

Catholic Courier1150 Buffalo Road
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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.

Father McBrien adds to confusion**To the editors:**

I rarely write to the editors of the *Catholic Courier*. Rarer still are the times I read the column by Father Richard McBrien. But after reading the March 10, 1994 column ("Can you be pro-life and pro-choice?") I have to take keyboard in hand.

Father McBrien's remarks are way off the mark. Let me explain. He writes, "And that is why, from an outsider's point of view," — is he speaking from his point of view as an outsider to what most Catholics believe? — "our church's unyielding reaffirmations of its teaching on contraception seems inconsistent. We want abortions to stop, but we deny the most practical means of making them stop."

Poor perception? No, it's a lack of understanding of what the Catholic Church



teaches. The most practical means of stopping abortion is abstinence. If someone chooses to have sexual intercourse and it results in a pregnancy, they do not have a "choice" to have an abortion or not to have an abortion. What they have is a RESPONSIBILITY to the life of the child(ren) within.

If "pro-choice" does not always mean "pro-abortion" then why is, it the pro-life side operates Birthright, the Nurturing Network, homes for unwed mothers as well as helping them with education, adoption and other social services? Where are the similar services offered by Planned Parenthood, the National Abortion Rights Action League, the National Organization for Women and other

abortion proponents? In their arguments for "choice" they seem to support it only when it means "choosing" to kill a child.

I wish I had more time and space to go but I don't have the column space that Father McBrien has. If Father McBrien really wants to help the issue of pro-life versus pro-choice I suggest he give up writing a column. After all, it only adds to the confusion with its misleading statements. "(W)ords are a problem for all of us," he states. With Father McBrien, it is more of a case of not knowing the facts.

Pat Donohue
Avis Street
Rochester

Abortion is consequence of allowing contraception**To the editors:**

I would like to comment on Richard McBrien's column in the *Courier* (of March 10): "Can you be pro-life and pro-choice?" He states: "... from the outsider's point of view, our church's unyielding reaffirmation of its teaching on contraception seems inconsistent. We want abortions to stop but we deny the most practical means of making them stop."

Father McBrien is in a position with his column to help people understand the wisdom of the Church's teaching — but often he uses his column to do just the opposite. I believe that he is just too separated from the reality of the harm that artificial contraception does to women and men, married and the unmarried.

It is very sad for our whole society that prayerful consideration was not given to *Humanae Vitae* ("On Human Life"). Just remember this encyclical was written in 1968. Abortion became legal for our country with the 1973 Supreme Court decision. Now we are counting the abortions by the millions, each one an innocent, defenseless human being that is killed.

A good book *The Doctor and Christian Marriage* by Dr. H. P. Dunn is available from Alba House, 2187 Victory Blvd., Staten Island, NY 10314 (Phone: 1-800-

343-ALBA).

Dr. Dunn states the title really should read: *The Doctor and Christian, Jewish, Moslem, Buddhist, Hindu, Humanist, etc. Marriage* because it aims to portray natural marriage for natural men and women, something that has been unchanged since the beginning because it is part of God's plan for the whole human race.

He has had plenty of experience delivering babies and treating gynecological patients. He goes into detail about each method of contraception, and the problems that it causes. He says there is an inevitable progression from contraception to sterilization and then to abortion.

To help married couples in a practical way, I recommend the magazine of the Couple to Couple League — an interfaith, non-profit organization for the promotion of natural family planning. This magazine is exceptional! Order from: CCL Family Foundations, P.O. Box 111184, Cincinnati, Ohio 45211.

As a wife and mother who has been active in pro-life work since the 1970s, I thank God for the courageous leadership of Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II.

Marian Buchheit
County Line Road
Webster

Found self agreeing with recent column**To the editors:**

I want you to know that reading Father McBrien's column just before Easter almost ruined my whole week. I actually agreed with him! I found his essay on Easter, the symbols of Easter, and even praising the traditions of the Church to be completely out-of-character of what I usually expect of him. He didn't even knock the Pope and the Magisterium of the Church once!

One of the highlights of my week is reading his column. I usually get angry, my blood pressure goes up, I yell at the paper, I even yell at my wife, when once in a while she agrees with him. I have to sit down and read my *Wanderer* — a real Catholic paper — about the terrible goings on in the Rochester and Albany Dioceses to get myself to calm down.

Perhaps if we all pray real hard Father McBrien might return to the Roman Catholic Church.

John D. Foy
Shore Acres Drive
Rochester

Synod prayer conveys powerful message**To the editors:**

Speaking from 22 years of personal experience in elected legislative office, people in positions of authority are too often the targets of unjust criticism, even though they may be right! The case may be that the critics just do not like the person in authority, be it the public, private or religious sector. The following are some kind words.

Some months ago I picked up a religious prayer card from a table at the rear of our church: "A Synod Prayer" composed by our Bishop of Rochester, Matthew Clark. It was some time before I read it. I then read the words but they really did not sink into my mind, as happens to so many of us.

Later I reread the Bishop's Synod Prayer and discovered it was a powerful and thought-inspiring message. The key words, "love," "hope," "peace," "faith," "patience" and "understanding" certainly drive home virtues this world is lacking. Sad but true!

I for one commend and thank our Bishop Clark for giving us this powerful and loving prayer/message.

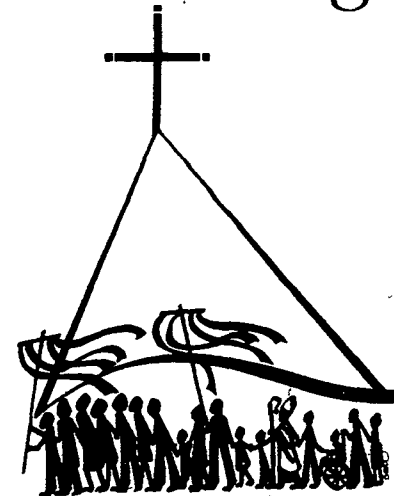
Friends, read and pray this beautiful prayer/message. I know you will be pleased with what our Bishop is telling

each one of us. We must accept our Lord's graces. Rest assured that a heart filled with love will result and all the other good virtues will most assuredly be a real part of each one of us who reads and prays this powerful message "A Synod Prayer."

To Bishop Matthew Clark, I suppose a litany of accolades are in order. However short, sweet and to the point, one word says it all THANKS!!

Much, much peace and love to all! God Bless Everyone!!

Francis Mastropietro
Clark Street, Auburn

**Aquinas Follies' producers deserve praise****To the editors:**

A fitting tribute from the cast of the Follies. The curtain came down! The show is over.

Permit me, representing the cast of over 50, to heap praise on a normally unpraised job — the producers. What a misnomer! In this case, the producers range in chores from conducting the business affairs to cleaning up the theater after rehearsal. Other "tasks" such as selling ads, bringing committees to-

gether, tickets, sets, stage hands, electricians, sound people, video technicians, publicity, auditions, cast party in addition to prominent roles in the production.

Our hats off to the "Producers" of the Aquinas Follies' successful run of "Gotta Sing, Gotta Dance," Norma Phelan & Rosemary Alonge.

Bob Studley
Cast member, Aquinas Follies
Kartes Drive, Rochester