

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.

Eucharistic 'fallacies' spark response

To the editors:

A few weeks ago I was pleased to see the article entitled "Fallacies distort eucharistic beliefs" in the *Courier*. The article was concise and clearly written helping to clarify any misconceptions and confusion concerning the Real Presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist and the necessary criteria for the reception of Holy Communion.

Many times our family has the opportunity to bring friends with us to Mass who are not Catholic. Unfortunately, this is part of the broken body. Although I would love for them to receive our Eucharistic Lord, I simply explain what we as Catholics believe and how it takes much preparation in order to receive Christ's Body and Blood. When put in this manner, all our friends regardless of age are very respectful. In this way we both give glory to God through our obedience and acceptance.

Even though I found it disturbing to read that 65 percent of Catholics do not believe in the Real Presence, it came as no surprise. I recognized this fact not because of the recent polls, but because of the behavior exhibited at Holy Mass. The reverence, awe and respect we once had when entering God's house is replaced by a casual social attitude. Very rarely do you see people genuflect before Our Lord and in most churches today the Tabernacle is no longer in the center but hidden in some obscure corner. I wonder if this could be one of the underlying causes of the lack of respect and belief. How can we be expected to make Jesus the center of our lives, when the Tabernacle, the resting place of the Eucharistic Lord, is not to be found in the center of our churches?

Yes, education is important but the greatest education is through the devotional practice of Eucharistic Adoration. It is here that Jesus will simply touch our mind, heart and soul. Eucharistic Adoration will give us the necessary direction so needed today. Thank God for all the parishes who have already implemented this practice on a regular basis especially my home parish of St. Vincent de Paul. It is a source of much healing and comfort.

Janice J. Armstrong
Parnell Drive
Churchville



Better teaching could dispel confusion among Catholics

To the editors:

Upon reading the article about the poll taken in eight parishes in the diocese, I was not surprised that 60-65 percent of the Catholics surveyed do not believe the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. From my observation at Mass and after reading several articles in issues of the *Catholic Courier*, I believe the reverence which should be given to the Holy Eucharist is and has been lacking for some time.

This mystery is just one of the many mysteries of our faith which we have to accept if we are true Roman Catholics. If we do not believe, are we not guilty of saying Jesus told a non-truth by saying "This is my body?" There are several other mysteries which we have to accept but cannot explain that happened throughout the life of Jesus from the Immaculate Conception of Mary to Jesus returning to the apostles after dying on the cross and the Holy Spirit descending upon them. We accept these mysteries even though we cannot explain them. This is our faith.

Maybe not enough emphasis is placed on the Holy Eucharist and the Real Presence at Mass. Or, perhaps even a homily or two devoted to this would help especially if the Bishop himself were to give the homily periodically.

Another source of the good truth about our Roman Catholic religion for you who have cable or satellite is EWTN which is the Global Catholic Network which originates from Our Lady of the Angels Monastery at 5817 Old Leeds Road, Irondale, Alabama 35210. If you write them and ask, they will send a monthly schedule of all the programming. There are different programs devoted to Jesus, Mary, the saints, the Eucharist and just about every aspect of our Roman Catholic faith.

Try it for a week instead of HBO, etc., and you might like it. My wife and I watch several programs on it daily and have come to know our Catholic faith much more.

William Shaw
Oakmount Road, Bloomfield

'Catechetical' article was no help at all, pastor states

To the editors:

In your July 10 cover story, "Fallacies distort eucharistic beliefs," you mention "disturbing surveys." Well, I found your article quite disturbing!

In such a short article you covered parts of our faith and practice today in a way that left more uncertainty than clarity. If I was a person wondering about the Presence of Jesus in the bread and wine, I would have no clearer understanding after your article — it is real, but what does that mean? Is symbolic unreal, is real physical, what is real? And the fact that so many people do not accept transubstantiation, what is new about that — most people can't spell it, let alone understand it. Are we to become concerned that people don't know how the bread and wine is changed into the body and blood of Christ? I'd like you to explain it so that your readers could understand it! An aside: Jesus is present in the Eucharist in more than in the bread and wine, really!

As I share the Body and Blood of Christ with people at St. Joseph's whether at weekend Mass or special wedding or funeral liturgies, I have a sense that their "Amen" does state their belief and hunger to be fed by the Lord's life. If it is unreal, do you think they would come?

And further for you to dismiss Inter-Communion so facilely does a disservice to the Ecumenical dialogue that has led theologians in Episcopal, Lutheran and Catholic faiths to come to a common articulation in matters of Eucharist and a dis-

service to pastoral ministers who are trying to build bridges of common faith in our pastoral settings.

Why not a more in-depth treatment of the Eucharist? Why not help our people to understand more clearly this part of our

faith. If this article was really a part of "Life-long Learning," a more faithful and catechetical presentation would have served us better.

Father Kevin P. Murphy, pastor
St. Joseph's Church, Penfield

Reality of Eucharist sacrifice substantiated by Jesus' own statements at the Last Supper

To the editors:

I BELIEVE! Recently, I was surprised to see and read that a poll taken in our diocese on the Transubstantiation, that the priest changing bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus was symbolic. This information was printed in the *Catholic Courier* and in a news bulletin on EWTN, the Mother Angelica Catholic network.

How this conclusion was reached, I do not know! Evidently it may have been from some man-made source.

Let's start at the beginning, the authentic source — The Last Supper. Not my words but the words of Jesus to His apostles. Direct quotes taken from the latest edition of the St. Joseph Missal Vol. #2 in accordance with Vatican II.

After Jesus took bread, gave thanks and gave it to his disciples and said: "Take this all of you and eat it; this is my body which will be given up for you."

When supper was ended, He took the

cup. Again He gave thanks and praise, gave the cup to His disciples, and said:

"Take this, all of you, and drink from it; this is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and all men so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of me."

Jesus did not say the bread and wine was symbolic, make believe, not for real — just an act. The statement is a positive, objective and real statement: "THIS IS."

For those who may disagree with me, fine. However, why not take it up with the One who made the statement when you go to meet Him. I believe you will agree with Him that "This is my body." "This is my blood" is for real. That is what Jesus said. My mind like everyone else's would never have thought to make such an objective, positive and real statement. His words, not mine!!

I BELIEVE!!

Francis J. Mastropietro
Clark Street, Auburn