

# OPINION COMMENTARY

## Catholic Courier

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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.



Jane Gefell crowns a statue of Mary during the July 22-24 Marian Conference. File photo

## Felt honored to participate in conference

### To the editors:

I would like to thank the Rochester Center for Peace and the Finger Lakes Chapter of the Knights of Columbus for sponsoring the first New York State National Marian Conference, July 22-24 at the Riverside Convention Center in Rochester. The Masses, the Speakers and the music created a beautiful spiritual environment.

I feel very fortunate — and honored — to have been among those who participated in this historical event. It was, however, most unfortunate that our diocesan leader, Bishop Matthew H. Clark, was unable to be present at least for a portion of the program.

Irene Wilson  
Seward Street  
Dansville

## Can't assent to teaching on women

### To the editors:

Recently, I read Pope John Paul II's apostolic letter reaffirming the Catholic Church's ban on women priests. I have read other articles, reviewed my understanding of the Christian moral decision-making process, and have made my own personal decision as an imperfect, practicing, faithful Catholic. Respectfully, I decline to hold the same judgment as our Pope.

I believe the Catholic Church is morally compelled to ordain women — and married people — as priests because all men and women are equal in God's eyes (Galatians 3:28).

I also base my ordination beliefs on these points:

1. If women are excluded from ordination because Jesus chose only men as apostles, then our Church, to be completely faithful, must only ordain men who are Jewish converts to the Catholic faith. Times change and the Church changes with the times, as long as these changes don't contradict teachings of faith and doctrine.

2. The Pontifical Biblical Commission reported to Pope Paul VI in 1976 there was no evidence Jesus explicitly forbade the ordination of women.

3. Women and married people are ordained as ministers in many Christian religions with positive results — and no damages — for teaching the faith and doctrine of these religions.

4. Our Catholic Church in the U.S. faces a growing shortage of priests and similar shortages are occurring in other countries. Many women and married people want to serve God as ordained Catholic priests. Our current Church rules aren't allowing the full utilization of the gifts of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:4-7); are limiting the number of people who become Catholics; and are

preventing the propagation of our faith to the people of all nations in violation of Christ's commands (Matthew 28:19 and Luke 10:2).

5. Our Catholic Church isn't consistent in its rules for ordination on the subject of celibacy. Church rules originally allowed married men to be priests in the Catholic Church. Current Church rules say only single men may become priests, but other rules allow widowers and married ordained former Episcopalian and Polish National Catholic priests to serve as priests in our Church without annulling their marriages.

6. There is an issue of Christian justice when our Church depends on women volunteers to clean churches, wash altar linens, and wash priest vestments, but refuses to ordain women as priests.

In closing, our Catholic Church leadership needs to listen better to the cries of all of its people who want to serve God and God's people as priests. I urge concerned Catholics to support Catholics Speak Out, CORPUS, Priests For Equality, and Women's Ordination Conference. I believe God will, in God's own time, definitively call our Church to ordain women and married people as priests. It is my prayer and hope our Church will soon hear God's call and change its rules for ordination.

Thank you to my family and friends who have planted seeds of ideas and encouraged me to grow. Hopefully, my letter will help to increase the dialogue on this issue (2 Maccabees 15:38).

C. Michael Reimringer  
Sperry Drive, Henrietta

## Center enabled woman to achieve self-sufficiency in business at home

### To the editors:

In the hope of continuing and expanding the services offered by the Worker Ownership Resource Center (*Catholic Courier*, Aug. 11: "Program makes business of ending poverty") I offer the following statements.

In July of 1992 I was dismissed from my position of Assistant Resident Manager of a residential facility for the mentally ill due to a chronic and recurring back injury. I felt capable of being self-sufficient and sought retraining through the New York State Department of Vocational Education for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID). I attended computer training courses and was confident that I could find a position using my skills. I had been receiving unemployment benefits for one year and was unable to ac-

cept any positions offered due to my physical limitations. I worked with VESID counselors and other placement specialists and had little success. I then decided to establish a home based business utilizing my business experience and my newly acquired skills.

I became a consumer of WORC services in July of 1993. Through the WORC program I met other entrepreneurs and we discussed ways in which we could make our businesses successful. Through classes offered I learned the importance of market research, accurate record keeping and a business plan. Options were discussed and explored, research methods were learned and through individual counseling sessions I was able to set a direction for my business.

In February of 1994 Day By Day Productions started publication of the Finger Lakes Bingo News, a weekly newsletter distributed to bingo players in the Finger Lakes. This area of the business had been explored with Mr. Cruz of WORC and we calculated that it could be a profitable venture. The publication is being well received in the area and current circulation is over 1,000 copies per week. Day By Day Productions also prints flyers, newsletters and business cards.

Thanks to the WORC program I am able to be productive and self sufficient! How fortunate we residents of the Finger Lakes are to have such a fine program available to us.

Mary Jakobovic  
Day by Day Productions  
West Lake Road, Geneva

## Enjoyed columns about principles, virtues

### To the editors:

Thank you for carrying the columns of Richard McBrien and Gregory F. Augustine Pierce. They rarely fail to give me helpful insights about our faith. The columns in the August 11 *Catholic Courier* were especially good.

The 12 "principles, values and moral perspectives" presented by McBrien from "the heart and center of the Gospel" can be used profitably in an examination of conscience. McBrien reminds us that there is much more to Christian moral teaching than teachings on sexuality. We in the Diocese of Rochester need to remember this when we consider the Syn-

### od priorities.

Our attempts to live faithfully frequently are challenged when we're working; even, sadly, when we work for the church. Pierce's four virtues, which could become the "basis for a spirituality of work," remind us that human work is about more than making money. It is interesting that these virtues do not appear to support the conventional wisdom that "you get what you pay for." Pierce's virtues fit very well into the moral principles which McBrien draws from the Gospel.

Sheryl B. Zabel  
Lyndon Road, Fairport