

OPINIONS

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 letter writers' opinions.

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.

'Misguided compassion' is a danger

To the editors:

No one would ever give liquor to an alcoholic for it would result in serious physical and emotional harm and prevent that person from finding the courage and self-control needed to overcome the disease. When it comes to homosexuality, some of our diocesan leaders would apply similar type of conduct which only perpetuates the suffering and enslavement leading to the unfortunate demise of the homosexual.

Those who believe homosexual behavior can be an acceptable part of Christian life have tried to remove the historical teaching of the Church on this issue on the basis of homophobia, prejudice and ignorance. Such a position has resulted in the denial of inescapable knowledge leading to tragic consequences.

Contrary to the idea of loving relationships among homosexuals, 70 percent of gays confined their relationships to impersonal "one night stands" and had between 100 and 1,000 different sexual partners according to the book *Ho-*

mosexualities published through the Kinsey Institute. Fewer than 1 percent had lasting monogamous relationships. Adult homosexual assaults on boys represented 50 percent of the entire total of sexual assaults and that for a group representing only 1 to 3 percent of the population.

Those who believe in a genetic explanation for the condition have ignored the warnings of those responsible for some of the research in this field not to jump to premature conclusions about the causes of homosexuality. All agree the number of individuals studied is too small to draw generalized conclusions affecting such a large group of people. Findings in the brains of homosexuals can easily be attributed to the diseases they suffer and not a genetic cause. Autopsies on homosexuals who have successfully overcome their condition have not been performed adding further confusion to the picture.

By affirming the sexual conduct of actively gay people, these diocesan leaders are inviting them to enter a subculture in-

volving a grave risk of serious diseases like AIDS, not often found in the general population, leading to an early and tragic death. They are depriving them of an opportunity to find treatment through the group "Courage" which has already enabled many homosexuals to find healing, resolution of the homosexual conflict, vibrant heterosexual marriages and deep spiritual growth. When leadership and example are needed, pandering to the weakness of these individuals is given denying them the ability to learn self-control.

The brokenness and pain of homosexuality can be healed. The wounds suffered by gays and their families can be healed leading to a greater happiness. Now is the time for all those concerned to learn the real truths concerning this condition because misguided compassion will only add to the misery and desolation long suffered by homosexuals.

Michael R. Aiello, M.D.
Clintwood Court, Rochester

Do not shift individuals' roles to state

To the editors:

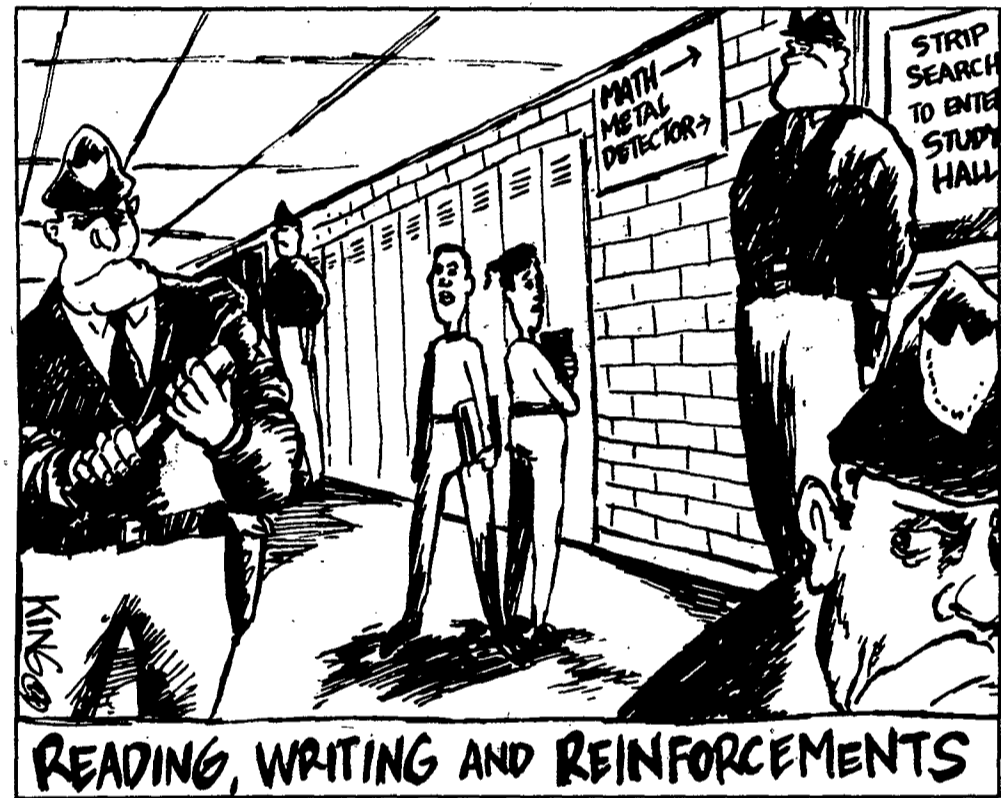
I found Father McBrien's column on "Trend is toward 'management priests'" most interesting even though I disagree with his philosophy.

Yes, in the 1930s, '40s and '50s many Catholics were "labor" and needed the unions. Now that more Catholics are well off in "management" jobs we have a dilemma: how to balance our faith in capitalism with our faith in God. Notice I haven't mentioned faith in government.

Father McBrien seems to have much faith in government to solve social problems, mainly by redistributing wealth via tax. Have we not been doing this for 25-30 years? And with what accomplished? A huge deficit, which, by the way, could bring our capitalist system "crashing down." Father McBrien claims it is the Federal government's "traditional responsibility" to help the poor. That's not what the Gospels say. Jesus never said it was Caesar's job to help the poor, I don't think.

Why is it that so many of our Church leaders insist on trying to shift this responsibility onto the state? Whatever happened to separation of church and state?

Did Jesus give us the parable of the



rich nation? Did He say it was harder for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle? We will be judged individually, I hope, based on our faith and our works.

The well off and the poor have something to offer one another on a person to person, parish to parish basis.

I do wish our Church leaders would encourage such interaction. Are there any "management" priests in our diocese? I hope so.

David Kepler
Spencer Road, Hilton

Catholics need discipline in modern world

To the editors:

Yet again I cannot believe Father Robert Collins' message and yet again he fails as a priest to preach God's Truth and the Catholic Faith. The Catholic Church is a religion of strong discipline which we need in this world that has given over to degrading sins of the flesh. Hasn't he realized that it is a great privilege to be a Catholic as well as a great responsibility.

I also can't believe that a priest of 1995 doesn't realize that we are to resist temptation. We are to love our neighbor and through the Holy Spirit we are never to lead men astray. Since we are Christians we have a responsibility to be true to our faith, which is a precious gift from God...

Susan E. Burke
Bent Oak Road, Rochester

EDITORS' NOTE: This letter has been edited to comply with our Letters Policy.

Impressed by young writer's maturity, understanding

To the editors:

I was very much impressed with the letter (*Catholic Courier*, Nov. 16) from Michael Schillace of Auburn, "Catholics can't disagree with Pope." I was surprised to see that he was only 14. How wonderful that this young man recognizes the One, Holy, Catholic, Apostolic Church from St. Peter to our present

beautiful pope John Paul II who teaches us Truth.

Please Michael continue to be truly Catholic and pray for our priests and bishops. I bet you watch Mother Angelica on EWTN. Father Albert Shamon's Column is another example of TRUTH.

Irene Wilson
Seward St., Dansville

More bias seen in CNS articles than in coverage by secular press

To the editors:

May I concur with your columnist, Father Richard McBrien, in his evaluation of how the allegedly anti-Catholic *New York Times* covered the papal visit in October ("Review of Pope coverage: Lavishly positive," Nov. 2).

Apart from the unfortunate mistake of the reporter in quoting Pope John Paul II at his Queens homily, the coverage was excellent, with some 30 of its staff producing at least 54 stories that were vivid, insightful, and sometimes even lyrical. However, I would criticize our own Catholic News Service, before the Pope's arrival in the New York area, for reporting the thrust of the Pope's three-page letter to the Austrian bishops, in which he "lashed out" at some 500,000 Austrian Catholics who had signed a petition for more openness in the Church.

CNS's choice of language, whereby the pope of reconciliation and compassion was represented as excoriating and flaying the skin of his recalcitrant Austrian children was most distressful. Where are the spin doctors of the Catholic press?

E. Leo McMannus
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