

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.

Last words on bishop and authority

To the editors:

Reminiscent of "Gnosticism" our Diocese seems capable of using any kind of psychobabble to lead the Faithful away from real Catholic thinking and truths handed down to us from the Apostles and as protected in "The Deposit of Faith" and expounded by the teaching authority of the Church — The Magisterium. This seems to be evident in the "Along the Way" column of Oct. 30, but not only in that article but in most of the agenda promoted by this Diocese.

Clarity, precision and purity of intention seem to be what is missing in the "common grounding" of our Diocese. We often hear call for a Broader Vision and an All Inclusiveness to be implemented by the faithful. It particularly puts forth this view when it tries to implement the homosexual agenda.

The Pope and the Bishops certainly do call for a loving and prayerful attitude toward those afflicted with any compulsive disorder but they do not call for the approval of sexual activity among homosexuals even in a longstanding monogamous relationship. It is the Catholic Faith that we should have a loving and prayerful attitude toward all sinners of all varieties including ourselves and with the intention that such persons will be converted and live in the grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ and thus finally attain heaven. The Diocese of Rochester tends to gloss over certain statements uttered by the Bishop's Conference such as, "It is God's plan that sexual intercourse occur only within marriage between a man and a woman." Why does our Diocese not speak to us in precise and clear language as to its stand on such things and remove all doubt as to its agenda?

Sincere Catholics will immediately recall the warning of Our Lord Jesus Christ in Matthew 7:13-14 "Enter by the narrow gate; for broad is the gate and wide is the path that leads to destruction and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life and those who find it are few." Therefore let us press on with love and compassion and purity of intention and go through the NARROW gate which leads to ETERNAL HAPPINESS.

Gerard G. Klueber
Ellicott Street, Rochester



To the editors:

I wonder if other Catholics are as fed-up as I am with this "open season" on our Bishop Clark?

I recently attended a retreat at the Notre Dame Retreat House in Canandaigua and was pleasantly surprised with the spirit of support of Bishop Clark by many of the men I had the opportunity to talk with.

I would like to do more for this spirit of support for Bishop Clark. Can you please provide names and addresses of those church officials who should hear from those of us who stand behind our bishop?

Thanking you in advance.

William S. Hodgetts
Pinnacle Road
Rochester

EDITORS' NOTE: The bishop's critics typically direct their letters to the following: His Eminence Bernardin Cardinal Gantin, Prefect of the Congregation for Bishops, Piazza Pio XII 10, 00193 Rome, Italy; His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Piazza del S. Uffizio 11, 00193 Rome, Italy; Most Rev. Agostino Cacciavillan, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio, 3339 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008-3687; and His Eminence John Cardinal O'Connor, Archdiocese of New York, 1011 First Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022.

Editors' Note:

We have now devoted several Opinion pages to discussion of Bishop Clark's article on authority, and have published all the letters received on the topic to date. Assuming that the article does not return to the news at some future time, we will not accept any letters on this subject postmarked after December 8.

To the editors:

In response to Bishop Matthew Clark's article "The Pastoral Exercise of Authority," which appeared in *New Theology Review*, Good Shepherd parish staff would like to express our support for him. For all of us who are fortunate enough to know him in a ministerial role, we see him as a caring gentle shepherd whose decisions are made after prayer and careful thought.

Bishop Clark takes seriously his role as teacher and pastor of the faithful. He invites each person to honest dialogue on questions regarding faith so that an adult, mature faith might take root in each of us. At the same time, he engages in dialogue with other Catholic bishops including the pope — the bishop of Rome — and treats the tradition of the Church with great respect.

We are most grateful to have in our community such a vital minister and spiritual leader as Bishop Clark. In choosing to include laity, religious and ordained members of the Church in the mission to build up God's Kingdom, he challenges us to use our God-given gifts for the common good.

We appreciate his pastoral approach as he reaches out to our youth, supports the role of women, encourages the role of the laity, and is sensitive to the pains and struggles of those who feel alienated by the church.

We have taken the time to hear what our wise leader has said and to read what he has written. We encourage others to do the same!

Parish Staff
Church of the Good Shepherd
Henrietta

Searches for middle ground on embargoes

To the editors:

Having read the article, "Critics say sanctions harm civilians," by Rob Cullivan (*Catholic Courier*, Oct. 23), I was left with mixed feelings. I have recently read the book, *Republic of Fear*, by Samir al-Khali from Pantheon Books, 1990 which vividly depicts the horrendous situation in Iraq prior to Gulf War. The edition I have also contains a special introduction added due to the invasion of Kuwait but prior the solidification of the coalition forces for Desert Shield.

The evil that is the Ba'th party in Iraq is almost unbelievable. Individual liberties and the dignity of the human person are antithetical concepts to the philosophies of the ruling parties there. I believe it is of great importance for humanity to rid the world of such an atrocious regime. But, I also wish not to see children starving or the innocent harmed by poor policy decisions aimed at achieving that end. This is our dilemma.

The (*Courier*) article seems to show only one side of two arguments: 1.) I am for sanctions because Saddam must be contained or 2.) I am against sanctions because innocents should not suffer unnecessarily. In these two views, I believe there is the possibility of middle ground. We should not rush to push the Bishops to make a political statement against U.S. foreign policy so lightly, as if it were our

first option. Instead of being "against the sanctions," perhaps we should be "for a human suffering amendment to the sanctions," which would allow for the continued monitoring by U.N. weapons inspectors and general sanctions but with provisions for those in need.

Too often such options are overlooked for the potential of a good old fashioned political stance. Let's not let this time be one of them.

Brian Byrne
Nason Lane
Naples, Florida

Asserts that diocese assesses parishes for value of mandatory appeal quotas

To the editors:

After all these years, I find it necessary to write concerning the BISHOPS THANKSGIVING APPEAL.

Let's examine the message. According to Webster an appeal is an earnest plea for something.

One would think that is what Bishop Clark's message is about.

However, let's examine what really happens. The goal amount is not totally attained by the generosity of the people as is say the United Way Campaign. The goal is a given because each Parish is assessed a portion of this goal. Whether the Parish collects the assessed amount or not, they are still responsible to "pay the assessment" to the Diocese, thus fulfilling the goal.

The word assessment according to Webster states "to fix or assign a value to

something."

I think the wording for the Campaign would be better served if it were the "BISHOPS THANKSGIVING ASSESSMENT."

As a man of GOD, the Bishop should be more truthful in his messages and wording.

Edward J. Uziako
Stoney Point Road, Spencerport

EDITORS' NOTE: Mr. Uziako's information is a few years out of date. The TGA was established to replace the "cathedraticum," a system of church taxation still being used by several U.S. dioceses. As such, the original TGA system did establish mandatory parish goals. Since 1991-92, however, parish TGA goals have been entirely voluntary. If parishioners do not contribute enough to meet their parish's TGA goal the parish has no obligation to make up the difference.