

OPINIONS

Catholic Courier

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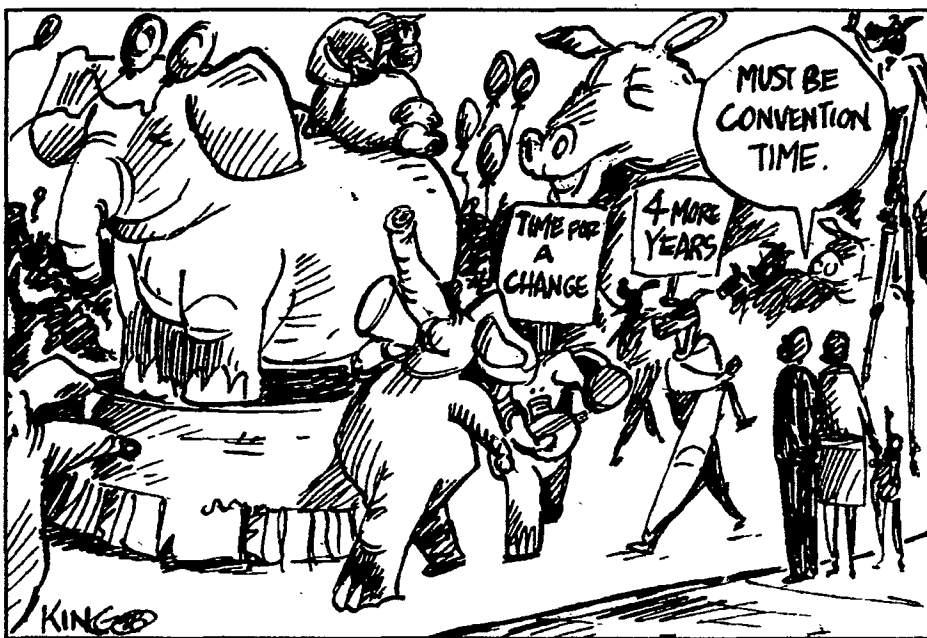
Letters Policy

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.



Was story anti-Catholic?

To the editors:

I find the lead article on Sunday Mass in the July 11 *Catholic Courier* offensively anti-Catholic. Staff writer Rob Cullivan speaks to a significant statement from the Constitution on Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council as "lofty rhetoric." The Constitution statement speaks to our belief that "the eucharistic sacrifice is the source and the summit of the whole of the Church's worship and of the Christian life."

Is Rob so naive or uninformed that the freedom he enjoys here, has clouded his view of the majesty and supremacy of God? The statement is truly lofty, but to call it rhetoric is to minimize and demean a fundamental belief, and a factual statement for the faithful. The responsibility Christ vested in His Church to prepare us to be with Him in the next life must fit within the priority set that all of us live by. This lofty rhetoric Rob refers to was, we believe, inspired by God through the Holy Spirit, but Rob has chosen to view it as less relevant today because of the decay and decline of some of the "local" churches in America. Does our current situation change our responsibilities to know, love and serve God? Perhaps in making his statement, Rob is communicating a view that this is a problem that can be explained by statistics and boundaries, and is an organizational governance matter.

The statement from Msgr. Shannon that we are dealing with a "pseudoproblem" engendered by the church's refusal to consider ordaining anyone other than celibate males to the priesthood is used to focus us once again a "solution" that many in positions of trust in this Diocese continue to suggest even after the Bishop closed the discussion. I find it a matter of concern that this dissenting view is being discussed in a lead story written by the staff of the newspaper of the Bishop of

Rochester.

We are led to believe, by the absence of any information in our Diocesan paper, that there isn't any Diocese where there is a solution employed that has stemmed the post-Vatican priest decline. Further, there are no places where this Diocese can acquire priests, perhaps missionary priests, to come in. Does our paper have the interest in doing diligence in researching and reporting a complete story for us, or does it serve a local agenda that is focused on the "pseudoproblem." I would hope that the Bishop is inclined to look at solutions beyond the limited ones that have been discussed over and over again. If we are to let God help us we must be open to understanding all of the possibilities he has for us. Let's get information from American Dioceses that are ordaining more priests than they are losing. Does God favor them or are we limiting the candidates in a way the Msgr. Shannon would find incredible. How are we encouraging the priesthood? For God's sake let's get on God's agenda.

S. David Coriale

Conifer Cove Lane, Webster

EDITORS' NOTE: The article in question used the term "rhetoric" exclusively as defined by Webster: "the art or science of using words effectively in speaking or writing." The writer's sole intent was to point out the enormous challenge current circumstances pose for a church striving to be faithful to its theology of Eucharist.

The story did not contain solutions to the priest shortage because the shortage was not the story's topic, although it certainly could be the subject of any number of other articles. Instead, the article in question focused on the most distressing symptom of the priest shortage: the possibility that regular Sunday Masses someday may not be available. Mention of the priest shortage, therefore, was only incidental.

Images necessary to devotional life

To the editors:

As an occasional visitor to St. Christopher's Church in North Chili, I am always pleasantly surprised when I see the church being adorned with beautiful images of sacred art. At a time when so many churches are being stripped of their statues, pictures and even crucifixes and replacing them with abstract symbolism and inanimate objects; this particular church is making an attempt to bring these holy objects back.

Why is this important one might ask? For myself, I am not a Scripture scholar nor am I familiar with liturgical practices; however, when I pray the stations of the cross and look at their images it touches my soul which leads me to ponder the depth of that particular station. When I see a statue of one of the saints, I start thinking about why that man or woman is pleasing to God. How did they come to know Jesus? What kind of life did they live

and what kind of obstacles did they encounter? How did they overcome them and will they help me overcome mine? When I see the crucifix, I am reminded over and over again of the great love that Jesus has for me. After his total degradation on the cross, Jesus humbles himself even more to come to us in the guise of bread and wine. No greater love was given to mankind than this sacrament. The crucifix and the tabernacle are powerful signs of God's love for us then and now.

Holy images are important for the devotional life not only because they touch the heart but they can be understood by a mere child. Thank you St. Christopher's for bringing these beautiful forms of sacred art back into your Church so they can be appreciated by both your parishioners and your visitors.

Janice J. Armstrong
Parnell Drive
Churchville

Questions limbo data

To the editors:

I am a 14-year-old Catholic who attends Mass regularly. I have read a few of the patristic fathers over the last two summers. In regard to Father Richard P. McBrien's column in the *Courier* (of July 18), I have a few points to raise:

1. He states he is quoting some of the early fathers and yet he does not list sources. Which one of the patristic fathers was he quoting when he said, "These babies go to hell...no grace, no heaven?"

2. In the early church baptism was put off until adulthood, so when the early fathers speak of the unbaptized, they are referring to adults. St. Augustine himself was not baptized until the age of 33.

3. Father McBrien is certainly not quoting Origen (third century) who said, "God is all in all" and, "At the end of time all will be reconciled with God" meaning that even the unbaptized have a place in paradise.

4. St. Thomas Aquinas formulated Limbo in the 13th century as an attempt to answer not only the question of what happens to unbaptized infants, but other Holy men and women who lived and died before the birth of Christ.

5. The issue of Limbo was debated by many prominent theologians long before Vatican II, the most prominent of whom was Father Bernard Herring.

Shelley Guido
Cullen's Run, Pittsford

Urges boycott of drug maker

To the editors:

Hoechst Marion Roussel, Inc. is the company responsible for RU486, the French abortion pill that kills a developing baby after his or her heart has begun to beat.

The German parent company, Hoechst AG, controls the drug as it owns a majority share in Hoechst Marion Roussel, Inc. It actually manufactures and distributes RU486 worldwide through its subsidiary companies. No matter who markets the drug, Hoechst is totally responsible for it decided to allow the Population Council to test and market it.

Boycott Hoechst Marion Roussel. Ask your doctor and druggist for alternate brands. This boycott is sponsored by Life Issues Institute, 1721 W. Gailbraith Rd., Cincinnati, Ohio 45239, (513) 729-3600. Their leader is Dr. J.C. Willke.

Mary Rita Crowe
East Main Street, Rochester

Bravo to 'true love'

To the editors:

Bravo to the *Catholic Courier* for Mike Latona's terrific article "True love waits" (July 11).

How good it is to hear our young people striving to save sex until they marry. God bless them for living their faith, and God bless their parents and those in the church who helped them form true Catholic consciences.

What a wonderful way for the *Courier* to support our diocesan Synod goal — forming Catholics in beliefs, Catholic morality and spirituality.

Mary Lou and Ed McGarrell Jr.
Wall Street, Elmira