

# 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, affecting 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.

# What a tangled web they weave

## EDITORIAL

Ron Fitzsimmons lied. Or, as he put it, "lied through my teeth."

Specifically, Fitzsimmons admitted in the March 3, 1997, edition of *American Medical News* that he lied about partial-birth abortions.

Fitzsimmons is executive director of the National Coalition of Abortion Providers, which represents more than 200 independently owned abortion clinics. Appearing on the ABC News program "Nightline" in November 1995, he asserted that partial-birth abortions are performed only in cases of danger to the mother's life or of severe fetal abnormalities, and that such abortions are rare.

Fitzsimmons now admits that the majority of partial-birth abortions are actually performed on healthy women and healthy babies. He estimated that the number of such abortions may be as high as 5,000 a year — 10 times as many as he and other abortion supporters previously claimed.

And he said other leading abortion advocates have knowingly lied about partial-birth abortion as well — lies that have been echoed, doubtless unwittingly in many cases, by others in the debate.

This is not the first instance of misinformation about partial-birth abortions. Last summer during debate over congressional attempts to ban the procedure, abortion advocates said anesthesia killed the baby before the abortion took place. The American Society of Anesthesiologists debunked that claim.

We shouldn't be surprised that partial-birth abortion supporters resorted to lies. Abortion advocates employed

lies throughout their fight to legalize abortion — a fight they ultimately won through the U.S. Supreme Court's

1973 *Roe vs. Wade* decision.

They lied, for example, about the number of illegal abortions performed in the pre-*Roe* days.

They lied about the number of women who died as a result of those abortions.

They lied about who performed those abortions and where they were performed.

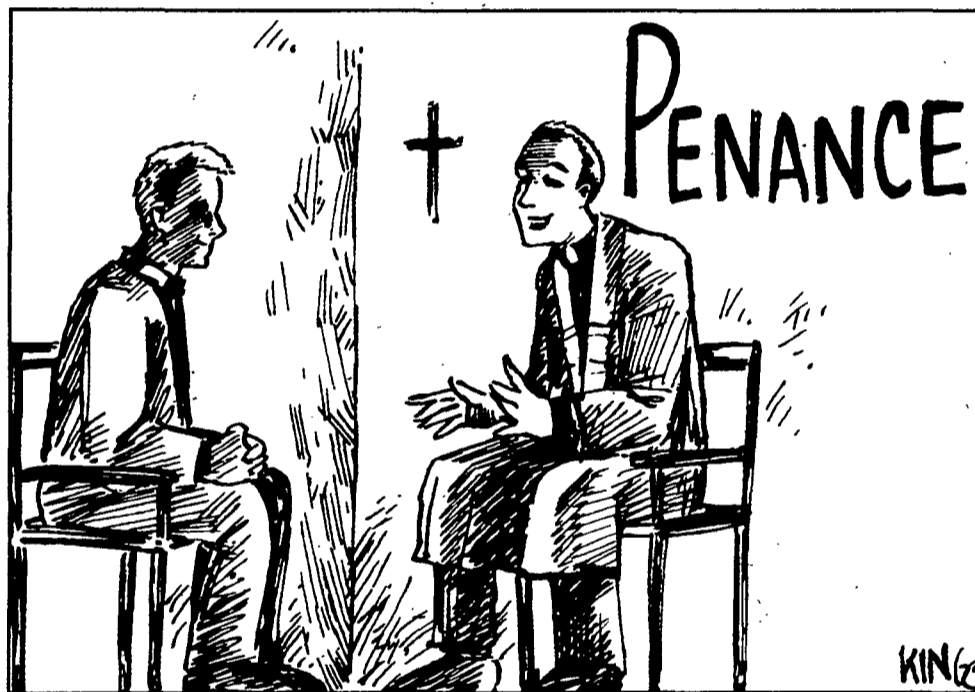
The *Roe* case itself was even rooted in a lie. At the time, Norma McCorvey — "Jane Roe" — said she had become pregnant as a result of rape. McCorvey now admits she became pregnant through an affair.

Masters of propaganda have long counseled that a lie, repeated often, becomes "truth." But now, Fitzsimmons' admission breathes new life into congressional efforts to ban partial-birth abortions. The ban Congress passed last year was vetoed by President Clinton, who explained his action by knowingly or unknowingly repeating the lies promulgated by Fitzsimmons et al. An override attempt fell short.

Legislation to ban the procedure is being reintroduced to Congress. And on March 10 the New York State Senate passed a ban, which has not yet been introduced in the State Assembly.

Support the ban — and to remind them of the lies abortion advocates told.

We should also remember this history of deception when listening to claims abortion advocates make in the future.



## Bishop's columns provide inspiration, encouragement

### To the editors:

I recently read a letter from a lector. The letter said that the Bishop's column talks about things not helpful for everyday life issues. In my opinion, all the contrary. Bishop Clark in his column talks about family, dreams, worries, experiences, today's technology, work, happiness and more. In my life, I could certainly relate to all above. For me his writings are inspiring. Regular family issues, family love, work experiences, help me to understand and deal with my own family. Also as an Aunt myself, I share the Bishop's gratefulness to God for nieces and nephews.

I do not see wrongdoing in using today's technology for positive and good means, as in making new friends. There are always two roads you could follow, the good way and the bad or evil way. It is not good to use the Internet or computers for friendship. It is bad when you use it with evil purposes. God created us free, gave us a free will. It is our own decision, how we want to act. It is good to know that today's technology employed wisely and with good hands could help in making lifelong friends; or even better, lifelong marriages.

**Janette Malavet**  
Beartown Road, Painted Post

## Column makes readers part of bishop's family

### To the editors:

I am of a different opinion than Crusa Ferrara (*Courier*, Feb. 6). I find Bishop Clark's weekly column thought-provoking, often asking us to think or pray. The columns make me laugh — remember the one on searching for pins? and some I reread again and again. "Varied Activities Maintain Perspective" is now dog-eared. We frequently learn of

people and events in the diocese that we may have missed.

I want my Bishop to write about his family because I feel I am part of his extended family. And I want to be.

He cares for us and he shows it by this sharing of himself.

I'm awfully glad he's my shepherd.

**Linda D. Sorg**  
Harbor Hill Drive, Rochester

## Reading is his penance

### To the editors:

Some of your correspondents believe that I need to go to confession. I am glad to oblige. I confess to the readers of the *Courier* that I am not a one-issue voter. I try to balance all the issues involved in an election and vote for the candidate that comes closest to espousing the values I hold dear. I confess that I place a high value on such virtues as caring, compassion, and civility. I place a lower value on such virtues as law-abiding, conserving, and admonishing. Yes, I confess to being middle-of-the-road but more attracted to the liberal side than the conservative. I also confess to having a sense of humor.

Now that the election is over, I confess to writing letters to the politicians I elected, holding them to the promises they made and making known my views. I confess to believing that my letters do some good, even if that good is merely preventing me from becoming cynical and sarcastic about the political system of this country. I also confess to being an optimist.

For my penance, I intend to continue to read the *Courier* opinion page with a cheerful heart.

**Father Robert L. Collins**  
Washington Street  
Livonia

## Proudly cast vote for 'best' choice

### To the editors:

Regarding your readers' responses to Father Collins' statement that he voted for Bill Clinton:

I am a practicing Catholic, and a Democrat. I also very proudly voted for Bill Clinton. I considered him then, and still do now, the "Best Choice."

**Corrine Muldoon McKinney**  
North Road  
Canandaigua