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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 letter 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.

**Disagrees with request on 'solemnity' of Mass****To the editors:**

I was compelled to write after reading the response to "Preserve the Sanctity of the Temple" (*Catholic Courier* Feb. 3). Evelyn Dodd tried to explain it in a very nice way to Dr. Dennis Murphy (*Courier*, Feb. 24: "Noise" builds to crescendo of love"). I'm afraid that she did not go far enough. Dr. Murphy said some very disturbing things that I too must address.

I respect everyone's opinion but I take exception to Dr. Murphy's. My parish is an older parish that is in decline. I say this because so many of the older parishioners — my friends — are being called home to be with the Lord. It is not in decline because "The church has lost sight of the sanctity and solemnity of the temple of God" as Dr. Murphy has said.

I disagree strongly with Dr. Murphy's letter. Dr. Murphy how dare you call my worship "a frivolous social gathering, a lawn party, a picnic and a song fest." The only thing you were right about was that my worship is a good time. I enjoy worshipping the Lord, in a lot of different ways! Dr. Murphy you claim to know God's mind, well so do I. God would sing and clap his hands at worship as he did at the Last Supper. Have you ever been to a Jewish Passover supper?

I want to go on record as saying that God is "my buddy" and my "best friend" but most of all he is my Lord. I could never lose sight of that. I tell Jesus my sad stories as well as a good joke or two. I'm sure God has a sense of humor. He

must as he deals with his children, just look around.

Dr. Murphy God's house is not a solemn place because Jesus did not stay dead; He rose. The "almighty creator" rose from the dead. I can never be solemn about that. My Good Friday ended with an Easter Sunday! Why didn't yours? You also claim to have the answer to the vocation problem. I hope the vocation director is reading this. You state all we have to do is make the sacrifice of the Mass significant again. I believe it still is.

Dr. Murphy your advice to the priests of our diocese was commendable. You advised them to dedicate their lives to the service of the Lord. I bet they think they did. The greatest commandment is to love God with your whole heart and soul. Jesus told us to tend the flock and feed the sheep, that is what the priests of our diocese are trying to do. Our priests do the service of the Lord every time they help one of us — his sheep.

Our priests cannot deal with us on God's level, only God can deal with us on his level. The priests can only deal with us on a human level, because they are human. My advice to you Dr. Murphy is to take the advice of Jean Lloyd in the *Catholic Courier* Feb. 24, 1994. She tells you the dates and times of Latin Mass at St. Stanislaus Church. I'm sure you will find everything you are looking for there.

Joseph Placious
Collamer Drive, Hilton

Columnist showed naivete in praising 'liberating' era**To the editors:**

Father McBrien's naivete is so highly developed that I believe he would introduce Little Red Riding Hood to Jack the Ripper.

In his February 17 essay, McBrien praises Gary Wills' *Newsweek* magazine article on the 1960s, which contained the ludicrous allegation that "most of the illegality, the coercion, the violence, was official," i.e., committed by the government.

That is, of course, a monstrous inversion of the truth. But Father McBrien, in ignorance of what goes on beyond the shadow of Notre Dame's "golden dome," presses it all together like flowers in a nosegay.

Father McBrien, like Wills, thinks of the 1960s as "liberating," and they certainly were. As part of their dogma, the

secularists of that decade sang hosannas to illegitimacy, perversion, reverse discrimination, the cheapening of human life through abortion, the replacement of individual responsibility with collective guilt, predatory wolf packs roaming our streets, democratization of public plunder, and multiculturalism, the last of which may lead to that glorious oxymoron, "a multi-cultural nation."

Julian Green wrote in his diary (1928-1957): "The starting point of almost all heresies is a truth misunderstood." Perhaps we can forgive Father McBrien for his praise of Wills' fictionalization of the 1960s, realizing that, as A.E. Housman so famously put it, "Thought is a painful process."

George Murphy
Washburn Park
Rochester

Msgr. will not forget friends**To the editors:**

The "Sound of Music" is not heard on Sunday mornings after Mass. And from the back pew in chapel is missing the priest who prayed there many holy hours. "Isn't that right, Frank?" will no more be asked by Father Donovan as they enjoyed their meals together.

For Monsignor Burns has gone from "Here to Eternity." And when the Saints came to meet him, what joy must have been his when St. Therese of the Child Jesus — his favorite intercessor — greeted him!

St. Joseph's Convent Infirmary had been blessed for five years with the presence of this noble priest. He will not forget us as he enjoys all the wonders of heaven.

Sister Catherine Quigley
East Avenue, Rochester

Refreshed by news of network efforts**To the editors:**

Congratulations to SAN (Social Action Network) for its efforts to get Monroe County Legislators to postpone the building of more jail cells and work on rehabilitation for alcoholics and drug addicts (see *Catholic Courier*, Feb. 10: "Legislature head meets action network"). I know all who go for treatment will not recover, but many will, and in the long run it will save taxpayers money. The problem is ecumenical and so too should be the solution. I hope more of our clergy, Jewish, Protestant, Catholic and all other religious leaders will support the efforts of SAN.

We read a lot of carping about the problems of our society. Isn't it refreshing to read the good that the Social Action Network is doing?

Rev. Richard C. O'Connell
St. Joseph Church, Rush

Write to cardinal**To the editors:**

Marriage is a basic part of society, a natural institution. God created a helpmate for Adam, a union. I strongly believe that the vow of celibacy for priests should no longer be imposed. A priest should be free to marry if he so wishes.

It is my belief that if priests were free to marry, problems such as alcoholism and sex offenses within the clergy would not arise to the extent publicized, and more young men would be willing to enter the priesthood.

I urge all like-thinking people to write their views to Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Vatican City, Rome, Italy.

Opinions can be written in any language the writer is fluent in.

Anna Roeger
Rochester

Interested by recent issues**To the editors:**

Congratulations on your new *Catholic Courier*! The last two editions (Feb. 17 and 24) were so interesting with articles on important happenings in our world as well as local and parish news. I feel that the paper has been too parochial and we all need to know what is happening to our brothers and sisters elsewhere. We read newspapers and get the news on the television. It is important that we look at these events through the eyes of charitable, compassionate people.

I, too had often wondered why we had no Southern Tier coverage.

The first thing I read is Father McBrien's column and then Bishop Clark's, and next the opinion/contribution. It seems to me that in the old format more letters were published that were generally pre-Vatican II. Wonderful changes have been occurring in the Catholic Church!

Elsie C. Stabel, Bath