

CATHOLIC COURIER

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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



Courtesy of Michael McBride

Participants in the Good Friday March processed from Our Lady of Victory church to the site of Planned Parenthood's proposed abortion clinic.

Why downplay annual pro-life march?

To the editors:

Approximately 150-200 Catholics gathered at Our Lady of Victory Church on Good Friday. Upon concluding a beautiful service, we prayerfully walked one-half mile to Planned Parenthood's new abortion center, reciting the Stations of the Cross. Enclosed are some photographs I took, confirming the above.

It was very disappointing however, when I read the *Catholic Courier's* coverage of the event (see April 15 issue). On the second last page of the newspaper, a photograph is shown with one Catholic holding half a banner and one pro-abortionist holding his sign. Our entire block-long procession of Catholic clergy and laity were strangely cropped out. In fact, there was not even an article attached to it — only a couple of sentences below the photograph.

Why would our own Catholic news-

paper "down play" a major Catholic Good Friday Service? Perhaps status quo, popularity, and being politically correct, is more important than defending God's most sacred of creation — human life. Perhaps the *Catholic Courier* is more afraid of offending Planned Parenthood and the abortion industry, than offending Our Lord, who loved, redeemed, and sanctified human life, by His death on the cross. Perhaps it's *Courier* policy to "give the devil his due" for the sale of maintaining a broad readership base, and not losing any advertisers.

Whatever the case may be, I think it would be appropriate to read what Our Lord had to say about being "wishy-washy" and lukewarm:

"Whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this faithless and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of when he comes in his

Father's glory with the holy angels" (Mark 8:38 N.A.B.).

Michael McBride
Fillingham Drive
Rochester

EDITORS' NOTE: The only "policy" entailed in our handling of the 1993 Good Friday march is that we do not provide extensive coverage of annual events every year. Doing so would mean virtually reprinting the edition published the same week of the prior year, and that would be a disservice to readers. Thus, we provide extensive coverage every few years — especially as new elements are added to the events — and only minimal coverage other years.

The specific photo published in the April 15 issue was selected to accompany a letter to the editor written by Amy Dorscheid ("Life is more important than political debates"). The action in the photo seemed to relate well to Mrs. Dorscheid's point.

Courier urged to enforce letters policy

To the editors:

The Letters Policy of the *Catholic Courier* states that, "although we cannot publish every letter we receive, we seek to provide a balanced representation.... We will choose letters for publication based on likely reader interest, timeliness and a sense of fair play."

This suggests to me that you receive many letters from your readers and have a wide range of subjects from which to choose for publication. It baffles me that Mr. John F. Starkweather of Middle Road, Rush seems to have become a regular published contributor. After reading his April 15, 1993, letter entitled, "Are modern bishops too friendly to dissenters?" I'm puzzled as to how you determine the sense of fair play stated in your policy.

Mr. Starkweather looks for a stronger church by suggesting:

- 1) replace bishops in wholesale quantities
- 2) eliminated foreign elements from true worship of the Mass
- 3) oust scofflaw priests and religions like the dross they are

How is such a surly attitude expressed, all too often by Mr. Starkweather in the *Catholic Courier*, any sense of fair play to your readers, to the many exemplary bishops, priests, religions and to Mr. Starkweather himself?

I have no opposition to your editorial policies. My purpose in writing is to

encourage you to adhere to them. Your discerning readers and editorial contributors would be more fairly served.

Helen K. Early

Washington Avenue, Waterford, N.Y.

EDITORS' NOTE: While we suffer no shortage of letters, we do manage to publish virtually all those we receive. To date, we have rejected only open letters written to individuals (generally Bishop Clark) and the following types of letters: those that also have been submitted to other area publications; that clearly distort the facts; that con-

tain libelous statements; that appear to lack any link to reality; and those that have been generated by out-of-diocese "letter mills" targeting all Catholic publications in the country. Letters espousing heretical opinions also would be included in the "reject" category, but we generally do not receive this type of material.

Admittedly, we have been reluctant to employ a broad definition of fair-play violations, but since such subjective decisions are open to error, we would prefer to err on the side of free speech.

College students decry elder abuse

To the editors:

We are writing this in regards to elder abuse. As a group, we are concerned about the high rates of its occurrence and the lack of community awareness.

Elder abuse constitutes physical and sexual abuse, verbal aggression, and the denial of basic human rights such as the right to privacy, freedom of speech and movement, etc.

Our research has shown Rochester's reported cases of abuse to be significantly lower than the national figures. Nationally, 32 out of every 1,000 people over the age of 65 are victims of elder abuse, each year (SUDOCs NBR: Y 4.Ag. Comm. pub. no. 102-810 United

States Congress, House Select Committee on Aging). Locally, Monroe County Office of the Aging states there is only one reported case a month.

We understand your paper is concerned about our community and its people. We hope to appeal to this and spur further investigations into elder abuse — its causes, and hopefully, strategies for prevention.

Shelley Arnold, Nancy Steiner,
Kelly O'Keefe, Keith Scherberger
and Stacy Needleman
Social work students at
SUNY Brockport
Whittier Park
Rochester