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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.

Abortion fight needs leaders to act

To the editors:

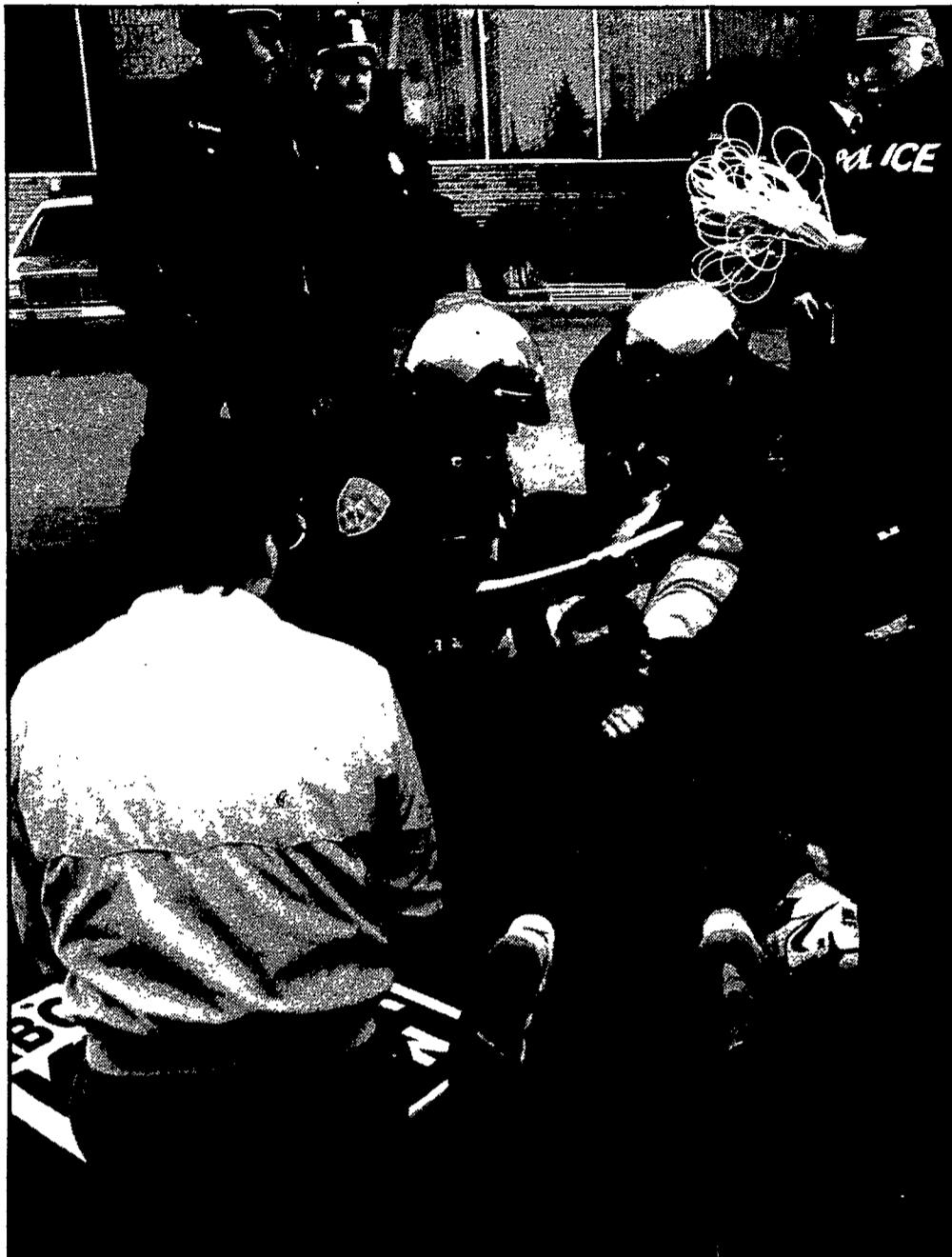
Operation Rescue which has been capturing much local and national news coverage of late both partakes of and symbolizes the larger spiritual struggle of our Church to fulfill her mission amidst a hedonistic, spiritually confused and increasingly satanically motivated culture. While all too many Catholics are busy making a living, St. John Vianney's reminder that "a man must also die," seems lost. Abortion is the culmination of a man and woman's decision to live for themselves rather than for God, and the death that ensues is prefigured in spiritual ruination.

Not only are Catholics perhaps equally involved in abortion as others, but our lay Catholic leaders in politics and the judicial system often give legal sanction to its practice against the backdrop of an episcopacy whose words have yet to be ratified by any actions that would influence the likelihood of these officeholders acting upon their Catholicism to protect the lives of these innocent. While courageous laity literally lay down their lives for their brothers and sisters, our Church hierarchy is unwilling to take any practical steps to make the Church a haven for these unwanted by disciplining or expelling from our midst — St. Paul — those responsible for this holocaust.

Abortion is but one example of serious sin practically accepted by our clerical shepherds. Sloth, avarice, lust, pride, gluttony are widespread among Catholics. That we rarely hear about them in homilies or their opposing virtues points to the conclusion that our Catholic pastors would rather coexist with serious sin than offend their hearers.

Catholics are called to be a people "set apart," we have obligations and a mission. We are obliged to share in the missionary spirit and apostolate of the Church; to study in preparation for the sacraments and then to continue to study and advance the cause of Christ throughout our lives; and lest we forget, to do penance in reparation for our sins — hopefully in some proportion to them as well.

As many among our young are be-



Kellie Mc Cann/Photo intern

After crossing police barricades outside the Erie Medical Center clinic in Buffalo April 29 — the ninth day of Operation Rescue's Spring of Life campaign — a pro-life activist kneels in prayer while watching Buffalo police and Erie County Sheriff Deputies arrest a fellow demonstrator.

ing attracted to the power promised through satanism, let us remember that living what we profess is a powerful witness to them. Hopefully our priests recall that they will have to answer not only for themselves, but for their flocks as well. Apparently, there

is much to answer for. God-willing, we will not have been lulled to sleep by their preaching prior to the Bridegroom's return for His wedding feast.

Helen Ann Wagner
Lark Street
Rochester

Schools should again be a priority

To the editors:

... It was with great joy and anticipation that a Catholic Educational System was built in our Diocese. Parish-based elementary schools came to life due to the vision of our religious leaders as well as the time, talent and financial resources of generous parishioners. This sacrifice and team effort produced hundreds of thousands of Catholics receiving not only the three R's of quality education, but one accompanied by a fourth R named Religion as well. In fact, the Catholic School System became so deep-rooted and the commitment of our religious leaders so strong, that the system stood the test of time as measured by two World Wars, the Great Depression, a half dozen more recessions, the anti-establishment movement of the '60s and most recently the material greed of the '80s.

... We as Catholics rely on priests, not only to receive the Sacraments, but also for leadership and spiritual guidance on all Church teachings. Parishioners in Rochester, however, have witnessed a gradual erosion of this leadership; at least as it pertains

toward promoting Catholic Education in our Diocese. We are told by our leaders that our focus must shift to higher priority social issues such as sexism within our Church. Our Bishop is spending tremendous amounts of time planning for a Religious Synod that fails to even list Catholic Education as a focus topic of discussion.

... During the past several years, our once proud Diocesan Schools System has been slowly crucified ... Parish run schools have been ordered to restructure into a quadrant system under the guise of fiscal necessity. Dozens of schools have been closed and thousands of parents, witnessing firsthand the lack of commitment and leadership from our Diocesan Administration, have decided that the permanency of the public school system — albeit without religion — offers more stability. Regrettably, they have elected to strip religious education from their children's lives. The teachings of the Blessed Sacrament will now at best be condensed into a single hour each week of Religious Educational instruction. This would certainly appear to be a solemn time in their spiritual

lives ...

How can we as Catholics ever expect to rise from the death of mortal life and join God almighty in Heaven someday without the guidance offered by Catholic Education?

If you believe as I do that Catholic Education is needed today more than ever, then don't passively wait for it to come to you. Instead, follow the example set by our parents and grandparents and actively restore the system. Demand that your voices as well as church contributions be directed back to this fundamental priority.

If this is done in a positive manner, then Catholic Education, like our Lord Jesus, will also rise again in all of its glory!

Barry Sullivan
Edgewater Lane
Irondequoit

EDITORS' NOTE: Sullivan — chairman of the Catholic Schools Committee, which opposes the closing of three schools in Monroe County's Northeast Quadrant — sent this letter during Holy Week. It has been edited to comply with space limitations and to omit dated references.