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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.

Single hour can be best of the week

To the editors:

It was with deep interest and concern that I read your recent article (*Catholic Courier*, July 9: "Faithful find adoration personal") on Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration now in progress in some of the churches in the Rochester area. Regrettably, however, St. Joseph's Church of Rush, N.Y., was not included in your list of churches.

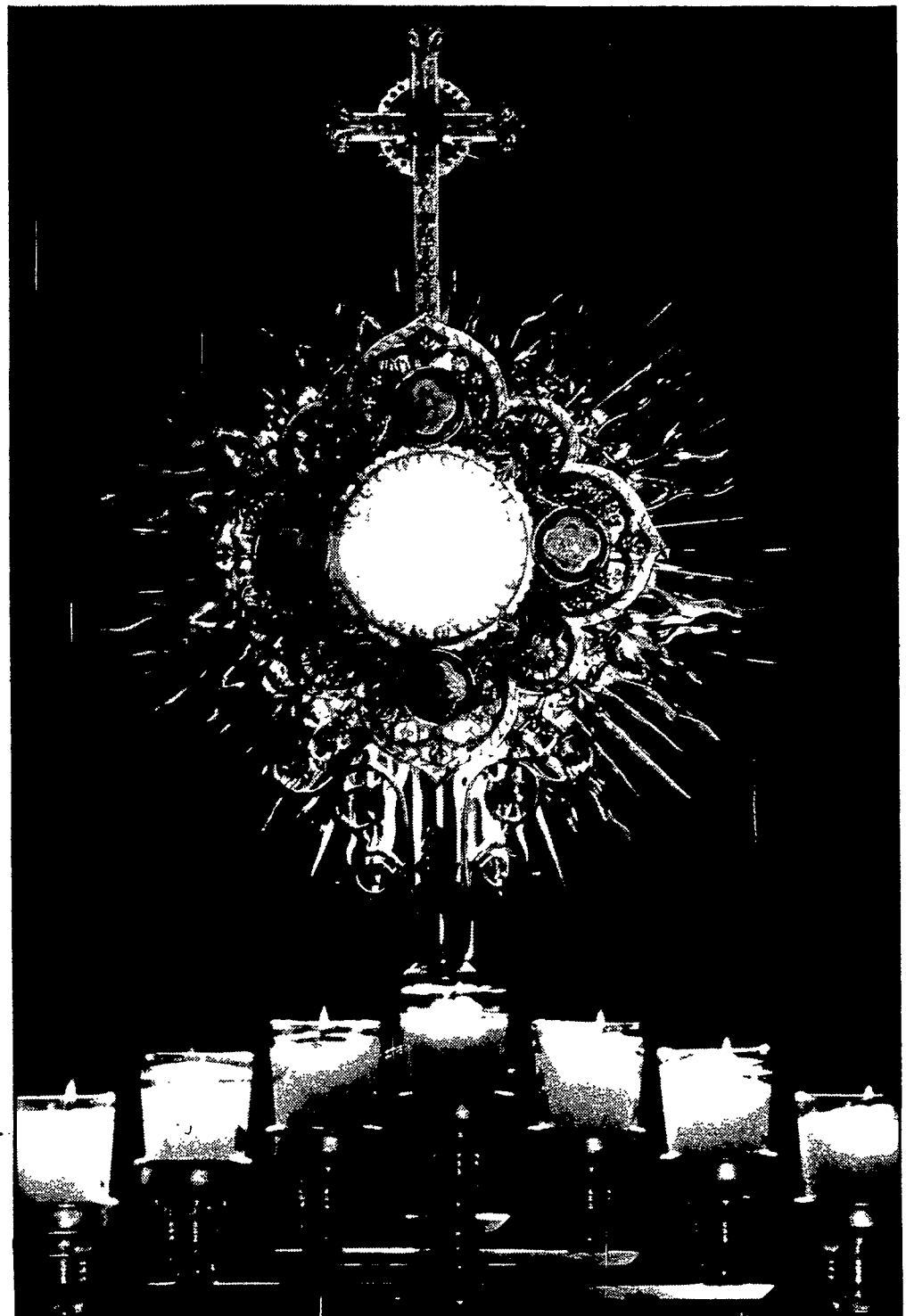
St. Joseph's Church of Rush is a small parish of about 400 parishioners. We have had Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration since December 16, 1990, when it was started under the direction of Father Lucia who has been promoting this devotion worldwide.

I am concerned and wish this information be made known to people in other parishes and especially those within our area who may wish to join us in this devotion, and perhaps even commit themselves to one hour a week.

To spend an hour before the Blessed Sacrament once a week can be the most rewarding time of the week.

Judy Stelphluke, co-chairperson
Perpetual Eucharist Adoration
St. Joseph's Church, Rush

EDITORS' NOTE: We regret omitting St. Joseph's. As the article noted, however, our mention of participating parishes was not intended to be comprehensive.



Emphasis on sexual sin necessary today

To the editors:

In his Aug. 13 column, Father McBrien criticizes those Catholics — read conservative Catholics — whose moral conservatism is too narrow focused on sexual sins. He offers many examples of what may be called "social" sins that, despite their prevalence in today's society, are not regarded as seriously as they should be by many Catholics. While he is probably right in this observation, he makes no attempt to analyze why it may be so. Instead, he seems to downplay the gravity of sexual sins when compared to these social sins by reminding us that Jesus never challenged anyone about sexual sins yet He did challenge the unforgiving, the self-righteous, the prejudiced and the arrogant.

To be sure, the Gospel accounts do not show Jesus condemning sexual misconduct. These same accounts, however, do not show Him condemning murder, rape, child abuse or abortion either. Do we take this to mean that Jesus did

not view these acts as vile and counter to the will of God? Or is it more likely that He saw no need to address these obvious transgressions of God's laws since abhorrence of such behavior was already imbedded in Jewish culture? Could it be that He geared His preaching to center on those defects in human conduct and relationships that were not part of the social consciousness of the times? When He proclaimed the dawn of the Kingdom of God, Jesus spoke not of refraining from sexual promiscuity or murder or abortion — it wasn't necessary. Rather, He delivered a message that demanded a total rethinking of how humans were to relate to God and to one another: loving our enemies, praying for our persecutors, using our authority to serve rather than control others, and so on.

Why then are there so many of us today whose moral concern is focused almost exclusively on sexual promiscuity, sexual abuse, adultery, and homosexual behavior? A good part of the

answer has to do with the permissiveness and hedonism that secular humanists, atheists, and ultraliberals have succeeded in weaving into the fabric of our modern society and that undercut traditional values. We are exposed to a constant bombardment from TV, movies, music, and magazines with the message that SEX is the be-all and end-all of our human existence and the thing around which everything in our lives must revolve. A *Donahue* episode about "mothers letting teens have sex at home," a top-10 song with a refrain that goes like this: "boom, boom, boom, let's go back to my room, where we can do it all night," MTV, Madonna, and Prince; school-based clinics that erode already tenuous family systems with their contraceptive distribution and abortion referrals without parental involvement or consent; are just a few examples of a sex-saturated environment much different than the one Jesus encountered. Many of us see this environment as aiding and abetting Satan's lust for doing horrible damage to human souls.

So it should not be surprising to Father McBrien or anyone that there is a great deal of deep concern over rampant sexual immorality and its potentially destructive consequences. Nevertheless, we must be careful not to engage in tacit acceptance of the social sins which Jesus so vigorously challenged and which also threaten to destroy our society. Clearly then, we must never back down from rejecting and condemning all kinds of sin — not the sinner! — if we hope to bring the Kingdom of God to its full realization.

Ronald J. Tocci
West Church Street
Fairport

Listing prompts priest to wonder about equality in diocesan hiring

To the editors:

The Diocese of Rochester is proud to be an equal opportunity employer.

In today's *Catholic Courier* (Aug. 13) the Diocese announces the hiring of 30 individuals as Catechetical Directors, Coordinators, Administrators and Pastoral Associates, Parish Visitors, Youth Ministers, a Music Director and "other Pastoral Posts."

Of the 30 hired, only 3 are male.

This is equal opportunity?

PS. The August 6 piece on the very talented Father Hurlman Siebert, OFM Conv., by Rob Cullivan with photo of Babette Augustin was excellent. Actually he has painted 1,500 works, not 150.

Father James P. Collins
West Water Street, Elmira

EDITORS' NOTE: We regret the typographical error in the Father Siebert story.