

CATHOLIC COURIER

1150 Buffalo Road
Rochester, NY 14624
716/328-4340

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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.

Opinion

Caring for the infirm is a special gift

To the editors:

To miss taking care of an old, sick dying person is to miss a great opportunity in life. It is a gift of God to permit you to take care of one of his beloved sons and daughters.

Think about it. You could be the last person that someone sees before he or she sees God. Within a second you could kiss your mother goodbye for the night and the next second, God could be saying to her: "Welcome, my beloved daughter. Welcome to my house." What a great moment in a person's life God has permitted you to share, especially if it is your own mother or father.

What good we do in life we do for God, for his glory; and for this, God seems to bless us with wisdom that cannot be obtained in any other way than when we are helping the infirm. When we help the infirm, it seems that we receive a blessing and it consists of a deeper understanding of life and God that cannot be obtained in any other way. In the end, the infirm help us a thousand times more than we have helped them.

Do not miss an opportunity to take care of a sick person. Jump at it. You'll never, never regret it.

In ending, I would like to say that one of the most unfortunate persons in Scripture is the Roman Centurion who pierced the side of Jesus with his spear. Of course we have all done the same many times ourselves, but let me tell you that there is an easier way to Jesus' heart. The easiest way of all is to help the sick and the dying. God love you.

Albert Tomei
Eagle Ridge Circle, Rochester

Couple prays administration will find strength

To the editors:

The Clinton Administration has come into office at a time when strong moral leadership is desperately needed. We are in an era of unbridled freedom without responsibility. The results have been sexual promiscuity and perversion, pornography, abortion, euthanasia, and radical feminism. The fruits of these "freedoms" have been such social disasters as a frightening epidemic of venereal diseases, the tragedy of AIDS, sterility, dysfunctional families, violence of all types, drug abuse, and the feminization of poverty.

All of these require attention, but by far the most serious is the crime of abortion. This denies our most innocent citizens the inalienable right to life so strongly defended in our Declaration of Independence. Everyone who calls himself a child advocate should have the courage to defend each child's right to be born. To argue that women should have the freedom to choose whether or not to give birth is to condone a painful death for millions of children and to ignore the severe emotional scars in women who have had abortions.

Our leaders have an obligation to investigate the most recent studies of the victims of abortion with honest and open minds. This is an issue that should transcend politics. It is far more serious than economic problems. We have the potential to destroy ourselves through moral decay. We would not be the first nation to suffer that fate.

The task is formidable, and they are in our prayers. May this administration be successful for the sake of all of us.

Dolores B. and Douglas R. Vining
Fairport



Education deserves priority

To the editors:

The first week of February is being celebrated as Catholic Schools Week by the Diocese of Rochester. I'm happy to see this for it represents a wonderful opportunity to talk about all of the positive things that our Catholic School System has to offer.

Throughout the past year, the media has reported many efforts by parents willing to step forward and offer their leadership. Money, management expertise and just plain willingness to assist were all offered as school closing rumors started to surface. However, when our Diocese pointed a finger at parents to help, they completely forgot that four fingers on that very same hand were pointing back at them. They needed to recognize that this requested help should be given some direction and perhaps even shared authority. After all, it was parishioner financing and the volunteer spirit of earlier generations that built the Catholic School System in the first place.

Instead of fostering this parental esprit de corps, the Diocese held fast to its autocratic system of control. School reorganization decisions were ultimately made in private but only after cleverly giving the illusion, through parental quadrant committee meetings, that they indeed had a major say. The subsequent "recommendations" now had that final valuable ingredient known as cooperation. The recommendations from the Diocesan office could now be made public with ease.

We were told to embrace a quadrant system to better manage our Catholic Schools. We were told that this will

make Catholic Education more efficient. In short, we were told that we are all in this together. The schools that closed probably would have closed anyway. That's why the Diocese had absolutely no other alternative but to install this new and improved quadrant system.

Unfortunately, no one in a position of authority listened, really listened to the parent's input for if they had, the term Catholic Education Leadership in Rochester would now not seem instead to be a better example of an oxymoron.

The given reality is that parents see and feel these continued school closing in a far more different and human light. Instead of better, more efficient building capacity they see schools dying and confused children crying. During this reorganization, the Education office for our Diocese has been feverishly trying to emphasize the positive points while at the same time distorting, glossing over, or just plain ignoring the bad news.

Simply put, Catholic Education needs to be given a higher priority in Rochester again. The future of our Catholic faith is directly attributed to how well we educate our children. This lesson is as important as how our earlier Three R grades were to our parents. By contrast, Social Ministries represent Art, Music and Gym. Sure, we need to do our very best on these "subjects," but like my parents always told me, it's the Three R's that really count. Catholic Education should be the most important agenda for us all.

Barry P. Sullivan

Edgewater Lane, Rochester

EDITORS' NOTE: This letter has been edited to comply with space limitations.

Is liturgical change sign of revisions to come?

To the editors:

From "This is the Word of the Lord" to "The Word of the Lord" is a seemingly innocuous revision. However, one concession inevitably leads to another — often more serious. Are we being conditioned for more substantive changes in liturgy?

We have been advised of the above revision under the guide that a clearer translation of Latin is effected and ecumenical adaptation is represented. The former disregards the fact that Latin is a condensed language and its translation into English requires expansion for clarification. If consistency in literal translation is the issue let's not translate brethren as brothers and sisters or man as "the one" or "all" or "people" — the Reader's preference of course — etc.

As for ecumenical adaptation — this usually entails one-way concessions on the part of the Catholic Church — no reciprocity required.

It also poses the question — when do Catholics and Protestants worship together necessitating Catholic Missal revision?

The International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) is the organization advancing liturgical revision. If you think further revisions will be as mild as the above, think again. The ICEL has been salivating for over 20 years to promote liturgical changes reflecting the spirit of modernity and severing continuity with the past. The Creed, Our Father and prayers in the Roman Missal are prime targets for "updating." Their most recent proposed revisions resulted in Cardinal Mahoney expressing his "serious concern" that the revisions "are not simply a matter of translation but a far deeper issue of Catholic theology and ecclesiology."

Renewal is alive and flourishing — To quote Thomas Molnar ("The Church: Pilgrim of Centuries"): "It takes an extraordinary amount of arrogance to point at self-liquidation as progress and renewal."

The ultimate Scriptural revision may turn out to read — The Word of the ICEL.

A.J. Annunziata
Horseheads