

OPINIONS

Behavior at church talk appalls her

To the editors:

This past Tuesday, October 7, I attended St. Bernard's On the Road at St. Paul's Church in Webster. Father Joe Hart was the presenter and his topic was "The Church: Past, Present, and Future." Just before he began his talk, Father Hart requested that it not be recorded. That it was a work in progress.

I was sitting in the back of the church. A man near the front of the church loudly said something. I could not accurately hear what he said because he spoke without amplification, but it sounded like he said that he was going to record and challenged Father Hart as to what he would do about it. I initially thought this man was a prop for Father Hart's talk. Moments later, a woman across the church yelled something in response. Again, be-

cause of no amplification I caught only the latter half of her statement which was something to the effect, "...and if you don't like it, you can get the hell out of here! At this point half the congregation began to applaud.

I thought, "We are in Church, and she just said 'hell!' What a clever idea for Father Hart to have these people positioned in the Church to show how divisive the Church can be, how differing the opinions can be, and what a wonderful way to begin his talk." But he did not begin, he simply stood at the lectern.

Several minutes of silence went by, and another gentleman on the other side of the church said, "Father, please continue. I will pray for him." At the moment it dawned on me that none of the participants were props, but were in fact, mem-

bers of the congregation.

I sat there appalled at everything that had just transpired. The first gentleman was disrespectful to Father Hart. The woman was then disrespectful to the gentleman. And then the majority of the congregation applauded the irreverence.

Prior to Father Hart's beginning, we had all joined hands and prayed the "Our Father" together. By the joining of our hands, it symbolized our unity, our oneness, the fact that we are all brothers and sisters in Christ.

Unfortunately, I lost the first half hour of Father Hart's talk; I was dismayed. I was in church with Catholics, presumably, Christians at least, and even in church we were not behaving as Christ would have us.

Joanne Balliet
Millcreek Run, Webster

Art trivializes death, cross

To the editors:

I viewed your photo-illustration on the cover of the October 2, 1997 issue of the *Catholic Courier* with disbelief and horror. How could the editorial board of the *Catholic Courier* show such flagrant disrespect for my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. It is indeed a sad commentary on our times that rock bands and art mock Christ's suffering and death by trivializing the cross. It is beyond my comprehension that a Catholic publication and the Diocese of Rochester would demonstrate such poor judgment — and taste — in its weekly newspaper.

I am against capital punishment. The article was well written and developed the point well. The photo illustration only detracted from the positive impact of the article.

Thank you for your attention.

Peggy Bangert, Elm Street,
Geneseo

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EDITORS' NOTE: Crucifixion was the preferred form of capital punishment during the time of Christ; lethal injection is its modern equivalent. Were Jesus' execution to occur in New York today, its instrument would not be a cross publicly erected atop a hill, but a syringe privately administered on an injection table. We recognize that the photo-illustration made its point in a jarring manner, and we apologize for upsetting Ms. Bangert and others. But we do not accept the charge that the illustration was in any way disrespectful to Jesus or to the cross.

Death penalty gives incentive

To the editors:

"Rejection of death penalty grows" stated the Oct. 2 issue of the *Catholic Courier*.

The front page also included a picture of our Lord, arms outstretched, on an execution table indicating that executions crucify our Lord.

Ironically this is true as the Lord died for our sins via the death penalty because it was in effect at that time.

Today, with our system of Justice, the appeal system would delay if not nullify executions.

Logic tells us that punishment should fit the crime. Eliminating the death penalty also reduces the inhibitions of those contemplating murder.

The saying that "There are no atheists in foxholes" leads me to believe a person is far more likely to seek God's help when facing death.

It is doubtful incarceration provides that incentive.

Robert Bart, Ithaca

Aunt wrote history

To the editors:

I found the article about the research into parish histories most interesting ("A voyage through history," *Catholic Courier*, Oct. 9, 1997). While doing the study of Corpus Christi Church I assume that Ms. Margaret Wittman has found a copy of the 36 page "The Perennial Spring — History of Corpus Christi Church 1888-1978" written by my aunt Grace Murray. Much of the early history of that parish is contained in that publication.

John C. Lynd
Brighton Street, Rochester



Pro-life collaboration offers hopeful sign

To the editors:

I am writing to express my appreciation to the staff of the *Courier* for the excellent article by Mike Latona, on the First Leo Holmsten Human Life Award Banquet ("Doctor earns honor for pro-life activism," *Catholic Courier*, Oct. 2, 1997).

What makes me especially encouraged and gratified about this is the significance of the unity expressed in these 13 Pro-Life groups collaborating to honor Dr. Leo Holmsten's dedication to God's gift of life and to celebrate those values we cherish. This was truly a landmark event in the history of the Pro-Life Movement in Rochester. I see this as a sign of maturity and a sign of hope. It says to me that there

is a tremendous potential for being able to reverse the acceptance by society of a culture of death in favor of the embrace of the Gospel of Life!

By demonstrating a willingness and an ability to collaborate on such an event that honored one of the movement's most dedicated, loved and inspiring advocates, those involved have opened the door for future collaborative and influential efforts to promote the dignity of life!

I consider it a joyful privilege to have experienced this new beginning and to be a member of a church and a co-laborer in a ministry that says a resounding "Yes!" to the Gospel of Life!

Sheila Cody, Executive Director
Faith Haven, Naples

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EDITORS' NOTE: Dr. Holmsten, who had been battling cancer, died Nov. 9, after the article and this letter were written.

Rosary maker thanks supporters

To the editors:

Referring to the 9/25/97 issue, I would like to thank Kathleen Schwar for the article entitled "Parishioners answer prayers for more rosaries." Ms. Schwar mentioned that I had made 3,500 rosaries since 1993 with occasional help. Believe me, the help I received was more than occasional and I would like to recognize those folks who made the 3,500 rosaries possible. If it weren't for their efforts far less mission rosaries would have been made. I would like to thank Father William Cosgrove, pastor of St. Dominic's, for his support all these years for this most worthwhile ministry. I would also like to recognize and thank the following rosary makers: Jeni Mortier, Patti D'Arduini and her family, Bob Smith, Jeanette VanEpps, Krissy Wood, Sue Bowker (from St. Felix Parish in Clifton Springs), Eleanor Reizenstein (my 84 year old aunt who lives in Baltimore — I taught her over the telephone), Liz Mitchell's

CCD classes at St. Dominic's, Joe Liberati, Derek Record, Chris Lannon, and the members of the newly formed St. Dominic's Rosary Makers Guild: Earl and Rosalin May, Pauline Angeline, Lucy Gwilt, Helen Dunay, Allie Gersbach, Teri Gersbach, Shirley Vanderwall, and Grace Muller. A special thank you to the parishioners of St. Dominic's who have financially supported this effort by ordering the gift rosaries. If I have inadvertently missed anyone, please forgive me and accept my thanks.

If any of your readers are interested in learning to make corded mission rosaries or chained mission rosaries, I hope they will contact me at the address below. I also enclose my phone number (evenings before 9:00 pm, please) and E-Mail address.

Ann Fogarty, OCDS
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Reader notes error

To the editors:

In the 23 October issue of the *Catholic Courier*, pages 6 and 7, there is a picture of 5 young people kneeling before a statue of the Virgin Mary. The caption states that they "pose in adoration of Mary."

Catholics do not adore Mary. We venerate her; we revere her; we love her; we honor her; but we DO NOT ADORE her.

Ramon G. Becker
Rouge Road, Rochester

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EDITORS' NOTE: True. Unfortunately, the edited version of that caption got lost along the way, and an unedited version made it into print. We apologize for the mix-up, and for any offense the printed culline may have caused.