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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.

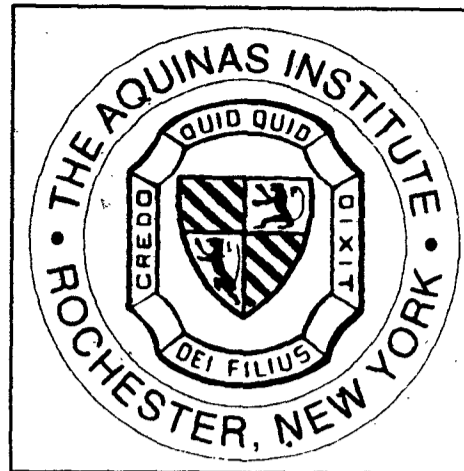
Mail letters to: *Catholic Courier*, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Please include your full name, phone number and complete address for verification purposes.

Priest urges starting over at Aquinas

To the editors:

Last October I wrote a letter to the local press complaining about what I believed to be a clandestine action, on the part of the Board of Trustees, to take control of Aquinas Institute away from the Basilian Fathers. Within two days of the appearance of that letter I was suspended from my teaching duties and, "for the good of the students," asked to resign. Within four days of that letter I was back at my old teaching position at Andrean High School in Merrillville, Indiana. My guess was then, and is now, that I must have hit pretty close to the mark. Over the past five months I have received a great many letters from students, parents, alumni, and Basilian Confreres thanking me for my actions.

On a recent visit to Rochester, the first since my rather ignominious departure, I read in the papers of the naming of a President at Aquinas, Mr. Patrick A. Hanley, and the resignation of the present Principal, Father Dennis Noelke. While I have no doubt that Mr. Hanley is a fine man and a great administrator I find the actions of the Board of Trustees deplorable. To name a former Priest in place of an active one I find, under the present circumstances, insulting to every Basilian who has ever worked at Aquinas. The appointment is cynical at best and sinister at worst. Is this what 70 years of service to Aquinas deserves? I am not



placated by the fact that the Board wants a Basilian Principal. I believe that would be eyewash for the Alumni so that they will continue their generous support of Aquinas. If the Basilians cooperate in tricking the alumni in this way it will be prostituting ourselves in the worst way.

To the Board of Trustees and the Basilian Fathers I say, Please stop this charade! FOR THE SAKE OF THE STUDENTS, STOP IT! I have no objections to naming a layman or laywoman as the CEO at Aquinas. But, you have to make it open and above board from the beginning. As one dissenting Board Member wrote, "this whole thing has been railroaded." Start again from the beginning and bring everyone affected by the Board's decisions into the process. If this does not happen I encourage my Confreres at Aquinas to leave at the end of the present year with the pride and dignity becoming of Priests and Religious who have selflessly served the students at Aquinas for 70 years. In the end we as Basilians must always remember, it is only the students who count.

Father Joe Lanzalaco, CSB
Merrillville, Ind.

Alumnus finds inconsistencies in rationale for AQ presidency

To the editors:

Recently the Board of Trustees of Aquinas Institute announced the appointment of a new lay administrator to the position of President. Mr. John Bell, Chairman of the Board of Trustees stated that the other Catholic high schools in the area have a President/Principal Administrative structure. Mr. Bell also stated "that the growth in enrollment and expansion of the physical plant, coupled with the need for more scholarship dollars and a larger endowment, make it impossible for any one person to maximize all the opportunities before us."

Mr. Bell fails to state that at the other Catholic high schools the position of President is held by the religious and the lay person is the principal. They have instituted the exact opposite at Aquinas. Mr. Bell also fails to state or seem to grasp the fact that for many years Aquinas not only had larger enrollments, but also the

additional responsibilities of Aquinas Memorial Stadium all managed by a Basilian Principal.

Furthermore the vote on this issue was 13-6, the six opposing votes were cast by the six Basilian Fathers on the board. That's all the weight they have on the current board. The fallout from this entire matter now stands as follows 1). the resignation of Father Lanzalaco CSB, 2). the resignation of Father Dennis Noelke CSB, 3). the resignation of the Basilian Campus Minister and hard feeling and tension among the teaching staff, some Basilian Fathers and a great many Alumni.

In closing I offer Mr. Bell and the rest of the Aquinas board of trustees some food for thought. It's a quote from Shakespeare which I learned from the Basilian fathers while a student at Aquinas.

"What Price Success!"

Alan Rector
Flower City Park, Rochester

Requests equal welcome for all candidates

To the editors:

I was at Sacred Heart Cathedral on Tuesday evening, March 7, for the Rite of Election. My husband and I are on the Core Team for the RCIA at our parish, St. Mary's Church, Downtown. We have been for several years.

Year-after-year we have witnessed Catechumens and Candidates go through dramatic changes as they are touched by the Spirit and the effects of this process. They come with open and searching hearts. This is a major decision in their lives as well as an unforgettable experience.

With all of this in mind, I still can't understand why the soon-to-be-baptized are treated with more "enthusiasm" than the soon-to-be-confirmed. The Catechumens write their names in "the book" and receive a hug from Bishop Matthew Clark, while the Candidates receive "only" a

handshake from the Bishop. An obvious discrimination. Tuesday evening, one "industrious" man took it upon himself to "steal" a hug from the Bishop anyway. That tells me they notice.

What kind of message are we giving out? God does not have favorites. Those who worked in the vineyard for only a few hours were paid the same as those who worked all day. There is no more Gentile or Jew, slave or free, woman or man. Baptism and Confirmation are really meant to be celebrated as one sacrament anyway as I understand it. Everyone should be welcomed into the church equally. Otherwise we are not only a house divided, but we are receiving God's children more for what they are experiencing than for who they are.

Christine LaBaró
Manhattan Square Drive, Rochester

Don't call succession into doubt

To the editors:

In his talk in February at Transfiguration Church Father Hart, STD, Professor at St. Bernard's Institute, stated that the Bible does not mention that there should be apostolic succession, nor does it say that there should be no apostolic succession. This talk was part of the effort of six area parishes to effectuate the Synod directive on lifelong education.

When asked whether he doubted apostolic succession Father replied that he did not. But he had already expressed doubts about the appropriateness of this tradition! Such doubt raises skepticism about established Church practices, weakens faith, misdirects the formation of true consciences, and effectively weakens if not truly removes all authority from parents.

Lumen Gentium (#20) is definite concerning apostolic succession:

"That divine mission, which was committed by Christ to the apostles, is destined to last until the end of the world (cf. Matt. 28:20), since the Gospel, which they were charged to hand on, is, for the Church, the principle of all its life for all time. For that very reason the apostles were careful to appoint successors in this hierarchically constituted society."

By doubting whether the Pope has the right to be Pope, Father implicitly questions whether bishops have the right to Episcopal succession. This brings into doubt his own sacerdotal role as well: if the pope can't appoint bishops then certainly bishops can't ordain priests. If priests are not licit, then the Eucharist they confect, and the sins they forgive in the sacrament of penance — also known as the rite of reconciliation — has no effect.

Furthermore, the role of the laity, which also has an apostolate, is undercut. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church expresses it (paragraph 3):

"All Christ's faithful are called on to hand (the Good News) on from generation to generation, by professing the faith, by living it in fraternal sharing, and by celebrating it in liturgy and prayer."

If what Father Hart says is correct, then parents, who head the domestic church known as the family, are following a questionable pattern by aspiring to be the primary educators of their children. The recent Convention on the Rights of the Child at the United Nations similarly questions that right. According to this new convention you will not be able to send your child to the school or the church of your choice. Nor will you be able to screen the type of friends your child hangs out with, or even which television programs they will be able to watch. As to this last point you can call the offices of (Senators) D'Amato or Moynihan: perhaps we should do that.

As to the first points, you can only pray: we would definitely do that. One who cannot accept the authority of the Pope is not likely to listen to a mere layman. But if we do remove the headship of the Papacy, we will be like a ship without a rudder and run aground on the shoals of ambiguity, contradiction, and crafty nuancing.

In the early years of the Church, Irenaeus isolated the root of all heresy, from within the Church, as a refusal to accept the primacy of papal teaching. The Western Schism (1378-1417), began with the writing of Marsilius of Padua and developed precisely over the controversy concerning the true succession of the Papacy. After great struggle, the point was finally settled — again. Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. How many souls will be lost in the process?

Jan Fredericks
Birr Street, Rochester