

**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.

**Priest shortage may be wake-up call**

**To the editors:**

"The shortage of priests will be the Catholic Church's downfall."

"Young men today don't have the commitment or the faith they had in years past."

"Father is never here; it seems like it is always his day off!"

"Our sacramental life is dying with the priesthood, we'll be lucky if we attend one Mass a month."

I have often heard these comments and others like them, and quite frequently in the past few months. Lay Catholics are realizing the fact that we do not have an endless supply of ordained priests to fulfill our needs and wants. The old saying "Father will do it," or "Father will know" does not apply anymore.

What I have seen alarms me. Instead of a responsible, mature faith community seeing this challenge and meeting it head on, I have witnessed negativism, despair, and hand wringing. Who can we blame? Who is responsible? Why isn't it the way it used to be?

I would like to propose a new way of thinking, a positive outlook on our current situation.

Consider for a moment that the Holy Spirit is behind this "problem." Perhaps the Spirit is trying to tell us something: "You must go FORWARD!" If the gentle prodding doesn't work, then hopefully the rock over the head will get our attention.

Perhaps there will not be numerous new vocations to the current priesthood. Perhaps its usefulness is nearing an end, and we are being directed to a new path.

But if we continue to whimper and whine about things not being the same, we will never discover what we may gain by stretching outside our secure boundaries.

I am not suggesting that a solution to all our challenges is just around the corner, however, it may be within reach if we just look for it, and pray for guidance. Things tend to move *very slowly* in our religion, and sometimes, that is a good fault. But in this case, I do not believe we have two or three centuries to get our house in order.

If we are open to the Spirit's wisdom and support, then we need to be moving now, before our beloved traditions become weights pulling us down rather than wings allowing us to fly.

**Marj Smith  
Spencerport**



**Parishes overlook definition in diocesan Eucharist paper**

**To the editors:**

On June 25, 1997, the Diocese of Rochester issued a set of guidelines concerning the centrality of the Sunday Eucharist. As part of that document, there was included a Liturgical Glossary.

One of the subject titles was Homily and was defined as "type of liturgical preaching given only by a priest or deacon following the reading of the Gospel in the liturgy of the Word." Having an ordained minister give the Homily as well as proclaiming the Gospel is in accord with the Code of Canon Law, the Documents of Vatican II and other instructions published by the Sacred Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship. Proclaiming the Gospel and preaching the Homily is also one of the main responsibilities conferred on priests and deacons at ordination.

In spite of these laws and rules governing worship and liturgy these responsibilities are being surrendered to the laity, and more often than not, in the interest of political correctness, women are allowed to exercise these duties. I feel that allowing non-ordained persons to perform

these functions is an abuse. The main function of the ordained ministers is to preach, teach and sanctify, and if they allow the laity to perform these duties, they are abdicating their responsibilities.

**Edward F. Lada  
East Street  
Pittsford**

**Society's status suggests course of 'orthodoxy'**

**To the editors:**

Does the Catholic community in the diocese know that we have two Roman Catholic Churches now? Of course there is one and only one. But at Holy Name of Mary on Winton Road, Rochester, on the sign outside the building you will read that this is a Roman Catholic Church with a Latin Mass at 6:30 p.m.

However, the sign lies. It is not a Roman Catholic church. It is run by the schismatic Society of St. Pius V, a group not in communion with the Holy Father. They style themselves Traditional Catholics and in their booklet available inside the house — it is no church although they practice the Tridentine Rite — they proclaim that the theological issues raised in Vatican II render the Vatican II Catholic world illegitimate.

This may be a warning to those Catholics who proudly proclaim themselves Traditional or Orthodox Catholics. To take the issues to their logical conclusion, as has the Society of St. Pius V, means you leave the Church and are not in communion with us.

**W.G. Beeney  
Knollbrook Road, Rochester**

**No one can do more than a Catholic priest**

**To the editors:**

Nobody can do the amount of good in and for the world that a good Catholic priest can do. So it's no mystery why they are hated, feared, persecuted and slandered the way they are these days by the ungodly! We never needed them more!

May God bless us with many, many more.

**Arlene O'Connor  
Haddon Road, Rochester**

**Organizer thanks volunteers, media for support of dinner**

**To the editors:**

Again this year, the Community Shared Christmas in Newark met its purpose.

About 170 meals were provided for people who came to the dinner, shut ins, take outs, and for the volunteers.

Twenty volunteers helped on December 24 to prepare the meal, set up, decorate and wrap gifts. On Christmas Day, there were 40 volunteers to finish the dinner, serve and clean up. WOW! There were a lot of dishes, pots and pans to wash.

Volunteers came from Newark, Sodus, Palmyra, Williamson, Ontario, Macedon, Ithaca, Port Gibson and Syracuse. I am so grateful for the support from all of these communities. Plenty of pies and gifts



were donated. The women from Hannick Hall provided us with traditional Christmas music.

It made the whole event joyful. People joined in singing. That was great.

I think that all who came and helped in

any way felt the Peace of Christmas — Love — Caring — and Sharing.

I am grateful to the press for all of the nice articles that were written. We had some new volunteers through these articles, and new people joined us for the dinner.

A special thanks to Kathleen Schwar; she wrote a beautiful article.

**Regina Krolak  
North Main Street, Newark**

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