

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 and 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.

Will refuse to pay taxes for abortion

To the editors:

I am writing concerning the potential use of my federal tax dollars for general abortions as part of the proposed government health plan. I believe abortion, under the vast majority of circumstances, to be evil, but I do not favor having government laws against it. Rather, I believe abortion should be confronted with strong public and strong private moral persuasion.

However, I do not believe that I should be forced to pay for general abortions through my taxes — whether the payment is direct or indirect. I would be forced to pay for what I believe to be the planned, systemic, destruction of innocent human life.

Except for saving the mothers life — and perhaps grotesque deformities where the child is in pain with no reasonable chance for survival — I feel no moral obligation toward providing medically "safe" abortions through my tax dollars. Must I protect murderers while the murderer is taking place with no regard for the murderer's victim? Others may feel obligated to provide tax funding for all abortions — so be it. My intent is not to legally prevent them from doing so; however, I have no moral obligation to contribute my tax dollars toward abortion and will not do so. I am willing to have my portion of these tax dollars rerouted to some other area of the health plan — if this were possible. But only if I do not end up contributing to abortions via some other, more hidden, tax route.

I believe the health care tax plan should include a conscientious objector's clause allowing people like myself to redirect these tax dollars somewhere else. But this will not happen because doing so

**File photo**

President Bill Clinton and his wife, Hillary, laugh during a September, 1993, kickoff rally for his health-care reform plan.

would mitigate against the amoral climate "pro-choice" people want to foist upon society with regard to abortion. "Pro-choice" people will not apply their pro-choice philosophy when it comes to tax funding for abortions. Am I to agree to finance murder because an objector's clause would make the budgeting/accounting too difficult to administer? I will not.

Tax funding for nuclear weapons aimed at cities came close to my personal limit of when to disobey the law. However, using my tax dollars to build nuclear weapons for mass destruction did not result in their actual usage — Hiroshima was prior to my birth. In fact, the threat of nuclear destruction may have acted as a preventative.

Funding abortions will not prevent abortions.

Funding abortions will result in the planned, systemic destruction of innocent human life. My personal limit will have been crossed.

James Urda
Strawhill Road, Barton

Take action on health-care reform

To the editors:

It is more urgent than ever for those of us who have health care coverage to speak out on behalf of those whom the current systems victimizes: the unborn, the underserved, the uninsured and the undocumented.

Our Christian concern for these poor and vulnerable brothers and sisters who are on the margin of society, and our belief in the basic rights and responsibilities of the human person, should lead us to advocate for comprehensive health care reform that assures universal access.

Our central belief in the sacredness of human life should compel us to advocate for the exclusion of abortion from health care reform. If we, who see the violence of abortion as inconsistent with respect for human life do not speak out, whose voice will be heard in the national debate?

The national debate should not be de-

ecided by partisan politics and special interest power. The debate is fundamentally about families without insurance, sick people without coverage, and whole communities without health care.

Ensuring that the health needs of an entire population are met will not happen without some level of sacrifice by each of us. Legislators need to hear this from their constituents.

I urge every citizen to be involved in the formulation of this important public policy. Write today to the President, to your Congressional Representative, and to the two U.S. Senators. Urge passage — this session — of health care legislation that clearly reflects respect for human life; a priority concern for the poor and vulnerable and the common good.

Father Michael J. Bausch, pastor
St. Helen's Church, Gates,
and Chairman of the
Diocesan Public Policy Committee

Place faith in wisdom of the Holy Father

To the editors:

Despite the fact that the Pope's letter reaffirming the ban on women priests was printed in the smallest print in the *Courier* — even the "classifieds" were larger — I did read it. I then went on to read Father McBrien's short course on the meaning of loyalty and fidelity. Fidelity from the Latin "fidelis" means TRUST.

Theologians direct our minds to new thoughts and ideas. That is good. I am not opposed to growth and development in the Church. However, I would like to encourage all Catholics to place their TRUST in the Holy Father channel their

energy away from opposition — to spreading the Word of God to all Peoples so that "all may be one."

McBrien asks "Is there such a thing as loyal opposition in the church?" Let me point out "loyal" and "opposition" used conjunctively is ambiguous. The words are contradictory.

There is no contradiction in the words of the Holy Father: "This judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church faithful." The hearts of the faithful are surely with our Holy Father as he struggles in his role as head of Church.

Jane E. Predmore
Clover Street, Honeoye Falls

How would female priests aid mission?

To the editors:

In the parish where I'm a member, there were loud lamentations concerning Pope John Paul II's edict against women's ordination. This happened from the sanctuary just before the conclusion of Sunday Liturgy.

On Monday morning, one part of the Liturgy of the Hours, Week II intercessions was "Our Savior has made us a nation of priests to offer acceptable sacrifice to the Father, praying, 'Christ, eternal priest, you conferred the holy priesthood on your people, grant that we may offer spiritual sacrifices to the Father. May we seek those things which are beneficial to our brothers and sisters, without counting the cost — to help them on the way to salvation.'"

Pope Paul VI, in his Apostolic Exhortation, "On Evangelization in the Modern World" quotes from the "Declaration of the Synod Fathers," October 1974 which says, "We wish to confirm once more that the task of evangelizing all people constitutes the essential mission of the Church."

My question is this: How would that essential mission be fulfilled by seeing a woman take over that highest act of Consecrating the Bread and Wine?

While in obedience to our Holy Father and our God-given royal priesthood, would it not be a most appropriate acceptable sacrifice to work together to give a birthday gift to Jesus in the year 2000 by bringing much of our world to His feet!

Dorothy Frederick
S. Clinton Avenue, Rochester

Spirit, church cannot disagree

To the editors:

The *Courier* has done a good job of publishing information on the Pope's teaching on altar girls and women priests.

For Dr. Marvin Mich to say, in the light of clearly expressed information sheets, that the Pope is "trying to put the letter in the category of defined teaching," is to question the authority of the Pope. And incidentally, of Bishop Clark.

Lumen Gentium, 25, states clearly:

"Bishops who teach in communion with the Roman Pontiff are to be revered by all as witnesses of divine and Catholic truth; the faithful for their part, are obliged to submit to their Bishop's decision, made in the name of Christ, in matters of faith and morals, and to adhere to it with a ready and respectful allegiance of mind. This loyal submission of the will and intellect must be given, in a special way, to the authentic teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff, even when he does not speak ex cathedra..."

Whenever we don't agree with the Holy Spirit's teachings we too readily run to Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit and the Church cannot be at odds.

To further assert that the Pope needs a consensus from all the faithful in order to teach authoritatively is simply illogical thinking compounded by wrong information.

Jan E. Fredericks
Birr St., Rochester