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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.

Stained glass enhances worship

To the editors:

Traditional stained glass windows have always had a strong fascination for me. The most beautiful ones I have ever seen are the ones gracing Holy Family Church, Willard Chapel and the one on the sanctuary of Westminster Presbyterian church all in Auburn. I believe the stained glass windows in the Basilica of Notre Dame in Montreal, Quebec top them all.

When the rays of a brilliant sun showers its rays through these stained glass windows and reflects their beautiful colors through a temple of worship, it gives one a feeling of peace, contentment and love — like a heavenly tonic.

Traditional stained glass windows and I might add the beautiful murals of the past seem to be long gone. Why? Prohibitive costs! Luckily for worshippers, most of our traditionally decorated churches have preserved these priceless treasures. Modernists and humanists seem to have lost touch with the beauties of these works of arts of yesteryear.

As long as these treasures of beauties are available for us to see and enjoy, I urge you to go to these temples of wor-



ship in the quiet of a day. It will add to your prayerful visit along with the real presence of Jesus, as we Catholics

believe, in our church tabernacles.

Drinking in the beauties of these stained glass windows will fill your heart with much, much peace and love. They will also act as the gateway to a deeper union with GOD. It can be said that stained glass windows are one of the many catalysts given to us by OUR FATHER to help us enjoy our life, our neighbor and even help to make for a happier world.

Remember, in the real presence of Jesus in our tabernacles, with faith and continuing to drink in the beauties of both stained glass windows and murals, you will receive a strong feeling of faith. Since the hand of Jesus is forever reaching out for each one of us to grasp. It will happen. HE will take us to HIS bosom for a peaceful and loving life. Then our life will end up with HIM in that place prepared for each one of us even before man or the world was created.

To conclude, God's gift of beauty are all around us. Let us not just look at them but appreciate and thank HIM for all of HIS gifts and blessings.

Frank Mastropietro
Clark Street, Auburn

Pope declared moral matters are not relative

To the editors:

The visit of the Pope to three Baltic countries, his first journey to an area of the former Soviet Union is a good time to reflect on his recent visit to our country.

On his arrival in Denver, President Clinton graciously welcomed Pope John Paul II and praised the Pope for the pivotal role he played in ending communism in Central and Eastern Europe — ending a crazy revolution that devastated those cultures for 70 years.

During his days in Denver the Pope then challenged all American's to end another equally crazy revolution — that of relativism as regards moral matters — to end a revolution that has bitterly ravaged our culture for 30 years at a no less incalculable cost.

His challenge came in these words: "In a culture which holds that no universally valid truths are possible, nothing is absolute. Therefore in the end — they say — objective goodness and evil no longer really matter. Good comes to mean what is pleasing or useful at a particular moment. Evil means what contradicts our subjective wishes. Each

person can build a private system of values.

"Drug and alcohol abuse, pornography and sexual disorder, violence: these are grave social problems which call for a serious response from the whole of society, within each country and on the international level.

"The 20th century has been a time of massive attacks against human life, an unending series of wars and a continuing slaughter of innocent human beings. The false prophets and the false teachers have been very successful.

"Precisely when science and medicine are achieving a greater capacity to safeguard health and life, the threats against life are becoming more insidious. Abortion and euthanasia, the actual killing of another human being, are hailed as 'rights' and solutions to 'problems' — an individual's problem or society's.

"The slaughter of the innocents is no less sinful and devastating simply because it is done in a legal and scientific way. In the modern metropolis life, God's first gift, and the fundamental right of every individual, on which all

other rights are based, is often treated as one more commodity to be organized, commercialized and manipulated according to convenience."

At the airport arrival addressing us all the Pope said:

"America, you are beautiful. You are the best in so many ways. But your best beauty, your richest blessing is from the human person. In each man, woman and child, in every immigrant, in every native-born son or daughter, the ultimate test of your greatness is the way you treat every human being, but especially the weakest and most defenseless ones. If you want equal justice for all, and true freedom and lasting peace, then, America, defend life!"

I like my uncle's observation that the pope was in a position like Moses — who comes to his people with God's Ten Commandments not because everyone was honoring their father and their mother but because they were not honoring their father and their mother and needed reminding.

William J. Schickel
Dryden, N.Y.

World day of prayer needed for healing, reconciliation

To the editors:

Congratulations to Rob Cullivan and Heidi Schlumpf Kezwok for the *Courier* cover story of Sept. 2 on the World Parliament of spiritual leaders in Chicago, Sept. 5-August 28. It was excellent.

Daniel Gomez-Ibanez, executive

director of the council, said that the World's religious communities "have to examine themselves, heal their own wounds, stop their own contributions to violence." Of some 40 wars now going on, he said, "more than half are being waged in the name of religion or have

religious components. Here are all these people who are killing other people in good conscience. This is a perversion of the teaching of all religions." Critical issues of war, violence, environmental preservation, social justice, hunger and poverty are "often hard to disentangle because they often feed off one another. But they are not just secular issues. They come together as degradation of the spirit, a religious issue."

What can we do? I urge that readers write to President Clinton and Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, asking them to promote a World Day of prayer for reconciliation and healing among all peoples. Our prayers for unity should be continuous, on a daily basis. It can be as simple as asking God for greater love and respect for the dignity of all persons on this earth regardless of race, color, religion, or gender. And, add the most powerful prayer of all: The Lord's Prayer.

Grace B. Carnes
Eagle Ridge Circle
Rochester

Just break away from Rome and get it over with

To the editors:

With the Pope's visit to Denver being the impetus, we are being saturated with the latest Polls showing the deep dissension within the American Catholic Church. In practically every News report we are witness to some Politically Correct malcontent, lamenting the fact that Priests should be married, women should be priests, sex is fine outside marriage, homosexual behavior is normal, ad nauseam.

The American Catholic Church, in our desire to be hip, has become a clone of some of the mainline Protestant denominations. The faith has become watered down and spineless. Our Church buildings have become just that,

buildings. Oh, but if we object to the "New" Catholic Church, we are considered oddballs. Orthodox Catholics are disdained by some Pastors and the so called Catholic literary greats like Mr. McBrien. Sin has become relative.

My only wish is that the American Catholic Church makes the inevitable split from Rome soon. Let's not continue the charade. Let's have married priests, women priests, homosexual celebrations, and whatever else the politically correct desire. Perhaps then, after the dust settles, we can all go about our business.

Michael J. Lehmann
Moss Hill Road
Horseheads

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