

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.

Thanks God for daughter's example

To the editors:

My dear daughter, Paula Mix Spanganberg, died in March. I would like to tell others of her strength and courage and share her convictions on abortion. Paula was married to Todd Spanganberg and they had two children, 1 and 2 years old. She had epilepsy since she was 12 and also a history of asthma.

Her seizures became more frequent the first time she was pregnant and she had an extremely difficult time carrying her first child. She suffered, but never complained. She was so happy to be having a baby she wanted so dearly and she wasn't going to let her seizures stop it. We were so frightened throughout, but she delivered a beautiful girl, Laura Rose. Paula wanted her to be named after my other daughter who died 17 years ago and whose name was also Laura, in honor of her little sister's memory.

When she became pregnant the second time and so soon after (the first), her doctors were very worried about her health and urged her not to go through another pregnancy. Abortion was strongly encouraged and her doctor even set up an appointment, but she would not give up this life inside of her — this life that was God's creation no one could take from

her. Paula was strong in her faith and her beliefs on abortion and she was willing to take that chance in spite of the risk to her own life. As I looked at her and she saw my doubts and fears, she told me there was no choice — that this was the right way, the only way.

Little Nicholas was born, a precious boy, strong and healthy. If she had an abortion, we would not have him now. Thank God for her strength and courage. I admire my daughter — I don't know that I could have been that strong. For a year and a half after Nicholas' birth, the seizures stopped completely.

When Paula died suddenly, they found no evidence of a seizure and really did not know the cause of her death. I think of Paula's middle name, Theresa. Saint Theresa, the Little Flower, was also called by God at an early age — and Paula always had a special devotion to Saint Theresa.

She wrote poetry and in her writings spoke of her rose petals falling from heaven, a sign from Saint Theresa, and about a rose beginning to die bowing her head with a gentle sigh. Perhaps she was speaking about herself and her own death.

She also wrote about life after death, about leaving this world and going to heaven in a magical environment filled with happiness and love where there is no pain, no sadness, where all her suffering and fears will disappear. She spoke of God being her best friend and wanting to live with him for all eternity. She believed she never would have had her happiness in life with Todd and her children without her love for God. She was blessed in her short life here, and she was happy — she accomplished what she wanted and I truly thank God for giving it to her.

Joanne Mix
Shoemaker Road, Webster

Story showed just one facet of Eucharist

To the editors:

The responses you have received to your July 10 article, "Fallacies distort Eucharistic beliefs," are not at all surprising. No wonder "Life-Long Faith Formation" is the number one goal of the diocesan synod and prominent in the Parish Planning process. Also, Bishop Clark issued, for our study and discussion, his marvelous Pastoral Letter, "From East to West, a Perfect Offering."

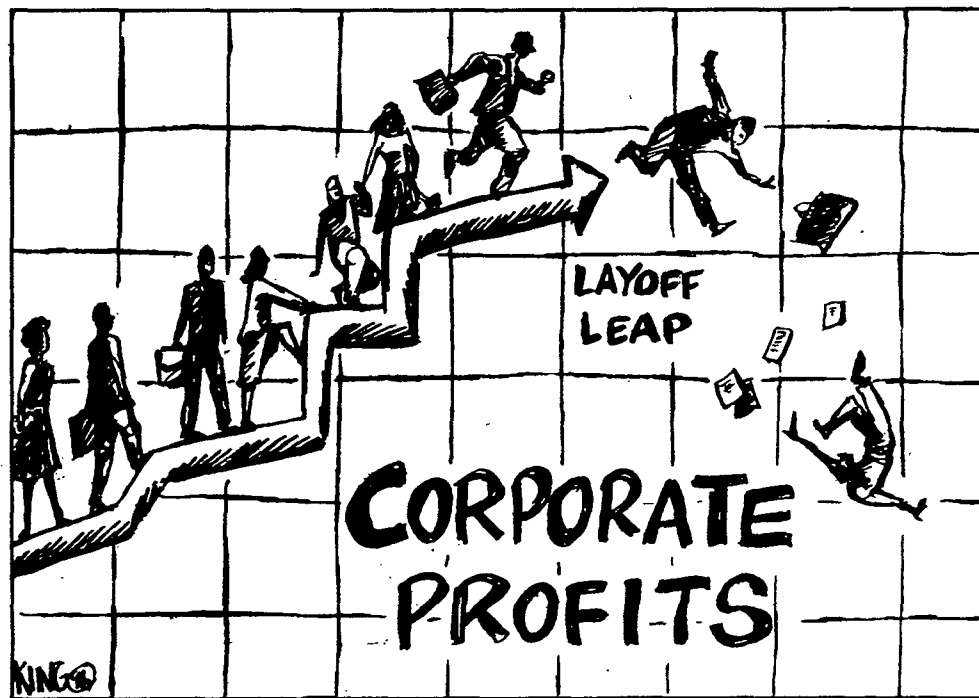
Your article touched upon only one aspect of the Eucharist — the Real Presence. Father Kevin Murphy was right in asking "Why not a more in-depth treatment of the Eucharist?" and he commented, as an aside, "Jesus is present in the Eucharist in more than in the bread and wine, really!"

In my Parish, earlier this year, members were invited to three evenings of discussion and reflection upon the Bishop's pastoral letter, and a Sunday bulletin contained Father Robert J. Kennedy's excellent article "A Eucharistic People Living a Eucharistic Life." I recommend that other parishes follow suit if they have not already done so. Another good source for reflection is Msgr. Wm. Shannon's "The Eucharist in a Grace-filled world."

Actually, why do we have to be a bunch of Thomases? Maybe I'm too simple minded. IT'S A MYSTERY!! Can't we accept it at that? Jesus is no imposter. He said "This is My Body. This is My Blood." That's good enough for me. Someday God will let us in on the mystery. For the time being, I find it absolutely awesome and I accept Eucharist wide-eyed and with tremendous love.

One last comment: You who are Eucharistic Ministers, please tell others what you see when people approach to receive Jesus' Body and Blood from you. Honestly. You don't see the "outside of the cup." You see a person full of longing. That individual "becomes" Jesus. His love reflects from their eyes to your eyes, back and forth. It's like being in a hall with many mirrors. Think about it. Am I right? You know it is a mystery — a beautiful, wonderful, mysterious mystery! What more could we desire?

Grace B. Carnes
Eagle Ridge Circle, Rochester



Takes exception to priest's review

To the editors:

I too like other people who have written letters to the editor liked your article on Eucharistic Fallacies. I thought it was very much to the point and very helpful to anyone with questions on the topics addressed by your article.

I was very disappointed with a letter from Fr. Murphy, because I thought a lot of his questions couldn't be answered in 10 articles or even a book the size of the Holy Bible. Most of his questions can be answered by one thing only, FAITH! Faith only obtained as a gift from God from a lot of prayer and Eucharistic Adoration. His power is enormous even to educate the simplest mind and heart.

As for the 60-65 percent that don't believe in the real presence of Jesus at Holy

Mass might be in part because the use of the Canada lectionary by so many area churches. This lectionary was disallowed for use two Octobers ago.

Is it possible there is no valid Mass in the U.S. churches who continue to use it causing a lack of faith? The meditations on page 1199 of the Vatican II weekday missal states no one person can take it upon himself to change even one word of the approved text of the Holy Mass. What is the penalty for using this Lectionary?

Thank you for your series of articles trying to educate the faithful in the truth. Keep up the good work.

Tom Dyer
Greenway Boulevard
Churchville

Two final thoughts on noisy children and contemplation at Sunday Masses

To the editors:

One more thought on infants at Mass.

I once was bothered by crying infants during Mass, until I attended a Mass for the deaf at Becket Hall many years ago. A young deaf mother was unaware of her infant crying as it was in a carrier on the pew, next to her and we were all standing.

The priest noticed the "hearing" shifting restlessly due to the crying, and said, "Just thank God you can hear it." From that moment on, I have always said a little prayer of thanksgiving each time I hear a baby cry, especially at Mass.

A few weeks ago at my parish, St. John the Evangelist, in Greece, my six-month-old granddaughter decided to accompany the cantor and music di-

rector in their communion duet. Nothing I tried dissuaded her. After Mass, as I was talking to the cantor, he said, "Well, doesn't Scripture say, 'Make a joyful noise unto the Lord?'" Amen.

Joan Rohr
North Avenue
Rochester

To the editors:

On the subject of young children at Mass we need only to look in the Bible.

In Matthew 19:14 it says, "... but Jesus said, 'Let the children come to me. Do not hinder them. The Kingdom of God belongs to such as these.'"

Who are we to disagree; by doing so we are denying Jesus Himself:

Bernadette Miller
Gauss Road
Bloomfield