

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 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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Take back responsibility for the needy

To the editors:

In response to the Feb. 23 lead article "Church agencies brace for worst as debate begins over budget cuts."

Our Church leaders seem to have little faith in us to fill the needs of the less fortunate should the government cut social spending programs.

Jesus Christ taught us that it was our responsibility to care for the sick, the hungry, the homeless, the imprisoned. He did not berate Caesar for failing to help the less fortunate.

For a generation or more now we have effectively shifted the burden to the state via our tax dollars. We are now in the midst of a debate over how effective the state has been at helping these least of our brothers. Not very, I'm afraid. We see polarization, moral decline. Many of us well off waste our time and treasure on frivolity and ignore the needs of the poor; many of us poor no longer try to help ourselves but instead rely on state charity.

Let us not complain that we cannot do the job that Jesus taught us to do. Our Catholic charity agencies will survive government funding cuts, if we make up the difference. Our church leaders need to educate and motivate us to support our wonderful Catholic charities, and even ecumenical efforts. The Gospels are full of miracles. Our faith needs work of mercy.

Let us join together and take back our responsibility to the least of our brothers and save our own souls at the same time.

David Kepler
Hilton

Concern justified by sorry statistics

To the editors:

Father Laird, of the Diocesan Marriage Tribunal, cites a number of "myths" about annulments (*Catholic Courier*, Feb. 9: "Annulments can foster healing, growth"). One of these "myths" is that "an annulment is just a Catholic divorce."

Later in the story it was reported that 253 cases before the Tribunal were decided in 1994. In only six of these cases were annulments not granted. Put another way, 98 percent of those marriages were declared null and the couples were free to marry again. Is it any wonder why some people feel that "an annulment is just a Catholic divorce?"

The Vatican has expressed concern over the way annulments are often granted. I believe the numbers cited above show why that concern is justified.

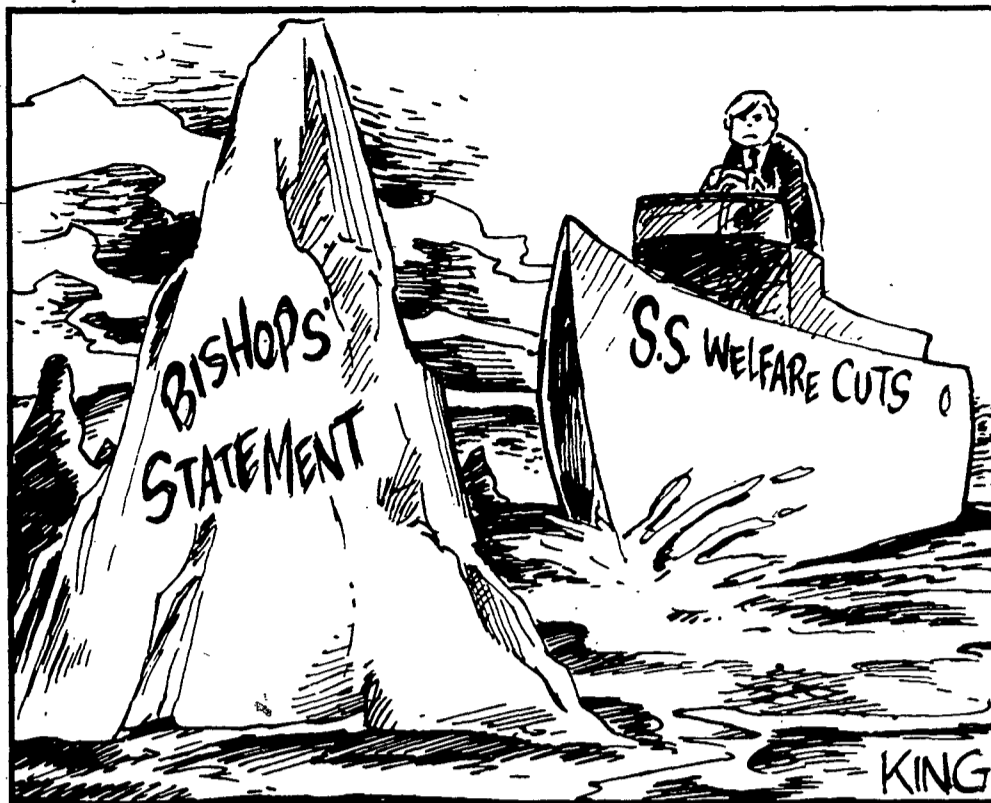
Raymond N. Buonemani
Holcroft Road, Rochester

Christ remains head of absolute monarchy

To the editors:

In the February 16, 1995 edition of the *Catholic Courier* Father McBrien says that the Church is not an absolute monarchy. He is so caught up on Church politics, hierarchy, papal succession and his own liberal agenda that he has forgotten that Jesus Christ is still the head of the Church. He is still on the throne, and He is still King of Kings and Lord of Lords. I don't know which church McBrien is referring to, but the Church founded by Christ and sustained by the Holy Spirit for 2,000 years is nothing if it is not an absolute monarchy.

Thomas J. Scott
Friar Tuck Lane
Webster



Asks prayers for faithful friend

To the editors:

Grace Krause's Memorial Mass was held Feb. 10 in the social hall, Tower A at Cedarwood Towers. It was attended by many residents from both Towers A and B plus clergy and religious from several area congregations. I first met Grace as a resident about 12 years ago when she was 70. This remarkable loving lady from that day on at least always kept track of any Cedarwood residents who were hospitalized at Genesee, our closest hospital, until they can back home to Cedarwood. She had a wonderful unending supply of cheerful cards.

If residents were unable to attend Mass for health reasons on Monday mornings, Grace was always among those who brought Holy Communion to them in their own apartments as a Eucharistic Minister.

She had a slight build and vision prob-

lems but these never stopped her cheerful hospital visits even in the coldest windiest part of winter if it meant she had to take two buses each way to get there and back.

Grace broke her hip so was confined to a nursing home the last six days of her life.

I'm so very proud to have known her as we all came to as time went by!

What a great example to the rest of us.

She is survived by a son and a daughter, who both attended our Memorial Mass, and four grandchildren. If I had a list of their names I'd be delighted to share them. She shared pictures of her trip with her daughter to Ireland with me very happily.

Keep them all in your prayers! God bless them all!

Mary Rita Crowe
Cedarwood Towers, Rochester

No mandate for unity in accidentals

To the editors:

I cannot claim the intellect of the Angelic Doctor; but with my little knowledge of Church history I will answer Mr. Allen Weaver's challenge (*Catholic Courier*, Feb. 23: "Seeks explanation of shift in teachings on war, violence").

Fundamental faith and moral holdings of the church have not changed in 20 centuries; their interpretation and application to the specific historical and social situations have. "Thou shall not kill," "love thy enemy" and "turn the other cheek" are still valid commandments and evangelical counsels. What has changed is the ideas of the extent of "self-defense," their only exception in both divine and human law.

Centuries ago, the Church condemned Copernicus' ideas about the solar system;

theologians held that some minority races had no soul, that male fetuses received the soul one week after conception and that females did not until the third month. In the nineteenth century, a Pope condemned freedom of idiotic ideas (deliramenta). All those holdings were duly reversed later by another Pope and an Ecumenical Council. By the way, St. Thomas Aquinas wrote and argued against the Immaculate Conception, declared a Dogma in 1854.

The Church always follows this Golden Rule: Unity in the essentials, variety in the accidentals, and charity in all matters. If the accidentals do not change, we would still need circumcision and kosher meals to gain salvation.

Enrique H. Miyares Jr., LLD
Chili Avenue, Rochester

Women must reach consensus on abortion

To the editors:

Let me clarify my remarks in my letter of January 5. I stand by my assertion that the wrongness of abortion can diminish greatly depending on circumstances. Knowledge, freedom, and consent have always been factors increasing or decreasing the sinfulness of an action. Should a woman who has had an abortion come to me seeking forgiveness, I would not argue with her or give her excuses; I would forgive her. I stand by my assertion that dialogue and "negotiation" with Planned Parenthood is possible and even desirable. The alternative is more violence.

I am not unable to feel compassion for an aborted baby; I find it difficult to feel compassion for one who now sees God.

I do not find it difficult to feel compassion for the woman who has found it necessary to abort her unborn child. I will never know, however, the agony in her heart. I continue to believe that the solution to the whole abortion debate lies in women reaching some sort of consensus among themselves about its wrongness.

Meanwhile, use of such phrases as "de-luded do-gooders," "shocking and frightening," and "no exceptions" will simply prolong the debate, generating much heat and very little light. And as for what God says to people entering heaven, I suspect is something like "Welcome home, I love you!"

Father Robert L. Collins
St. Thomas More Church, Rochester