

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, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Please include your full name, phone number and complete address for verification purposes.



Query was fit for a scribe

To the editors:

Father McBrien's "Essays in Theology" are always mildly amusing. In his essay in the May 30 issue of the *Courier*, he poses the sophistic question to God and to us: "Two versions of religion: rules and relationships. Which is closer to Jesus?" The manner of posing the question is worthy of the scribes and pharisees of old. At once it reduces and trivializes the moral law to arbitrary rules, and simultaneously presents a false dichotomy between the law, whether civil or moral, and relationships.

The "rules," the moral and civil law, are not at war with relationships, but a recognition given by God to man of the duties and obligations between man and God and man and his neighbor arising by reason of the relationships. The moral law and legitimate civil law are derived from the proper ordering of relationships — that is from the Two Great Commandments given to us by Jesus. Breaches of the moral law are deadly attacks on those relationships. For example, the adulterer destroys the relationship between husband and wife; the abortionist mocks the relationship between the physician and defenseless child; the false teacher betrays

his obligation to transmit truth to the student.

Our secular society has already decoupled the "rules" from the relationships with disastrous results to the common good, families and individuals. The theological essayists make their subjective pronouncements from cozy and safe academic chairs far removed from the real world with real people who suffer and are in pain because of moral disorder. Our prisons are filled with our tragic brothers and sisters who operated on a basis that there were no rules, only relationships. Ask the abused or abandoned spouse or child about lawless relationships. Ask the parents of victims of homicide about relationships without rules.

Jesus gave His answer to the question by the young lawyer almost 2,000 years ago. His answer remains the same for Father McBrien and for all. The Holy Father has spelled it all out in "Veritas Splendor." Like the prodigal son, we all must come back to our "senses," recognize our own failings, and our own breaking of the "rules" and humbly return to our Father's house.

Ronald J. Buttarazzi
West Church Street, Fairport

Parish got glimpse of future

To the editors:

We at St. Helen's in Gates have completed a year of discernment concerning whether we would continue with a Pastoral Administrator and a Priest Sacramental Minister or have a Priest Pastor. Either way, it was clearly a win, win situation!

During the year, Father Bob Ring juggles his position in the diocese with our parish's unpredictable day to day life. Sister Nancy DeRycke and Pastoral Associate Dick Schuler along with our great staff kept everything running as smoothly as a parish can be run.

We at St. Helen's have had the opportunity to travel ahead into the near future and see how it will be when many parishes will have a Pastoral Administrator and a Sacramental Minister. It works!!

Make haste to open buds of Vatican II Documents

To the editors:

Father Richard McBrien recently quoted Cardinal Suenens saying that the Vatican II Documents are "buds waiting to be opened." This caused me to reread the Vatican II Documents. "Buds waiting to be opened" they truly are. We, the people of God, should be making haste to transform these buds into flowers.

Tom Fogarty
Walnut Street
Auburn

St. Helen's has now been assigned a Priest Pastor, Father John Firpo. We welcome him and hopefully what we have learned has taught us that we are all kind of "co-pastors" and we must be "ambassadors for Christ," it is not up to one person.

I would like to thank Barbara Pedeville, Bishop Matthew, the St. Helen's Parish Council and staff for guiding us through this past year. Thanks for opening your ears and hearts to our parish. Your compassion and well prepared information was very healing and helpful.

I would also like to invite anyone who has been hurt or felt alienated during this past year or other years to please come home. Come back to the place where you have shared your joys and sorrows for three and four generations. The community where you were baptized, confirmed, married, where you cried at the funerals your loved ones and laughed at country fairs. We miss you and welcome you with open arms and hearts. This is the time for reconciliation and renewal.

To those parishes who are going through transition "Do not be afraid." You are experiencing the wave of the future. Though administrative ways are changing, one thing never changes — "The love of God poured out to us through Jesus Christ."

May God continue to bless our Diocese and the whole Church.

Liz Leone
Hinchey Road, Rochester

Urges sampling Tridentine Rite

To the editors:

I would like to commend you on your report of the Tridentine Latin Mass celebrated at St. Patrick's Cathedral by Cardinal Alphons Stickler on May 13 (*Catholic Courier*, May 16: "St. Patrick's hosts thousands at Tridentine Mass"). From all accounts, this was a very successful and positive event that drew close to 5,000 people to the cathedral.

It was interesting to note the great number of young Catholics who were part of that liturgical celebration. It is good to see that the ancient Roman Rite continues to inspire people of every age group, and that it lives on as an important part of our liturgical heritage.

Courier readers may not be aware that with the kind permission of Bishop Clark the Tridentine Latin Mass is celebrated in Rochester at St. Stanislaus Church, every Sunday at 1:30 p.m.

While it cannot quite match the solemnity of Cardinal Stickler's Pontifical High Mass, many find that the traditional Latin Mass at St. Stanislaus provides a reverent and contemplative atmosphere for the worship of God. We invite you to give it a try sometime.

William A. Basile, chairman
Una Voce
Rochester

Parable indicated God is interested in economic justice

To the editors:

On May 30, Anne Petrantoni ("Disturbed by church involvement with labor") wrote that Jesus told us "My Kingdom is not of this world." She asked, "Do we now believe His kingdom can be found in labor union leadership? Only naive souls would say so."

Then, I guess I am naive! She wrote, further, "The parable of the vineyard owner paying each laborer the same wage, regardless of how long he worked, quickly illustrates that our assumptions are not always God's."

Why not?

I think Jesus gave this parable precisely to illustrate that God is interested in economic justice — each laborer receiving a just living wage and proper working conditions. The vineyard owner was wise and compassionate in providing for the needs of the one who had been unable to work a full day, and by so doing he did not short-change the one who worked the full day.

There is need for corporate responsibility. If a company fails in its obligation to its workers, they have every right to organize. Economic justice is indeed a worthy goal and we, as church, must uphold it, as part of the Consistent Life Ethic.

Grace B. Carnes
Eagle Ridge Circle
Rochester

Dawn is dream's answer

To the editors:

My dreams are about death and dying (see *Catholic Courier*, June 6: "Dreams tell 'parables' of lives"). At age 71, Freud and Jung might say "that's natural" and fits the norm. When I awake it's nice to know that God decided to wait until tomorrow — and that's Irish Wisdom for prayers answered.

Joe Leahy
State Route 414, Valois, N.Y.