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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.

Diocese's 'true' intentions disclosed

To the editors:

Catholics of the Diocese of Rochester should beware! Our leaders and their intentions have been exposed! As hard as they tried to be clandestine, Mr. Joseph J. Murray revealed the true story in an article in the (Rochester) *Times Union* on Aug. 31, 1993. The word is out that our leaders are really terrorists in disguise, the Synod might result in our Diocese being estranged from Rome and that we will resemble less and less the Catholic Church. Are we headed for a schism?

Wow! How could 40,000 of us who participated in parish Synod meetings have been hoodwinked?

I thought all the Synod recommendations — whatever they might be — were coming from the people. At least they seemed to be in my parish. Now I learn that they are really being orchestrated by Bishop Matthew Clark! What a cunning guy!

220 members of the St. Thomas More Lawyers Guild compared to over 40,000 Synod participants equals .005 or five thousandths. Father Joseph Hart considered that number to be insignificant. But he must never have studied math because it's quite clear that .005 is very significant! The other .995 portion of us must be the insignificant part.

Mr. Murray cites Canon Law 767.1 to argue that preaching should be done only by a priest or deacon. However, my copy of Canon Law also has a statute 766 which states that LAY PERSONS — i.e., male AND FEMALE! — may be permitted to preach. It must be that my copy is a misprint or a subversive edition. Bishop Clark must have the same erroneous copy!

All along I thought that the theologians named in the article were well-respected, eminent scholars. Mr. Murray sure was proficient in selectively quoting a word or two of theirs out of context to show us what they really are! Mr. Murray obviously must have extensive theological education, training, background and experience. Unfortunately,



nately, he neglected to state his credentials. But, regardless, I'm now convinced that all theologians should just be ignored.

Also, I'll surely be withdrawing from a course I'm taking at St. Bernard's Institute. I thought it was a reputable school, but I never checked out the list of their honorary degree recipients! You just never know! And did you hear that a WOMAN has been selected as the new president?! Bet our darn Bishop was behind that, too!

And Father Charles Curran might address the Synod? How dare they invite him?! That's the last straw! I absolutely won't be attending! I definitely don't want to listen to anyone

who just might know more than I do or who might challenge me to think!

Thank you, Mr. Murray, for giving us the true facts and for opening my eyes to what is really going on! I'll certainly try to be more on guard in the future! Please continue your excellent, investigative reporting and keep us posted!

Judy Hoffend
East Lake Road
Conesus

EDITORS' NOTE: Our information indicates that Bishop Matthew H. Clark's homily for the 125th anniversary Eucharist will be the only address to the General Synod delegates.

Synod delegates should call for non-violence

To the editors:

In the Gospel for the 27th Sunday of the year, the Sunday of the Diocesan Synod, Jesus quotes Psalm 118; "It was the stone rejected by the builders that became the keystone..." What an appropriate reminder that all that is undertaken through the Synod should be based on Jesus!

The priority recommendations of the regional synods are indeed well placed on the Keystone. I have found two of these especially interesting. Recommendation 1C (on Catholic moral education)

was the highest overall priority of the first regional synod...

... Recommendation 6E (on consciousness raising) was the second overall priority of the second regional synod...

Together, the feeling of 1C and 6E might be summed up as a need to have Church teachings concerning life, peace, and justice issues presented as clearly and authoritatively as possible so the faithful may respond to them.

6E necessarily includes the nonviolence of Jesus since that is the cornerstone of His teaching and example of

how to build a society that respects all human life and is based on justice and peace. Unfortunately, 6E contains a fatal flaw. As soon as one has one's consciousness raised about the nonviolence of Jesus, it is apparent that what was once taken to be His normative example faded with the coming of Emperor Constantine and later, with a form of philosophical speculation known as "just war" theory. The Church has not been clear about the nonviolence of Jesus for 1,700 years!

The only proper and productive way 6E may become a pastoral priority for the Diocese of Rochester is to combine it with a prophetic recommendation that calls for a Council of the Church that will finally take up these never authoritatively decided issues. That done, diocesan programs that deal with the nonviolence of Jesus can take place with the knowledge that all will be properly subordinated to Church Authority.

Fortunately, the General Synod schedule allows time to discuss new recommendations. A recommendation for a Council along with 1C and 6E can be squarely placed on the Keystone of Jesus. I pray that these recommendations will remain or become high priorities in October. Without one, the others are weakened.

Mark Scibilia-Carver
Cold Springs Road
Trumansburg

Church's renovations have created beautiful and intimate worship areas

To the editors:

"These people will not come around in three months." (see *Catholic Courier*, Aug. 19: "One conservative does not intend to 'come around'") Change is certainly difficult, and many people are hurting because of changes. On the other hand, many people have admired the beauty and loveliness of St. Patrick's renovated church. The gathering and worship areas invite the assembly to reflect on the meaning of church as community. The quiet, peaceful Blessed Sacrament chapel draws people during day and evening hours. Small faith

groups enjoy the intimacy and closeness of the daily mass chapel.

I would like to commend the U.S. Bishops for their inspiring document entitled, "Environment and Art in Catholic Worship" and to support pastors who have the courage to implement the guidelines. I encourage all who "just don't understand these changes" to read the document and to enter into the experience of being church in a new way. Don't wait three months!

Sr. Ann Louise Hentges
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