

**Catholic Courier**1150 Buffalo Road  
Rochester, NY 14624  
716/328-4340**President****Bishop Matthew H. Clark**  
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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.



## Killings show need for consistency

**To the editors:**

The recent killings of abortionists has been justified by some as a legitimate means of self-defense for the unborn child — as one would protect any child about to be killed. This moral reasoning must be challenged on several points.

First, to defend another's life is morally different than intending, premeditatedly to kill someone. Those who killed abortionists did not do this to the abortionist as he was in the act of beginning or during the abortion. Many abortion providers — like Dr. Nathanson — walked into their abortion clinic one day for the last time in order to clear out their belongings to quit, never to return. No one can know for certain what was in the mind and heart of an abortionist on any given day. Those that have left their practice of abortion have sometimes become the greatest advocates for the pro-life cause.

Secondly, the traditional use of self-defense was always limited and a last resort. The amount of force to be used was only enough to defend oneself after all other means were exhausted. Yet those who killed abortionists justified their actions because those particular doctors would never again kill any more preborn children. Couldn't this have been accomplished just as well by not killing the abortionist but rendering him ineffective by stopping in some way their ability to perform abortions — through affecting their hands or eyesight? But even this action has problems because it is the woman — with all the pressures on her — that hires the abortionist. She merely has to find another abortionist to do what the dead one would have done.

Besides, this has set the pro-life cause back by giving the pro-abortion lobby and media an excuse to continue to overlook the violence done daily to thousands of innocent preborn children and instead focus on these isolated, acts of violence to abortionists. It allows the media to continue to distort the abortion issue. More and more journalists are seeing that the media has shown the reality of violence in Somalia or Bosnia but not the violence done to preborn children inside the legally protected abortion clinics. The killing of abortionists perpetuates this media bias.

Thirdly, there has been a damaging effect done to the common good. The Supreme Court established a private right to use violence — through abortion — for any personal reason without the need for any public justification or any concern for how those individual acts will harm the common good. Disregard for the value behind the law, by the Supreme Court decision in 1973 — respecting life — has paved the way the continuing use of violent solutions for complex situations.

Those who kill abortionists are like those who kill the preborn, in that they set themselves up as prosecutor, judge, jury and executioner with no due process whatsoever.

These actions of killing abortionists demonstrate visibly and clearly how it is possible to be anti-abortion but not pro-life. This is not new, for many politicians have voted against pro-abortion laws, but have turned right around and voted for other policies that stop programs that as-

sist the poor and women that need support after their child is born.

I think this demonstrates the importance of holding the consistent life ethic in our society. One person has summed this up by saying we need to treat pregnant women the way we want them to treat their preborn children. We need to treat everyone with respect and compassion.

Father James Hewes  
Newman Community, Genesee

## Evil still exists in human lives

**To the editors:**

As a participant at the Diocesan Synod, I believe that we heard a clear message regarding the need for Catholic Moral teaching. For some this sounds reactionary, for others it sounds prophetic, but the more I have thought about this topic the more I find it a means to good mental as well as spiritual health.

A recent interview with Dr. William Coulson, a Catholic Psychologist, who worked with Dr. Carl Rogers through the '60s, revealed how important Church teachings are to promote goodness and normalcy. Dr. Coulson, with Dr. Rogers, worked with Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary and other teaching orders, providing therapist and facilitators for group encounters in California.

Dr. Rogers believed that every man and woman is totally good, and that God was available to every person, that we could self-consult. This led to his "humanistic and non-directive psychology," quoting Dr. Coulson. With this concept for therapy in mind, Coulson set up workshops for the Sisters of IHM in 1967. Working with 560 nuns in a 1-1/2 year period, the results came in. 300 nuns petitioned Rome to get out of their

vows. Although starting-out with good intentions, Dr. Coulson says, "we destroyed them."

The flaw, Coulson admits, is that they had not considered that evil could reside in the "deepest longings" of people. Thus the goodness of moral teachings was replaced by the humanistic view that the authority for action was "their imperial inner selves." Coulson admits that Dr. Maslow warned us. "Maslow believed in evil, and we didn't," says Coulson.

Dr. Coulson says, we "failed to understand the reality of evil in human life." Catholic Moral teaching is an antithesis to non-directive therapy. The Synod process caused me to love our faith more intensely, to see that many people recognize the need to promote moral goodness found in Church teachings.

With the nuns, Dr. Coulson says, "we overcame their traditions, we overcame their faith." May we all be aware that the Church still holds the keys, provided by The Bread of Life, Our Blessed Lord, to the healthiest way of life. (Dr. Coulson can be contacted regarding his interview at P.O. Box 134, Comptche, Calif. 95427.)

Frank Netti  
Weedsport

## Sisters thank community for mission aid

**To the editors:**

We would like to express formally the gratitude of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester to the Diocesan Mission Office for the very welcome contribution of almost \$70,000 which we recently received for our missions in Brazil.

This would not have been possible without the continuous and whole-hearted support of Bishop Matthew Clark; the selfless and creative efforts of Father Robert Bradler, the Diocesan Mission Director; and, finally, the sacrifice and generosity of the people of the Diocese who gave to the Missions collection.

We would like you to know that these moneys go directly to our 13 Sisters

presently working in central and northern Brazil. It helps them to continue to meet the pastoral concerns and to accompany their people, who have very little in the way of material goods, but such a deep sense of what is truly precious in God's sight: their relationship to God and to one another; and the importance of sharing what they do have with others.

The whole Congregation, and especially those who have been or are presently in Brazil, join me in grateful prayer for all of you who remember the missions in any way.

Sister Rosemary St. Peter  
Superior General  
Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester