

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.

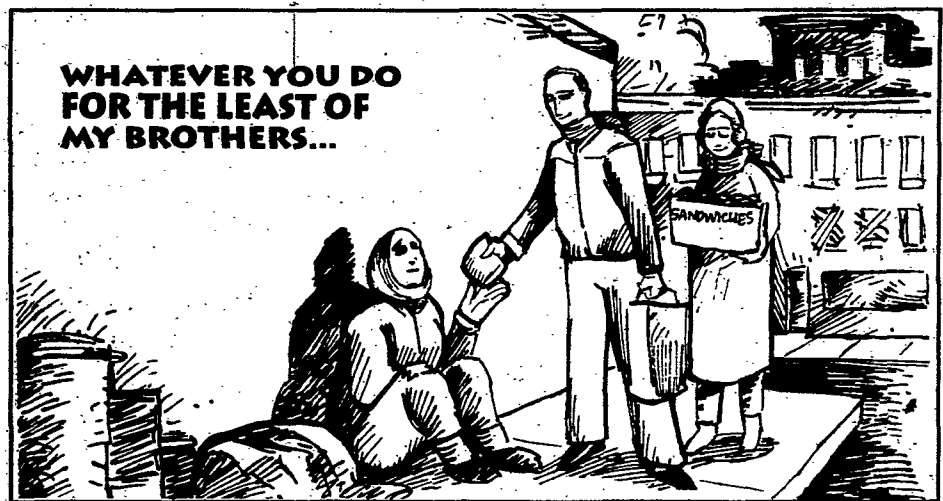
Mail letters to: Catholic Courier, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, N.Y. 14624. Please include your full name, phone number and complete address for purposes of verification.

A final word on Friday meatlessness

To the editors:

Might you tolerate another letter on the subject of meatless Fridays? Mrs. Harshbarger, whose letter appeared March 12, has been subsequently attacked by writers March 19 and April 2. I applaud Rose for speaking against a man-made rule that her critics have seemingly accepted without question. I called a priest, well educated in theology, traditionalism, and history, to inquire about the doctrine. He confirmed Rose's statement about the origin of fish being a means to support a failing industry in villages in Greece and Italy. However, some writers expressed a belief that one made a personal sacrifice FOR God, in remembrance of His death on Friday. The idea is blasphemous!

I am not down playing the significance of my Savior's death on the cross. He paid a debt He did not owe, for me — because I owe a debt I could never repay. But Jesus also gave us His victory over death in His resurrection Easter Sunday — He lives! Therefore St. Paul wrote Romans (12:1) "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." Jesus never asked anyone to give up meat, or anything for one day or 40. He wants you: "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength." (Mark 12:30): Every day of the year! If He indeed had your heart, soul, mind, and strength — "your reasonable



service," these man-made rules would be of no value as Colossians 2:20-23 states.

Paul also warned Timothy (1 Tim. 4:1-4) about these "latter times (3) forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving." People can eat worms if they so choose.

Rather than making sarcastic remarks about Rose's accurate statements, and rallying for everybody to send her their "meatless recipes" perhaps all would consider, What would Jesus do? Ephesians 4:15 says to speak the truth in love. The truth is "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:20).

"Every word of God is pure" (Proverbs 30:5). "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever" (Isaiah 40:8). Jesus said, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed, and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31-32).

My prayer for all who read this is that the Holy Spirit give you understanding. Proverbs 3:5-6: Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.

Sarah F. Nichols

Pleasant Avenue, Rochester

EDITORS' NOTE: We have published several letters on abstaining from meat and consider the topic closed for the time being.

Clinton photo, article attracted interest



Photo spoke of hospitality; article spoke of exclusion

To the editors:

Thank you so much for the beautiful picture-image of GOD'S OWN HOSPITALITY published on page 5 of the April 2 edition of the *Catholic Courier* as depicted in the photo of President Clinton receiving Communion from Father Mohlomi Makobane at the Regina Mundi Catholic Church in Soweto on March 29.

When I turned to page 5 while reading the *Courier* my eyes immediately centered on that photo before ever reading any of the printed words, above, below and around it, and I was awestruck at its poignant beauty!

Joy leaped within my heart and tears of gladness seeped from my eyes as I pondered the unseen communication dawning within me. Truly we walk by faith and not by sight.

So caught up in its transcendent beauty was I, that I must confess I was terribly shocked and disappointed when I began to read the accompanying newsprint that the focus had to be on rules and exclusiveness over relationship and inclusiveness as sisters and brothers in the Lord. Since none of us are able to read the contents of Mr. Clinton's heart/conscience, none of us know what beliefs or desire dwell within it.

My heart went out to Father Makobane also. It certainly had to have been a tough spot to be in; but it seems like he went trusting in the Holy Spirit, not the critical one. I applaud and rejoice in his Spirit-filled, decisive actions, man of God that he is. "Whoever is without sin may cast the first stone."

Patricia Federowicz
Clover Road
Apalachin

How do we handle touchy subject?

To the editors:

I'm really confused about a non-Catholic receiving Holy Communion, as was the case of President Clinton and President Reagan and Nancy Reagan did in Washington June 1983. I'm sure many of us would not know how to handle this subject — to tell a friend or close relative during Communion to sit down you cannot receive Communion. If you attend a non-Catholic church, everyone receives Communion. I'm sure there are many

other Catholics who feel the same as I do. Where do we draw the line? Do we have access to Catholic Church laws to guide us?

James G. DeVecchio
Shawnee Drive, Rochester

EDITORS' NOTE: *Intercommunion is discussed in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (paragraphs 1398-1401) and canon 844 of The Code of Canon Law. The issue was also addressed in the Courier ("Fallacies distort eucharistic beliefs," July 10, 1997).*

Saddened by 'confusing' journalism

To the editors:

I am saddened that the article under World & Nation News, in the April 2 *Catholic Courier* was printed when other more important happenings could have been chosen. Of course, Father Makobane was correct and gracious!

This type of journalism can be confusing to people who do not have complete knowledge of another culture. Also, how knowledgeable are we of President Clinton's intentions?

Miss Helen Shultz
Main Street, Newfield

Was it Christ's wish?

To the editors:

Isn't it possible that Christ really wanted to be received by President Clinton in Soweto?

Marie Louise Skelly
Howard Avenue, Holcomb