

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.

Letters must not exceed 500 words. Anonymous letters and the use of pseudonyms are unacceptable. We reserve the right to edit letters for legal and other concerns. With respect to errors in submitted text, we will correct spelling only.

Mail letters to: Catholic Courier, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Please include your full name, phone number and complete address for purposes of verification.

Shared goal obscured by letter's focus on methods

To the editors:

Woe to you who know of the silent scream that is taking place in the womb, yet stand by idly not doing anything. "Over 30 million babies have been killed by abortion since 1973. Oh really dear, that's terrible, what's for supper?" These were Father Weslin's words, speaking to us at judgment time as a typical response of a person who when told of the murders committed against the unborn, sat idle and DID nothing.

(The letter) by Ellen Gertzog from Planned Parenthood is a perfect example of the decisive tactics pro-abortionists will use as an attempt to divide the pro-life people. (The *Catholic Courier* mistakenly put Father Marx' name in the article instead of Father Weslin's, as the priest leading a pro-life march at Planned Parenthood. In Miss Gertzog's (letter), she writes of always having respectful contact with Mrs. Schnittman — a pro-life supporter — and makes sure to tell of Father Weslin's numerous jailings in defense of the unborn. She states, "that if anyone is concerned with restoring civility, and



coming to terms with our differences without violence and hate, that we should model behavior we want our children to emulate" we should then be very concerned about the views of the Lambs of Christ, Father Weslin's pro-life group.

What Miss Gertzog fails to mention is that what Suzanne Schnittman and Norman Weslin have in common is that they are both pro-life and no matter what their means, their end result is the defense of the unborn.

The best way to bring down a building is from the foundation within, which Miss Gertzog attempts to do by acting as a self-appointed mediator — to critique, undermine and divide the Pro-Life Foundation.

Sow the seeds of division, watch them grow. Don't let a pro-abortionist's seeds of destruction fool you into thinking anything good could come out of murdering babies. Deprive the seeds of discord the water or fuel they need and watch them wither from thirst to deceive and divide.

Attempts to associate Father Weslin with individuals who murder abortion doctors is unfounded, as does her pitch to fool this pro-life advocate that she is being no less than sincere in her (letter) when she talks of "coming to terms with our differences."

Michael P. Valerio
Malin Lane
Penfield

Marchers only voice the truth

To the editors:

In regard to the letter from Ellen Gertzog (of) Planned Parenthood (June 20): Myself and all the faithful prayed a peaceful Rosary with Father Norm Weslin on May 23 — I am happy to see the *Catholic Courier* finally got Father's name correct. Since then only a handful of lay Catholics with the Life Saver's — who are Protestant — have been taking turns with a peaceful protest every Tuesday and Saturdays.

The few Catholics that come have a wonderful lady Mary Melfi who is in charge of the Catholics and we all agreed to be peaceful and ONLY Mary is giving out brochures at the driveway on the true information on abortion and offering alternate to abortion and how to receive free post-abortion counseling for woman and men who have been misled into abortion.

Ellen, if you find speaking the truth according to the commandments of God and praying the Holy Rosary terror and violence, just imagine the violence and pain for the babies that are being killed in their mother's womb. We are trying to be the voice for the little innocent babies who cannot speak for themselves. If Planned Parenthood did not allow abortions, we would not be there. God loves the sinner but hates the sin. To not speak out is to approve!

In reply to Ellen's pro-choice people on the other side of the street on May 23, they were violent, uncontrollable screaming toward us as we prayed the Rosary, the whole couple hours we were there. The police were watching them very close. Myself, I was scared by them and also concerned for their welfare in the high heat of the day — it was very hot that day.

I would like to also mention how painful it is to us to see cars drive into Planned Parenthood with Rosaries hanging from the car mirror and pro-choice ladies for Planned Parenthood wearing a medal of our Holy Mother Mary around her neck.

Something is wrong in this Diocese, and we need better support from the Holy Church in Rochester!

Martha Van Savage
Jamison Road, Rochester

Protesters' inflammatory speech is echoed by church's new Catechism

To the editors:

In its treatment of abortion, the Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us that "since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion" (#2271). Furthermore, the Church "makes clear the gravity of the crime committed, the irreparable harm done to the innocent who is put to death, as well as to the parents and the whole of society" (#2272).

This is strong language, and easily qualifies for what Planned Parenthood would describe as "inflammatory speech." It is such sensitivity to language that Planned Parenthood of Rochester claims in their letter (June 20) regarding the pro-life activities of Father Norman Weslin, founder of the Lambs of Christ.

The *Democrat and Chronicle* recently reported on Father Weslin's stated desire to close Planned Parenthood offices through the power of the rosary.

Planned Parenthood's Public Affairs Coordinator reports that Father Weslin "repeatedly called on God to close 'dirty' Planned Parenthood." Of course, these are simply the heartfelt expressions from a Catholic priest who works tirelessly for the non-violent rescue of unborn children in danger of abortion. The attempt by Planned Parenthood to link Father Weslin to violence is, at best, runaway imagination.

What again are the details and effects of the abortion procedures performed at Planned Parenthood? And, should a Catholic journal provide such an organization with a forum to misrepresent a good Catholic priest? It would seem more reasonable that any editorial accommodation of Planned Parenthood be reserved only for public acts of contrition for their countless abortions.

W. Randolph Smith
Rochester

Name-calling creates further alienation from pro-life movement, activist asserts

To the editors:

Regarding the anti-abortion protest held at Planned Parenthood on May 18th: Ellen Gertzog, who is the Public Affairs Coordinator for Planned Parenthood of Rochester and the Genesee Valley, mentioned in her letter (June 20) her concern regarding Father Weslin's association with individuals who advocate the murder of physicians who do abortions. She further stated that anyone who is concerned about restoring civility, coming to terms with differences without violence and hate, and modeling behaviors that we would want our children to emulate, should be concerned about the views expressed by Father Weslin and Father Marx and that of the protesters who accused Planned Parenthood escorts and staff of being murderers.

Due to a scheduling conflict of the

Walk for Life which raised money for The Crisis Pregnancy Center around the same time that day, I was only able to participate in part of this protest and have to admit that I did not hear the harassing remarks made by the other protesters.

Having had the opportunity to go into Planned Parenthood on two occasions in the past, I found the staff to be very warm and caring people. When you call them "murderers" you only further alienate them from the pro-life movement.

Maybe the best way to explain the abortion debate would be what I have always said to my children when they did something wrong that I did not approve of when they were younger, that being "I do not dislike you but I dislike what you are doing."

Dianna Richmond Ives
Simpson Road, Rochester