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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.

# Catholic training hasn't helped Clinton



File photo  
During a press conference in the White House Rose Garden this spring, President Bill Clinton acknowledges a question from a reporter in the crowd.

**To the editors:**

Many Catholics and other Christians expend considerable effort and personal sacrifice to oppose governmental actions that sanction immoral activities. At the same time we are periodically faced with having to endure obvious ecclesiastical support for those politicians who favor the immoral actions we have been opposing. Abortion and homosexual activity are two currently disturbing social issues involved.

Last Fall, the *Catholic Courier's* own Father Richard McBrien advocated that Catholics support Clinton, stating that he would be the first President of this country who was educated in a Catholic university (Georgetown). Now we have a clear awareness of how Clinton's Catholic university education is *not* helping our country. It didn't take Clinton long to write Presidential orders authorizing all federally funded health clinics to advise clients on obtaining an abortion. Next, he authorized abortion services to servicewomen — in government hospitals. His National Health Insurance Program is said to include abortion services. It is also obvious that Clinton's leadership has been ineffective

in resolving the horrible ethnic cleansing brutalities occurring in Bosnia. On the other hand, he has been a staunch advocate for homosexual causes, including high level government appointments of avowed homosexuals, and those who advocate distribution of birth control devices in our schools.

It pains me that our own church pastor has refused to discuss the wrongness of abortion or homosexual practices, or other current moral issues from the pulpit, or even in the parish bulletin — for fear that some parishioners may be offended! I wonder if Jesus offended the Pharisees!

The unwillingness by some of our Church leaders to provide moral leadership so badly needed today is extremely discouraging to many of us.

**Paul Cannon**  
**Sherri Ann Lane**  
Rochester

*EDITORS' NOTE: At no time did Father McBrien's column or any other material published in the Catholic Courier endorse a political candidate. As a non-profit corporation, the Catholic Courier is prohibited by Internal Revenue Service regulations from making any type of political endorsement.*

# Don't use double standard on forcing views

**To the editors:**

After a Mass which I recently attended in the Diocese, the priest announced that someone had been throwing away copies of the *Catholic Courier* that were left out for parishioners. The priest went on to state that it is a shame that in a Catholic community there are those that would attempt to impose their individual beliefs on others in the community by such an action — and that by their actions those involved were suggesting that the teachings of the Catholic Church were best represented by their own opinion and interpretations. The priest was very upset by this problem and suggested that we pray for them —

an excellent suggestion!

Here is where I begin to have difficulty! This same priest has taken it upon himself to modify the Eucharistic Prayer to his own liking. The Eucharistic Prayers for the Mass were developed and approved by authorized liturgical committees of the Catholic Church and contain many of the basic truths taught by the Catholic Church. Among numerous insertions and deletions from the approved text the priest replaces the reference to "Mary, the virgin Mother of God" with "Mary, the holy Mother of God." This is at best a misstatement of the full truth taught by the approved text and at worst a denial of the virgin-

ty of the Mother of God.

The priest has circumvented the Diocesan Extraordinary Eucharistic Minister program by allowing parishioners, who have not been trained or appointed by the Diocese/Bishop as Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers, to take Holy Communion to the sick after Mass. Deacons are required to go through a formal educational training program as well as ordination by the Bishop in order to preach the homily at Mass. No need at this parish. The priest has stated a program of inviting unordained individuals to preach the homily — which Canon Law reserves for ordained individuals except in extraordinary circumstances.

I understand that none of these changes are allowed or approved by Church authorities and therefore they must represent the priest's own interpretation of Catholic teaching! By his own reasoning above, he must feel that he is able to best represent Catholic teachings through his actions and not the actions of the Catholic Church. How can a priest who draws his pastoral authority from the Catholic Church be disobedient to that very same Church? Is there any parallelism between the liberties being taken by the priest and the actions of someone discarding the copies of the *Catholic Courier*? Just who is giving who the bad example?

I think we all agree that the discarding of the papers, although it only affects a handful of parishioners who might pick up the paper, is wrong and should not continue. But what of the individual liberties taken by the priest which affect a whole Catholic community? Can we agree that they should stop or do we believe in a double standard which allows those in authority to misuse their position to accomplish their own individual goals and not the goals of the Catholic community?

We must all first remove the plank from our own eye so that we will see clearly enough to remove the splinter from our brother's eye. We can begin to accomplish this by sincerely praying for each other and by putting into practice the teachings of Christ as revealed through the Catholic Church.

**Michael A. Gallagher**  
West Church Street  
Fairport

# Hopes bishop will address problem of priests involved in sexual abuse

**To the editors:**

I am typing in regard to an issue that has many Roman Catholics upset. It seems like daily we read in the newspaper or see on TV, stories of priests who have sexually abused children. It has become such a growing problem in the United States that the pope has finally said something about it.

I wonder what, if any, is the diocese position on this issue? Is it all fluff or does it have substance to it? Does the diocese have any priests in it that have this problem? Is the diocese getting them any help? What positions are they in? Is there a written policy in effect? Or has the diocese, as others mentioned in the media, just reassign the priest to another parish, slap his wrist and hope he never does it again?

As one who was abused as a child by a teacher in the public school system, this issue is very important to me. The churches response to date has been

unsatisfactory. It seems to be in a position of denial. But as more and more people come out with charges against priests it will be hard to stay in denial. The church as whole has a trust and a credibility problem especially in light of a recent article in the *New York Daily News*. The article in the June 19 issue stated that according to the church the "16-year-old consented to the sex (act)." That is really not the issue. The priest abused his position of authority.

As a Catholic who grows more and more angry with the churches handling of this problem, I wish that Bishop Clark would address this issue in this paper. However, realistically, I believe you won't even publish this letter much less a response from the Bishop to it.

**Richard J. Kuehner, Corning**  
*EDITORS' NOTE: This letter was received prior to publication of our July 22 front-page article on Bishop Clark's new diocesan policy.*

# Abortion clinic dedicated to pursuit of profits

**To the editors:**

Planned Parenthood's abortion clinic is being built solely for the purpose of realizing a profit or in other words, a business venture. They will deprive the Rochester community of the talents that these aborted unborn could have con-

tributed if only they have been given a chance at life.

Obviously Planned Parenthood doesn't realize that "one cannot buy respect, it has to be earned."

**Dianna Ives**  
Simpson Road, Rochester