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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.

# Virgin Mary was not an unwed mother

To the editors:

March 19th is the sacred feast of St. Joseph, the most chaste spouse and protector of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God. In honor of this most venerable saint, I wish to address those who maintain that the Holy Mother of God was not married to St. Joseph when she conceived our Lord, Jesus Christ in her virginal womb.

Many Popes throughout the ages have recognized the awesome role of St. Joseph in God's plan for the redemption of mankind. Pope Pius IX acknowledged St. Joseph's role when he declared the Saint, Patron of the Universal Church. In recent times, Pope John Paul II published an Apostolic Exhortation on St. Joseph entitled *Redemptorist Gusto* (Guardian of the Redeemer). The occasion was the 100th anniversary of an encyclical on St. Joseph, published by Pope Leo XIII on August 15, 1889.

In the following paragraphs, I will be citing some excerpts from John Paul II's Exhortation on St. Joseph as printed by the Redemptorist Fathers in their publication *Perpetual Help World*.

To Joseph solely, did God entrust His most precious Treasures — Jesus and Mary. John Paul writes that the "Incarnation is precisely the mystery that Joseph of Nazareth shared like no other human except Mary the Mother of the Incarnate Word. Because of Joseph's profound interior life, commands and consolations came, bringing him logic and strength and giving him power in making such decisions that put his liberty immediately at the disposition of divine designs. To make over to them also his legitimate calling and his conjugal happiness, in order to accept the conditions, the responsibility and burdens of a family and at the same time through an incomparable virginal love, to renounce the natural conjugal love. In God's divine plan it was necessary that Joseph's marriage to Mary be a normal valid marriage."

Pope John Paul carefully noted that the Jewish marriage had two parts.



Namely, the formal legal ceremony establishing the couple as man and wife; and in finality, the reception of the bride into the bridegroom's house.

Luke and Matthew speak directly of Joseph as Mary's husband at the time Jesus was conceived, although the reception of Mary into the house of Joseph had not yet occurred. Douay Rheims Bible, Matthew chapter 1:20 states: "Son of David fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife" — not Mary as thy wife — "for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost."

Joseph was called upon to make many sacrifices, not the least of these was his acceptance of the perpetual vir-

ginity of Mary — a sign that while she was indeed his wife, it was God's will that she be both Mother and Virgin all her life. The Holy Father writes that Joseph obeyed the explicit command of the angel and took Mary into his home respecting the fact she belonged in a special way to God.

Let us put to rest once and for all the mindless and far worse, scandalous pronouncement that Mary was an unwed mother. Let us give Mary and Joseph their sanctified place in the Holy Family. In the name of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

**Anna Eugena Johnson  
Pennsylvania Avenue  
Pine City, New York**

## It's time to get to root of church pedophilia

To the editors:

As a hopeful, moral, and Christian woman, it is amazing to me how anyone could rationalize a reason for not attacking at the root, the disastrous scandal of PEDOPHILLIA in our Catholic priests. There is absolutely no justification for such extreme behavior.

Fr. R.P. McBrien stated in his column

(Feb. 14) a "stumbling block" in theology to explain this atrocity which has happened to our young people. I thought that in this case the ecclesiastical power structure went beyond political interest, considering that our children are the basic foundation for continued growth of our Catholic Faith. No child or family should have to go

through the emotional and psychological trauma that continues throughout a lifetime. How are these young people to believe in the honesty and integrity of the magisterium? On the A&E cable channel I watched an investigated report called "The Sins of the Fathers," which brought to the surface this whole, disastrous affair.

For years, I too have been hearing allegations about priests, and like many, have offered explanations to those who were all too sure these things were happening. I offered explanations because I believed so strongly in the hierarchy of the church. Maybe Martin Luther wasn't so wrong in "breaking away," but like the reformation, this too can change the order of policy and strengthen us from within.

We all must support those affected by this horrible act — the children, their families, and the priests. We also need to enhance and encourage, in a positive manner, those priests who put forth so much effort in their Christian ministry. We must act quickly, because no financial amount can repair "the Sins of the Fathers."

Thank you for listening! I needed to express my feelings, because it saddens me deeply to hear such horrible things about those who are in the mainstream of our beloved church.

**Donna P. La Chuisa  
Orchard Street  
Walworth**

## Columnist displays a political bias in writing about church and theology

To the editors:

Mister McBrien has outdone himself. He seems to think that some special policy is needed to tell priests not to molest boys and girls. I thought that there was some prohibition about that in God's law, and not just for priests. All of us humans are subject to failure in measuring up to God's commands, which are covered in Holy Scripture. McBrien should try reading that sometime. When we fail it is called sin and no special policy on sin is required of the American bishops. If they did come up with a policy it would probably bear little resemblance to what Scripture teaches.

McBrien might dub me "conservative" for calling sin what it is. He and a large segment of the American bishops are so tied up in politics that they have forgotten that the role of the Church is

to bring all to salvation including priests who err.

If the Catholic Church survives in the way McBrien would have it, it will be a political body not a religious one. It was not the Vatican, the Curia or the Pope who perpetrated the cover up as described in McBrien's Feb. 4 column. It was the same bishops he calls upon to write the policy.

For accuracy in reporting McBrien's column it should be entitled *Essays in Politics*. He has little to say about God; his views are not God centered, they are his and have a distinct political bias; and I can't see how they serve to bring people to the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of God to the people.

**Michael T. Brady  
Princess Drive  
Rochester**