

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.

Believes paper improved policies

To the editors:

I must respectfully take issue with my Christian brother Thomas O'Brien — no known relative — and his letter to the editor found in the March 27 issue of the *Catholic Courier* regarding expressions of disenchantment on the editorial page with both the Rochester Diocese and the *Catholic Courier*.

Last May I notified my Pastor that I no longer wished to receive the *Courier* at Parish expense. I was very unhappy with what I perceived to be a one sidedness to all the issues. However, my pastor — or his staff — ignored my request long enough for me to note a major change in policy of the letters to be published selection process.

Subsequent to my May request, the *Catholic Courier* has published a much more balanced selection of pros and cons in a wide area of issues of interest to the Catholic laity. I wish to speak at this time to encourage the *Courier* staff and board to continue to be open, and balanced even in those areas which do not appear to favor the Bishop, the *Courier* or current trends within the Church. It communicates an image of honesty and integrity which is much needed in our Church in today's times.

I have decided to keep the *Courier* coming. The editors' comment following Mr. O'Brien's letter to the effect that it is receiving extremely negative reflections in their incoming letters indicate a problem of major proportions, which needs to be addressed. We are all aware of it and we

speaking in our private circles, and on the Internet, to be sure. The *Courier* should be a "within the family" journal, and reflect the opinions of all who wish their input to be put to constructive use.

There are many articles which I do not like, and many I could not do without, some of them found on the editorial page.

Ken O'Brien

Laurelton Road, Rochester

EDITORS' NOTE: Our policy on letters has been constant throughout the last 12 years, and the selection of letters is made by the same person today as it was in 1985. As for the tone of letters, many individuals who wrote us regularly in '85 continue to do so today, with little change in tone or perspective. In recent months, however, a handful of new writers have come forward offering more positive commentary.

Correspondents deny some criticisms, embrace others

To the editors:

Many of your letter-writers seem to get upset by the passion of other letter-writers. Yet these same complainers seem not to notice when people denigrate the greatest of love-letters to humanity: the Holy Bible. Paul knew nothing of homosexuality, thunders the venerable Monsignor Shannon (*Catholic Courier*, March 6: "Don't seek Scripture's counsel on homosexuality"). Yet Paul was the greatest student of Gamaliel who was the greatest teacher of Torah. St. Paul knew whereof he wrote and spoke.

How can we follow a book that has outdated dietary laws, queries the staff of Sacred Heart/St. Anne's (March 6: "Parish staff struggles to understand uproar over liturgy"). They forget that the New Testament fulfilled and in some cases changed the Old, as St. Augustine noted. Dietary

laws can change, juridical laws can change, but moral laws never.

Let us turn to the Bible with greater fervor. It is after all the Word of God, which talks about the living Word of God, Jesus Christ. As for those who would dis-myth the Bible — Peter Kreeft's term — we should pray for them, love them, but not do what they say. Every Catholic doctrine is Scriptural: read the Bible, love it, live it. For solid Catholic commentaries, I recommend the tapes of Scott Hahn, and the Navarre Bible Series.

As for your letters policy, I applaud it in all its aspects. The letters are most often concise, and interesting. I enjoy hearing the voices of old friends, and I make new ones.

Jan E. Fredericks

Birr Street
 Rochester

Change isn't the solution to problems

To the editors:

In the April 4 issue of the *Democrat and Chronicle* Bishop Clark's article encouraged me to express my thoughts. His open mindedness and consideration of other's viewpoints is commendable.

I view the Holy Roman Catholic Church, not as a democracy, but as a Theocracy. I believe the Church was founded by Christ as stated in Scripture. The Church is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. The mission of the Church is the sanctification and salvation of mankind. All authority, all powers emanate from the Holy See and all parameters of responsibility at all levels are clearly defined, known and accepted as responsibilities from Deacon to Pope. It is much more efficient and effective than the United States Post Office or any governmental agency.

Yes, more parish priests are needed. Does this mean there is a real shortage of priests? The Religious Orders across America, Europe and Africa have priests that could help alleviate the pressure. In any case, I do not see redefining the priesthood as a solution to the problem, no more than redefining police officer because of the increase of crime.

To conclude that non-married clergy did not become universal until the 13th Century does not negate the fact that all previous acquired knowledge was a basis for adopting celibacy universally. Nor can we deny that from the 13th Century to the present is a fairly strong argument for retaining celibacy. God deserves a hundred percent commitment, total — unreserved — Him alone shall we serve. I have never seen or heard of a person with two diverse vocations that were successful.

The Blessed Mother, who ought to be a role model for all Christians, especially women, was the most humble and reserved in the plan of redemption. Yet she is the most honored, Queen of Heaven,



Mother of God. Could priesthood have been Her role? She offered Her Divine Son on the cross. Is there not something in our very soul that says women's role is queenly? Throughout the Scriptures, men were asked to make the bloody sacrifices. Abraham was asked to slay his only son. My thought is that most of our social ills stem from a role reversal and a failure of the religious institutions to help women appreciate the great calling they have. It is sad to see women killing their own flesh and blood. To equate roles, destroys the very purpose and meaning of life.

Now in the current attempt to be all inclusive by altering the language in the liturgy, as in the Gloria, to replace His people and say God's people, we overlook Christ as a person or obliterate his humanity. Christ taught us how to pray by addressing God as our Father and God said "Behold My Son." Thereby we are called to be children of God and brothers and sisters of Christ. Will we solve any problem by making God less personal and more distant?

Vincent J. State
 Trowbridge Trail, Pittsford

Don't focus on offending words

To the editors:

In reference to (the April 10 letter by Anne and Dr. Roger Ciccarelli, "Insulting charge may reduce help for poor"), I wonder how many people, after throwing such critical barbs, would care to step into Sister Grace Miller's shoes day after day on her journey of helping the men and women who have lost their way.

How pompous are such people who can take a statement, probably out of context, and display such a total disregard for Christianity in action.

Perhaps the Ciccarellis would volunteer

for a night shift and assist our poorest brethren when they are most in need of a bed, a kind word, a little food.

At the age of 69 I have seen humanity at its worst and can only thank our Loving Lord for sending people like Sister Grace to do the jobs most of us shy away from but we are ready to knock her down for a statement that offends people like us who are so much better off.

Thank God for us rich people.

Harry Vought
 Marshall Road
 Rochester