

OPINION COMMENTARY

Catholic Courier

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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.

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

Please restrict letters to 500 words or fewer. Mail them to: **Catholic Courier, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.** Please include your full name, phone number and complete address for verification purposes.



READING, WRITING AND REINFORCEMENTS

God deserves credit for cease-fire

To the editors:

How do I meet Colin Craig, director of Corrymeela Community? His comments in your article on the IRA cease-fire were right on target (*Catholic Courier*, Sept. 8: "Hope, wariness greet cease-fire in Ireland").

It is essential that a lasting peace be built upon a grass-roots outreach, a "person-to-person, region to region" dialogue. We need to remember that Catholic and Protestant are both Christians, worshipping the same God and fighting the same enemy.

I also share Mr. Craig's concern about the impact "triumphalism" would have on loyalists, who feel threatened with the loss of their very identities. While I can't muster an unreserved love for men who are capable of murdering pregnant woman and sleeping, unarmed men, I do understand the tremendous fear and sense of abandonment they must feel.

Ireland is indeed becoming increasingly secularized, though I cannot view this as a positive development. If religion has been used in the past to divide and conquer, my wish for Ireland now is that God would restore in Her people the power of Christian love to overcome differences and unite. Her slide into secularism will only serve to increase apostasy among all Her people, Catholic and Protestant.

Lastly, I would like to comment on the mutual back-slapping occurring between politicians as a result of the cease-fire. I realize that months and years of effort have been expended on the peace initiative, but why is it that not once have I heard anyone give the slightest credit to God? And while the IRA must certainly be commended, along with Gerry Adams and Sinn Fein, for their absolutely essential role in this new hope for peace, the fact is not one thing would have changed without the will and direction of God.

I continue to pray for a peaceful unification of Ireland, knowing that when it occurs, there is only One who can legitimately claim the glory for the miracle He bestows.

**Sandra Dunn
Mattie Street
Auburn**

EDITORS' NOTE: Craig can be reached by writing to: Corrymeela Community, 8 Upper Crescent, Belfast, BT7 1NT, Northern Ireland.



File photo
Gerry Adams (left), president of Sinn Fein, addresses a crowd gathered at Connolly House in Belfast, Northern Ireland Aug. 31, the day on which the Provisional Irish Republican Army declared a cease-fire.

Urges assistance to Haitian people through parish 'adoption' program

To the editors:

The heroic Haitians, all 6.8 million, for decades have been the poorest people in the Western Hemisphere! Since the U.N. Embargo they are even poorer; poorer than Calcutta residents.

Father Lawrence Bohner started the Adopt-A-Parish Program. His director is Harry Hosey.

In this program the adopting parishes send monthly money for food and medicine. To learn more of how it works write Adopt-A-Parish, P.O. Box 111, Old Hickory, Tenn. 37138 and include your

parish's name and address with the pastor's name. Twenty-seven percent of Haitian children die before age 5.

And as a retired gym teacher, I'd like to suggest if your parish has a sports team in a league, they might raise money to send two backboards, two goals with nets and basketballs. I can see the smiles now on the kids' faces, in my mind's eye. Their favorite players are Michael Jordan and Charles Barkley.

**Mary Rita Crowe
East Main Street
Rochester**