

OPINION COMMENTARY

Catholic Courier

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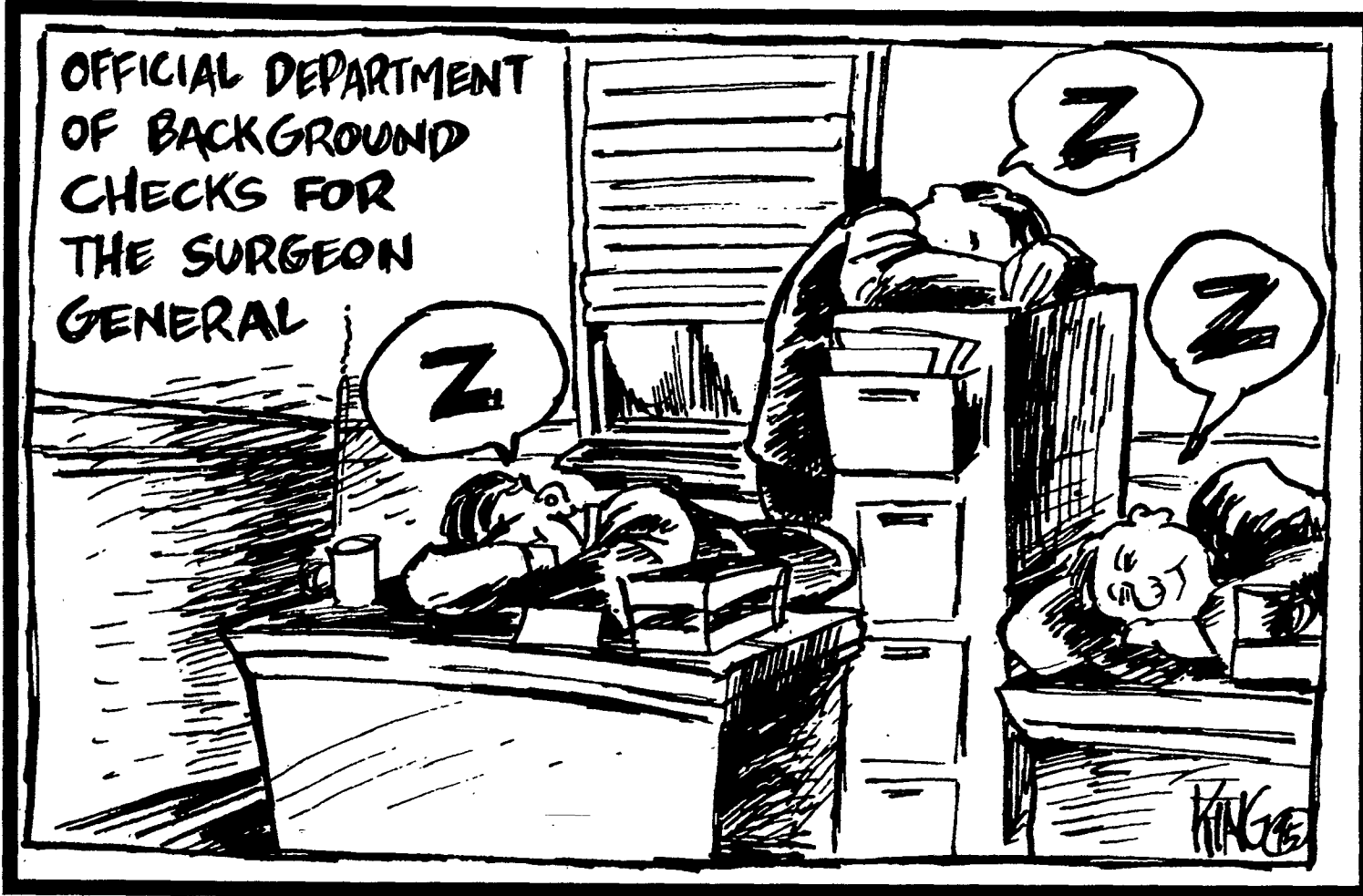
The *Catholic Courier* wishes to provide space for readers throughout the diocese to express opinions on all sides of the issues. We welcome original, signed letters about current issues affecting church life.

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.

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.

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Answers bishop's query on priests

To the editors:

In response to Bishop Clark's column "Facing some dawning realities" (Jan. 19), I would like to compliment him on an excellently written column which raises some important issues for the not so far away future of our parishes.

As one who considers himself a conservative Catholic who has found himself on the opposing side of Bishop Clark's more progressive views more than once, I also see the sad reality of the priest shortage in our Diocese. Personally the Bishop is a hard person not to like, even when you're holding the dissenting voice, and I would never question his devotion to the faithful. In fact, the times I've held the friendly opposing viewpoint, I've also held that unfair advantage of not being responsible for the diocese!

The Bishop's column ... should serve as a wake-up call, especially to those of us who vocally oppose women and married priests, yet we fail to offer any reasonable alternatives to cope with the shortage. Instead we bury our heads in the past and say "That's his problem, he's the Bishop!"

Therefore, I offer these ideas to the situation the Bishop outlined in his column.

A.) Dropping One Sunday Mass from the Schedule

I would hope the pastor would announce the loss of the parochial vicar and the need to drop a Mass along with his feelings on the situation. Then I would suggest a vote by parishioners on what Mass to drop or possibly we could alternate on a weekly or monthly basis: skip the 7 a.m. one week a month, then the 9:30 etc. If no workable solution can be agreed upon, I would expect the pastor to make the decisions he deems best.

B.) Expanding the Youth Ministry

The pastor should announce his intention to embark on this initiative and the need to staff it. I think you would find the call for volunteers to work with the youth, would be readily answered in most parishes, much the same way a volunteer comes forward to coach the parish basketball team.

C.) No replacement priest to staff for vacations

I would hope the parishioners would think enough of their pastor to force him to take his vacation. If need be we could go up to Holy Rosary or down to Holy Cross or St. Charles that particular Sunday the pastor is away. Another al-

ternative would be the television Mass for shut-ins that particular week; this may also help us gain a new perspective and how many people worship every week due to infirmities. If worse came to worse I'm quite sure the good Lord would forgive us missing a Sunday Mass so that our pastor could take a well deserved vacation. Finally I would expect to hear that the Bishop ordered the pastor on vacation out of concern for his

health, regardless of no replacement being available!

In closing I would like to offer Bishop Clark a quote by one of his predecessors in office. The late Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen was famous for saying "I could have been a cardinal if I'd keep my mouth shut!"

Alan Rector
Flower City Park
Rochester

Seeks explanation of shift in teachings on war, violence

To the editors:

In his letter of January 5 ("Accepting two views eviscerates the Gospel") Mark Scibilia-Carver at least recognizes that there is simply no room for two opposed moralities within the Holy, Roman, Catholic Church. While I can understand, and applaud, those who accept the idea of non-violence as the proper response to all forms of violence, I cannot ignore the thinking of the Doctors and Popes, Councils and Bishops Conferences, who have taught for more than a thousand years that there is a place for

the just war and the death penalty.

I will not attempt to capsulize these teachings in a short note, but do hope that someone with the stature of St. Thomas will step forward and explain to this senior person why the church could be so wrong on this issue for so many years and yet be infallible in passing on the deposit of faith. My goodness, that is some sentence. I hope someone takes the time to analyze it, but more importantly, to respond to it.

Allen Weaver
Cork Street, Aurora

Restore prayers to St. Michael

To the editors:

One of our greatest concerns today is the increase of crime on our streets, violence and abuse in our homes, and the immorality that is so prevalent in our movies and TV Programs.

My observation is that these have escalated considerably in the past 20 years. Could it be coincidence that it was just about 20-25 years ago that we discontinued the prayer after Mass that was directed to St. Michael, the Archangel imploring him to defend us against the

snarles and wickedness of the devil?

Regarding prayer, Pope John Paul II wrote in his "Crossing the Threshold of Hope:" "St. Paul tells us where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more." This profound truth presents a personal challenge for prayer!

My challenge to our Diocesan parishes is to restore the recitation of the prayer to St. Michael after every Mass.

Jane Predmore
Clover Street
Honeoye Falls

Not surprised by new research at UR

To the editors:

The University of Rochester's Medical Center's decision to experiment with women's health involving abortion should come with no surprise. Any institution that 40 years ago could experiment with plutonium and human beings would not find it inconsistent to be willing to experiment with women's health and abortion now. The secrecy

and lack of ethics 40 years ago and which are evident in the present experimentation speak of the similarly sad results that come from this new chemical and biological warfare on those women and children who are all part of our human family.

Fr. Anthony Paul Mugavero
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