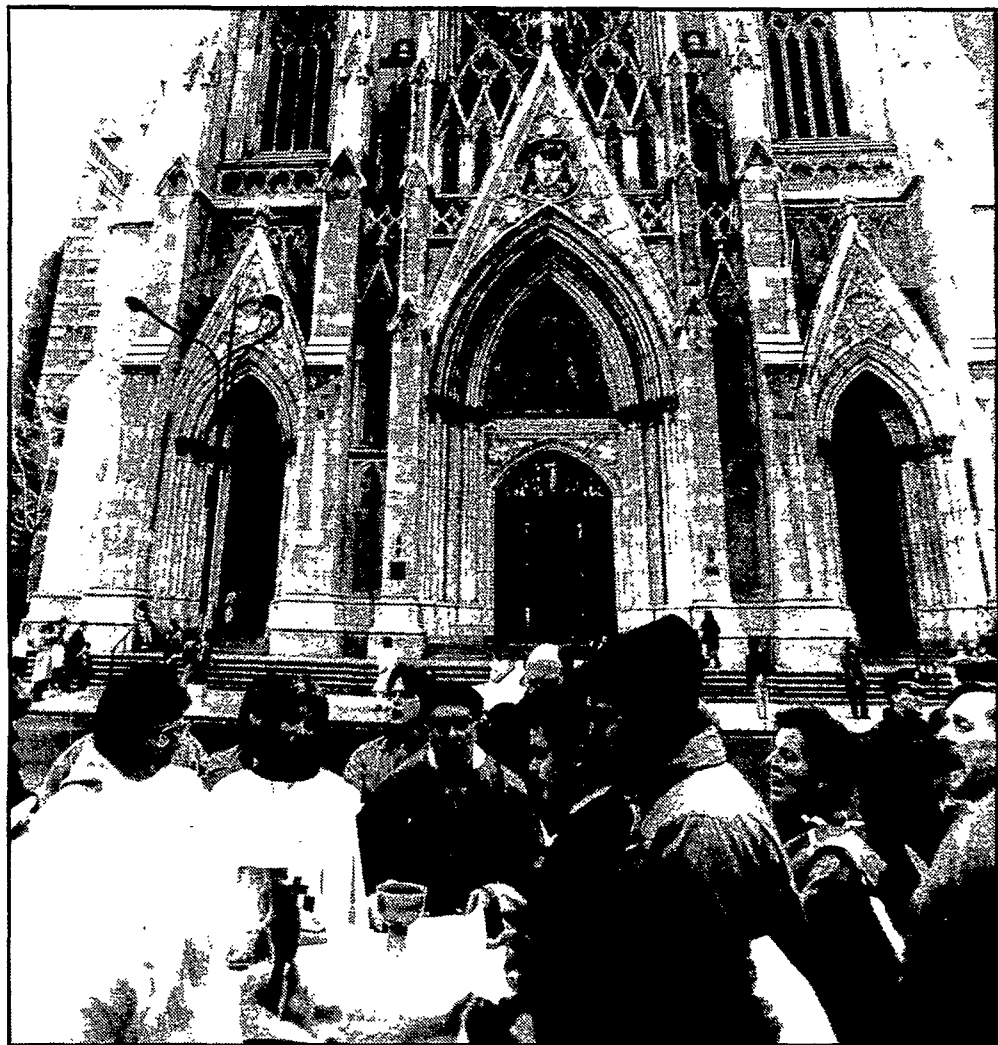
After reading Father McBrien's column on homosexuality (*Catholic Courier*, March 26), I find he expressed many different views, but ambiguously, claimed none of them as his own. So, I think it is timely and only fair for the Church to express its official teaching on this subject from "Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics," by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith:

"At the present time there are those who, basing themselves on observations in the psychological order, have begun to judge indulgently, and even to excuse completely, homosexual relations between certain people. This they do in opposition to the constant teaching of the magisterium and to the moral sense of the Christian people.

"A distinction is drawn, and it seems with some reason, between homosexuals whose tendency comes from a false education, from a lack of normal sexual development, from habit, from bad example, or from other similar causes, and is transitory or at least not incurable; and homosexuals who are definitely such because of some kind of innate instinct or a pathological constitution judged to be incurable.

"In regard to this second category of subjects, some people conclude that their tendency is so natural that it justifies in their case homosexual relations within a sincere communion of life and love as analogous to a marriage, insofar as such homosexuals feel incapable of enduring a solitary life.

"In the pastoral field, these ho-



File photo
Father William O'Brien, a retired priest, celebrated Mass for homosexual-rights activists outside St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York March 9, 1988.

mosexuals must certainly be treated with understanding and sustained in the hope of overcoming their personal difficulties and their inability to fit into society. Their culpability will be judged with prudence. But no pastoral method can be employed which would give moral justification to these acts which lack an essential and indispensable finality. In Sacred Scripture they are condemned as a serious depravity and even presented as the sad consequence of rejecting God. This judgment of Scripture does not of

course permit us to conclude that all those who suffer from this anomaly are personally responsible for it, but it does attest to the fact that homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered and can in no case be approved."

I hope that (this quotation) will help to dissipate some of the fog which reading Father McBrien's column always generates.!

**Marion Seelman
Sharon Drive
Rochester**

Welcomed bishop's support of United Way campaign

To the editors:

Bishop Matthew Clark's support for the 1992 Greater Rochester United Way-Red Cross Campaign (*Catholic Courier* April 16: "Along the Way") was certainly welcome. I fear, however, his announced support may have come too late to change the minds of contributors who succumbed to the inaccurate and negative information spread by the coalition of anti-abortion organizations.

This year, more than ever before, the 254 agencies that receive financial support from the United Way need the community's help to meet a growing

demand for services. Faced with cut-backs in state funding, these organizations depend on the United Way to maintain important services to children, families and senior citizens.

It is an outrage that the anti-abortion coalition purposely set out to undermine the campaign to further their own ends. It is equally shameful that churches allowed them to solicit support from parishioners.

If their efforts are successful, and the United Way falls far short of its \$38.5 million goal, the coalition will have done nothing to substantially harm Planned Parenthood, but will have

been successful in hurting agencies that may suffer cuts in United Way funding, including those with a strong Catholic tradition.

Bishop Clark was right to urge readers to separate the anti-abortion issue from the United Way campaign. The United Way deserves all our support.

We can only hope that those who agreed to send the United Way notices that they will not contribute this year will look at what is really at stake and reconsider their decision.

**Robert L. Meteyer
Wyndale Road, Rochester**