

# 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.

## Parish sets 'accessible' precedent

### To the editors:

I'm writing this letter to praise Father James Callan and the congregation of Corpus Christi Church.

In the last two years, they have funded the construction of a ramp outside the church, created a barrier-free rest room off the vestibule and, most recently, added an elevator to make the church hall accessible. There are plans to build barrier-free rest rooms in the church hall and to make the rectory accessible.

Very few parishes in this Diocese have made the level of commitment to diversity and accessibility that has been made by Corpus Christi. The fact that most of the parishioners are far less than wealthy has not prevented them from achieving accessibility for all. Through Father Callan's leadership and dedication to opening the parish to all, people with disabilities are finally able to celebrate the sacraments without feeling like intruders.

I hope other parishes will follow Corpus Christi's example and truly open all their doors to people with disabilities.

Congratulations, Father Callan!  
**Donna Leary, Program Director**  
The Health Association  
Mount Hope Avenue, Rochester

## Urges lobbying with the purse

### To the editors:

Are you aware that the strongest lobby is economic?

Why are you delivering your babies and tending to the health care needs of your family — especially the handicapped and elderly — in Rochester institutions with the philosophical base that allows them to provide the services to which you are opposed?

Physicians, nurses, midwives, and Physician Assistants — you who are pro-life — why do you promote these institutions by generating millions of dollars in business for them?

There is only one hospital in Rochester that upholds these principles. Why isn't it flourishing both with consumers like yourselves and with pro-life practitioners?

Witness with your pocketbook. It is the stronger weapon and communicates your support for institutions like St. Mary's Hospital where respect for life is alive and singing hallelujah. Why not join in the chorus?

**Pat Deibel**  
Genesee Park Blvd., Rochester  
EDITORS' NOTE: Ms. Deibel is a midwife at St. Mary's Hospital.

## Where will it end?

### To the editors:

Father McBrien, Sister Schoelles, I like the concept and the sound. It expresses the Baroque style, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven, Goethe, Christopher Wren, etc.

I guess that the French Bishops have come up with an anti "Baroque" elastic morality with their two sins for the price of one concept/receptive concept. O Tempes O Mores! Where will it end.

**James Myers**  
Gatewood Avenue, Rochester



## We must embrace cross

### To the editors:

T. H. Green in his book "Drinking from a Dry Well" says we tend to see only the individual threads of the tapestry but miss the whole picture. The story about penitential practices by Lee Strong, the associate editor, might benefit to know that the quoted citation #1460 in the catechism was cut short at the most inappropriate time. The essay concerning fasting and other Lenten ascetical practices seemingly paints a picture of traditional devotees, particularly Sister Winifred Whelan, professor of theology at St. Bonaventure, as mislead individuals who "really did not understand what they were doing." The story uses quotes from Lawrence Cunningham, an author who obviously met the requirement to benefit the pre-Lenten essay on penitential practices. Father Bokenkotter's example of using the extreme of some earlier Christians scourging

themselves, wearing a hair shirt, leads the reader into a corner with no alternative but to denounce traditional ascetic living or risk ridicule. ... (The) quote of citation #1460 states: "Penances help configure us to Christ who alone expiated our sins once and for all. They allow us to become co-heirs with the risen Christ." ... Omitted (is the phrase): "provided we suffer with him." As Catholics we not only celebrate the risen Christ, but Christ on the cross, the suffering Christ so that we as Catholics know that anything worth waiting for is worth working for. Whether it be through fasting, mortification, or leading a selfless life, we must be willing to embrace the cross and then and only then will we be able to view the tapestry with all its threads seeing the true picture as it was meant for us to see.

**Michael P. Valerio**  
Malin Lane, Penfield

## Concerned about shortage

### To the editors:

I'm concerned over the shortage of priests. What is the Vatican proposing to do about it? Will it keep closing avenues of resources such as allowing married men who would join the priesthood if the option was offered?

Many such men are deacons who are qualified to take on the duties of the priesthood. Is the fear of allowing this would conform us to other Christian denominations; and feel we will lose our unique catholic identity.

Are we willing just to continue a future without priests? I can picture it now; it's the year 2096. Headline a priest sighting has been reported in the outskirts of Rochester. Farfetched you may say, but it could happen, the way the trend is going toward vocations. The priesthood should be put on the endangered species list. We

have let this go to crisis proportion, that will not resolve itself.

We must debate this if this is what Jesus Christ intended for his followers to espouse to or is this put upon us by man-made edicts?

Band-Aid solutions such as clustering will not solve our problems. Is this the church's version of downsizing?

Instead of building walls to people who have a calling to the vocation, we should be encouraging them. I believe we should have certain conditions, but none that would exclude anyone who has a true calling to serve Christ.

I fear of having in the future a Catholic Church that is run by administrator, like a business. Lets all pray on this and act on it!

**Frank DiFilippo**  
Smith Street, Rochester

## Church in Rochester, England, seeks portrait

### To the editors:

I call your attention to an error in the book review on the book "Thomas More: A Portrait of Courage" in your Feb. 8 issue. The date of death given for St. Thomas More was June 22, 1535. This was the date of the martyrdom of St. John Fisher, Cardinal-Bishop of Rochester, England, who was named patron of our Diocese in 1961 by Pope John XXIII.

Sir Thomas More, Chancellor of England, was beheaded at the Tower of London on July 6 of the same year. (Both saints' feast day is June 22, although St. John Fisher is commemorated alone in our Diocese on that date since 1941,

when permission was given by the Sacred Congregation of Rites at the request of Bishop Kearney. Bishop Kearney also initiated a collection in 1953 to help build the church of St. John Fisher in Rochester, England.

On a visit to that church a few years ago, I was asked by the Greymoor Friars to obtain a portrait of Bishop Kearney for their church; since our diocesan Catholics financed one-third of the church's cost. If any rectory or convent in the Diocese would be willing to donate such a portrait, I would be happy to receive and deliver it.

**Father John F. Gagnier**  
St. Michael's Church