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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.

Story served to promote vandalism

To the editors:

Of all the possible topics that come to mind, I'd least expect a Christian newspaper to be a proponent of graffiti. I refer you to "City teens seek positive image for their art" appearing in the June 10, 1993 issue of the *Catholic Courier* special (graduation) section.

Spray-painting on the property of others without the consent of the owner is very simply vandalism. Your article not only condones it but promotes it! What if next week's sermon were promoting graffiti? What a world! Didn't anybody think before they ran this piece? What's next, spray painting cars? There's no difference, of course. If the Church can't be a good example for its members, it should be silent.

Your arguments are so weak. These high school students are better than amateurs. They put a lot of time into it. And because of their talent, painting graffiti is beginning to evolve from an outlaw activity to a legitimate business. Let's stretch. I'm really good at murder. I'm better than amateurs at it. I put a lot of time into it. And because of my talent, I earn a lot of money at it.

Television is not a good example for our children. Movies are not a good example for our children. And now the *Catholic Courier* is not a good example for our children!

Jean A. Black
West Avenue
Spencerport



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer
Victor 'Range' Zarate (left) and Michael 'Sno' Marrocco stand before one of their many works gracing the walls in the North Clinton Avenue area.

Program aids unemployed

To the editors:

As Parish Council Secretary for Church of the Transfiguration, I have attended monthly Council meetings for many years. I continue to be impressed by this faith-filled, caring community and the numerous ways they reach out to help their fellow parishioners and the needy in so many areas of Monroe County.

At a recent Council meeting, there was discussion about the efforts of the Employment Network. I recalled reading an article in the *Courier* a few months ago which indicated that no, or little information, was available about any Catholic churches in Rochester offering assistance to individuals dealing with unemployment.

Please let it be known that Church of the Transfiguration has for several years had a very effective program to aid those needing services aimed at: self-

esteem, marketing themselves, networking, counselling and all aspects of unemployment. Currently, the Employment Network contact people are meeting with representatives from two Catholic churches to share information about the formation and operation of our group and to discuss the possibility of combining efforts. Perhaps, others would be interested in learning about the success of the Employment Network. We also run ads in the church bulletin for those seeking employment.

Believe me, it was good to know that a service, such as the Employment Network, existed when my husband was dealing with the struggles of unemployment. It was a great support!

Patricia M. Slimmer
Barker Road, Pittsford

EDITORS' NOTE: The article in question contained all relevant information then available from diocesan Social Ministry.

Catechism will reduce dilution of the faith

To the editors:

The June 10th column Walking Together by Father Joseph A. Hart entitled "Authority can be misunderstood" raises some interesting questions.

Father Hart's explanation on what is the magisterium was very well done given the space restraints of the column. However, his statement concerning the magisterium as a service to the church from the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, to provide some further insight, might have included what immediately followed: "The canonical mission of the bishops can come about by legitimate customs that have not been revoked by the supreme and universal authority of the Church, or by laws made or recognized by that same authority, or directly through the successor of Peter himself" (*Lumen Gentium* 24).

I also find much agreement with his discernment that the Vatican II council's teachings are still not well understood. Perhaps this may be in some way due to the response to the faithful concerning what many consider to be abusive and/or illicit practices, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist. When legitimate questions are raised as they relate to the liturgical documents, the questions are mainly ignored, pooh-pooed, ridiculed, or given a half answer taken out of context, but seldom fully answered.

Perhaps this may be the reason that the mid-western bishop — Bishop Meyers of Peoria, I presume — has taken the action he has regarding the "Catechism of the Catholic Church." In the functioning of his magisterium, he may have the same problem some other bishops have with their middle management. In order to defend the faith and not have it diluted or distorted to suit the whims of special interest groups, he is merely showing his union with the successor to Peter.

Pope John Paul II, on April 29, 1993, fully the Catechism "an instrument called the Catechism of the current era." He further stated that "It (the Catechism) is destined to all the faithful who have the capacity to read it, to understand it, and to assimilate it into their Christian lives."

In that same address, the Holy Father also stated "It is clear that the Christian faith is not identified with any determined culture, being above them, even if, it can be incarnated into the various cultures."

While concurring with Father Hart that how the same Gospel, the same apostolic faith, will be preached and taught is quite different in Nakuru, Kenya, as opposed to in Elmira, N.Y., the primary question still comes down to not How, but What is being preached and taught. The What is primary. The How is secondary. If the What is taken care of, the How will follow.

Between being a participant and fulfilling other functions, I have had the opportunity to take part in at least two

occasions for each topic during the fall and the spring synod sessions. It would seem that the underlying concern expressed in numerous and various ways, amounted to a desperate plea for a return to all the basic truths and teachings of the one Holy Catholic Church founded by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. "We don't know what the Church teaches anymore" was not an unfamiliar remark. Jesus does not offer a cafeteria menu from which we can select or reject what He preached, and still be saved. Holy Scripture tells of instances where people turned away from Jesus because of what He taught. Today is no different. God does not force Himself on us but allows us to choose His truth or not.

Since truth is light, I pray that the Holy Spirit will help us all to become more aware and more responsive to His light so that we might cease to continue stumbling around in the darkness and truly become the one fold with the one shepherd.

Stanley P. Praszunus
Green Valley Drive, Big Flats

Review board needed to preserve patrimony

To the editors:

I was impressed by the recent news coverage in both the *Rochester Times Union* and (*Catholic Courier*) about the recent restoration of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church on Joseph Avenue to its original architectural beauty. Both Father Miller and the congregation should be applauded for respecting the original architect's and parish community's intended vision for the church edifice.

Too many grand urban churches have been architecturally vandalized by over zealous pastors and parish councils who deviate from sound architectural principles and impose contemporary styles on 19th and early 20th century edifices.

While St. John the Evangelist Church on West Ridge Road is an outstanding example of contemporary ecclesiastical architecture, the transposition of this architectural style in a poorly conceived past renovation of St. John the Evangelist Church on Humboldt Street in Rochester was an architectural travesty.

Perhaps a Diocesan Architectural Review Board should be established to review parish council plans to renovate historic diocesan churches so that this diocese's patrimony is both safeguarded and preserved for future generations.

Larry LoMaglio
Pond Valley Circle
Penfield