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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 original, signed 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 letters writers.

We reserve the right to edit all letters for length as well as legal concerns. With respect to errors in submitted text, we will correct spelling only. Anonymous letters and the use of pseudonyms are unacceptable.

Mail letters to: *Catholic Courier*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Please include your full name, phone number and complete address for verification purposes.

Opinion
Canons can be clarified by asking

To the editors:

There is a serious misapprehension expressed by Ms. Hoffend in her somewhat brash letter castigating a Mr. Murray (*Catholic Courier*, Sept. 30: "Diocese's 'true' intentions disclosed") Firstly, there are no infalibilities for "well respected eminent scholars" with "obviously extensive theological education, training, and background" that need intimidate anyone from defending Christ and the Church he loves. Letters to the editor are properly for the right airing of views. Ideas stand or fall because of their own force. All that is required is at least half a brain, some pluck, pause, and a readiness to be humbled. Elitist badges from academia are no hum "scarems." As for the sway held by majorities, recall the clamor of Canaan's Goliath, a minority's David, and the slinging of one singular Rock.

Mr. Murray was right on point with Canon 767 that states: "The most important form of preaching is the homily, which is part of the liturgy, and is reserved to a priest or deacon." However, Ms. Hoffend misapprehends the prior Canon 766 just before it: "The laity may be allowed to preach in a church ... WITHOUT PREJUDICE TO Canon 767" (emphasis added). Her cited Canon, then, cannot "prejudice," i.e. weaken,



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preempt, or dismiss the stricture against lay homilies that follows in Mr. Murray's cited Canon. Lay people are not forbad to speak in a church with a purpose to exhort, preach, educate; even during the time of a Mass. However, a homily is a didactic liturgical discourse for expounding the Scripture and correction of heretical opinion. Canon Law reserves this to those who sacramentally received Holy Orders.

If there were a dispute in a diocese over the understanding of what underlies these Canons no doubt the Vatican is prepared to shed light on the matter definitively. Anyone wishing to dispel their own misapprehension should read

carefully the Code's preamble "Apostolic Constitution" by the Bishop John Paul wherein he lays out from whence the Code springs: the heritage of the Old and New Testaments, the worldwide input from eminent scholars and episcopal conferences in the collegial Spirit of the Second Vatican Council.

It is a phantom spirit that reads anything in this Code that hints support for "lay deacons". The only hope for support left indeed is to muster majorities into position and undercut a minority and raise a hew and cry the insubstantial, "higher law".

Gene Charles
Geneva Turnpike, Canandaigua



AP/Wide World Photos

President Bill Clinton gestures during a Sept. 17 talk on health reform.

Plan will compel abetting abortion

To the editors:

President Clinton's Health Plan calls for mandatory abortion coverage. Even though abortion is NOT a "needed" medical service, but rather an "elective" one, it will be "paid-in-full" by us, the taxpayers, under Clinton's proposed Health Plan.

Our Church has remained firm on its condemnation of abortion through the centuries. Vatican II calls abortion "an abomination." The Church also assures us that anyone who assists a woman in obtaining an abortion shares with her the evil associated with the act.

So, if abortion will be paid for by our tax dollars, we will de facto be "assisting" a woman in obtaining an abortion. This places Catholics in a "Catch-22" position. If we pay taxes, we assist in the killing of God's pre-born children and thus violate the federal law!

We will have to choose between God and man if this Health Care Plan retains the mandatory abortion coverage. Perhaps its time we — the people of God — stand up and be counted in secular city. Write the Bishop(s) — write Clinton! Express your justifiable anger and state your plans not to pay taxes if this Plan is enacted into law. If we don't stand up soon and live, and practice our Catholic faith, I fear we will soon lose the privilege of that freedom altogether!

Barbara A. Fredericks
Birr Street, Rochester

It's time to inject some humor into over-serious discourses

To the editors:

I laughed right out loud when the editors' note which accompanied Margaret M. Rudolph's letter "Feminist influence was no surprise" (*Catholic Courier*, Oct. 28). I don't know Dr. Patricia Schoelles, SSJ but I have the feeling she doesn't take herself too seriously and others shouldn't either. Isn't it refreshing, though, to have someone with a sense of humor under the microscope. After all, Jesus had a sense of humor. Didn't He tell Peter who had fished all night without success to try the other side of the boat?

...There was a fair amount of bile in Ms. Rudolph's letter, and I thought Judy Hoffend — also from Conesus — was a

little hard on Joseph Murray in her recent letter to your paper dealing with his article published in (the Rochester *Democrat and Chronicle*.) Judging from his picture I'd say he's not a young man... My advice to Mr. Murray would be spend his last days in prayer and leave the care of the Church to the Holy Spirit. He's been doing a fine job since long before Joe came on the scene.

Now that the General Synod is behind us and the world hasn't exploded and the Church hasn't gone down the drain, let's all lighten up and try to act like Christians.

Bridget Lawler
Webster

Doctors must see abortion's impact

To the editors:

Recently a group by the name of "Parallel" held a walk through Fairport to spread the message that when couples lose a child through a miscarriage or stillbirth that they need to go through a grieving process. Having personally experienced the loss of a child through a miscarriage, I can relate to the pain that these couples have experienced.

There is, however, one more group of women who have been overlooked and they are the women who have had abortions and have to, year after year, be constantly reminded of the child that they have lost.

There is one question that I have that has never been answered. What if an abortionist was to learn that his or her teenage daughter was pregnant? Would he or she want their daughter to have an abortion knowing that they would be taking the life of their own grandchild? Or would the abortionist rather see their daughter choose to give birth knowing that they would not have to subject her to such complications as infertility and many times excessive bleeding which could lead to death as a result of having an abortion?

The abortionists need to put themselves in the place of the girls who come

to them looking for the right answer to their crisis pregnancy and that would be to "choose life."

Dianna Ives
Simpson Road, Rochester

What is *Journal's* aim?

To the editors:

I read the article appearing in the October 14th issue, reported by Lee Strong, about Father Eugene Emo and St. Januarius Church with great sadness. This is just what we need.

The *Courier* has joined all the other publications and media presentations that fill our minds and eyes with anything sensational, sexy and suspicious. I, for one, don't need or want every little disgusting detail of someone's alleged "fall from grace."

It may help the Writer to read the weekly Corpus Christi Church Bulletin. One page is all it takes for signs of hope, enthusiasm, charity and encouragement. This little bulletin builds up the Church and the People of God.

I wonder what is the purpose of the *Courier-Journal*?

Sister Mary Beth Teddy, RSM
Blossom Road, Rochester