

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.

Facts often usurp truth

To the editors:

I am grateful to Sandra Dunn (*Catholic Courier*, Feb. 1: "Don't undercut Gospels") for her affirmation of a column I wrote on lay spirituality. In the spirit of continuing dialogue, however, I must disagree with her assessment of Scripture scholarship which shows that the Gospels were written several decades after the death of Jesus.

In her letter, Ms. Dunn assumes that an "eyewitness account" would be preferable to narrative accounts distant in time from the actual events themselves. I do not share this view at all. I take as an example the assassination of President Kennedy. Literally thousands of people personally witnessed that event. It is recorded on film, analyzed by sound experts, scrutinized by scientific photo methods of all sorts. The Warren Commission spent thousands of dollars getting "the facts," and hundreds of books taking into account eyewitness accounts have been written.

Still, we really haven't settled many of the questions that still surround this terrible tragedy. Theories of a single gunman, a conspiracy, government or mob involvement still abound. And "the facts" will never define the "human truth" or meaning of this death. In fact, what anyone who has lost a loved one knows, the "truth" of any individual's life and death is revealed far more truly through the stories and narratives we tell of him or her than in the accuracy of factual details.

The outlook of modern Americans assumes that "the facts" are exhaustive of "the truth." God, on the other hand, reveals Himself in the stories, poems, proverbs and letters of the Bible. What is really important about any one of us is revealed finally not in the "facts" of our existence, or in the accuracy of eyewitness accounts. The essential truth of our lives can only be known in the stories told and retold by the communities we have been part of — these alone have the power to reveal the meaning of our living and dying. What a wonderful God we have! And how grateful we should be to Scripture scholars who show us Who that wonderful God is!

Dr. Patricia Schoelles, SSJ
President
St. Bernard's Institute



Church welcomes sinners but they must abandon sin

To the editors:

It is absolutely incredible what kind of absurdity one can expect to read in the (*Catholic Courier*) these days. The latest drivel appears to be the justification of homosexuality, better known throughout the centuries as the sin of Sodom, and an attempt to reconcile it with Catholicism. Sorry, folks. It will never happen. Sodomy is one of the four sins crying to Heaven for vengeance.

If one truly wishes to learn what causes sodomy and what the punishment is for this perversity, he has only to read St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, Chapter 1 verses 18-32. It is all there including "they not only do them, but give approval to those who practice them."

The arguments adduced by these individuals to bolster their wishes to condone sodomy stem from that prevalent Liberalism of our times. All of the principles of Liberalism are of diabolic origins. Under the guise of being charitable they induce their adherents to be, in reality, uncharitable. How, indeed, is one charitable by aiding another to Hell "where the worm dieth not and the fire is not extinguished." This is false and damning and hogwash. Observe the true meaning of charity from Pope St. Pius X, who is the saint of our times: "Catholic doctrine tells us that the primary duty of charity does not lie in the toleration of false ideas, however sincere they may be, nor in theoretical or practical indifference towards the errors and vices in which we see our brethren plunged, but in zeal for

their intellectual and moral improvement as well as for their material well-being" (Notre Charge Apostolic, August 25, 1910).

The Holy Roman Catholic Church welcomes sinners into Her bosom, but not their sins. Those who continue in this condemned perversion without doing violence to themselves and denying it, have denied the cross of Christ and the reward that comes from carrying it — eternity in Heaven. I hope all of you who read this will ponder over these things, preferably with a rosary in your hands. As St. Theresa of the Little Flower Jesus used to say: "Theresa by herself can do nothing, but Theresa with God can do everything." It's called Faith.

Richard V. Hussar
Jordan Avenue, Rochester

EDITORS' NOTE: Barring the introduction of new points of view, we consider this topic closed for the time being.

Hopes others will get benefit of fine retreat

To the editors:

Bishop Clark devoted his article "Along the Way" (Jan. 18) to the topic of his retreat experience "Preaching the Just Word" held at Notre Dame Retreat Center. I was also a participant at that retreat. It was one of the finest retreat experiences I have ever had and I heartily recommend it to all who preach the Word.

I would like to thank St. Bernard's Institute and specifically Sister Patricia Schoelles, President of SBI, and Judith Ann Kollar, Director of Continuing Education, for bringing this program into our Diocese. I hope it will be able to be repeated locally or close by so other preachers can have the benefit of such a solidly spiritual retreat and deeply rooted conference on a topic at the very heart and center of our preaching responsibility: preaching the just Word.

Father Walter L. Wainwright
St. Mary's Church, Canandaigua

Appreciates publication of column on parenting

To the editors:

I am writing to thank you for publishing "Was young Jesus ever put in time out" in (the Jan. 25) *Courier*. It was a delight to read of a mother's interpretation of the "Baby Jesus" story. This is a part of our children's religious background which should be enriched.

I look forward to reading more from ("Family Matters" columnist Eileen Marx).

Corrine Muldoon McKinney
North Road, Canandaigua

Practitioner disdains considering MBTI alongside the Enneagram

To the editors:

I was given a copy of your December 14, 1995 issue of the *Catholic Courier*, with the cover article entitled "What's your type?" As a psychologist and certified (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) practitioner I was taken aback by the seeming attempt in the article to utilize the well regarded and highly studied MBTI as a vehicle to validate the use of mystical sufism to pigeon-hole our motivations. It would have been better to combine the "very ancient" Enneagram with the even more ancient and probably more similar method of astrological typing. But this would have exposed a "New Age" rather than scientific connection.

I am also concerned about the purpose, as suggested in this article, being served by typing others for spiritual growth. The value of the MBTI, as I have learned it, is to alert ourselves to the more autonomic manner in which we relate and communicate with others. Based on this information we can then adapt ourselves by more effectively using our less primary functions.

In a Christian sense such information may work to better form our will to the will of God. It would do this by invalidating the belief that we cannot change. This does not seem possible in the Enneagram, as explained by Sister Schlehr, where we "build on our strengths" and where we "cannot change." This attitude would then serve only to validate the "I am who I am" and "have it your way" mentality reflected in America and increasingly its Catholic Church.

I should imagine that the "exemplar two," Mother Teresa, did not seek out a Sufi spiritual director to define her life course with an Enneagram but rather, molded through prayer and grace, modified whatever type she was initially given to the purpose God ordained for her.

In closing, let me suggest strongly that we run a dangerous path when the science of psychology refuses to recognize the value of religion and where religion seeks answers in the psychology of the self. This, I believe, is the defining point of New Age religion.

Dennis R. Donahue