

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.

Don't pass up gift of living stations

To the editors:

Every year at Easter we go to visit our family in Pennsylvania. For several reasons, this year we stayed in Pittsford. This gave us the opportunity to participate in the various Holy Week celebrations at Church of the Transfiguration. And, of course, all of them were very meaningful and sacred.

But, I must draw your attention to a first experience for us, the Living Stations of the Cross. Through the years we have attended many Stations of the Cross; none ever so poignant or with such an impact as the Living Stations. Forty-two teenagers and a handful of adults were responsible for giving everyone in attendance a Good Friday prayer meditation that will never be forgotten.

Jesus surely must be pleased with the way in which the adults used their directing/teaching skills and the teens used their action and musical talents to help everyone have a more vivid understanding about the depth of the love of Jesus for us. With solemnity and dignity, the teens retraced the suffering of Jesus. With beautiful music, they helped us remember what happened long ago.

At the end of the service, it felt as if the teens should be recognized for their efforts. But, appreciation for what we had just witnessed went far beyond applause.

Another Lent has come and gone. If next year, you are presented with the opportunity — and it is a present, a gift — to attend the Living Stations of the Cross, don't let it pass you by. Go and share in a most powerful prayer experience.

Pat and Dennis Slimmer
Barker Road, Pittsford

Touched by bishop's words

To the editors:

If you read Bishop Clark's Easter message in the *Catholic Courier* on April 9, I hope it touched you as it did me in seeing the deep faith, understanding heart, gentleness, and humility of our spiritual leader.

If you have not, I urge you to do so slowly and thoughtfully and discern the holiness present in his words.

Certainly you must have noticed these qualities in the past.

For example: In planning direction for the future, he did not mandate but rather encouraged the input of all the parishes. Amid all the furor and criticism of some things he did, he could have responded angrily as the head of the flock but he did not.

May God continue to bless him in all that he does for us.

Jerry Paladino
State Route 14, Rock Stream

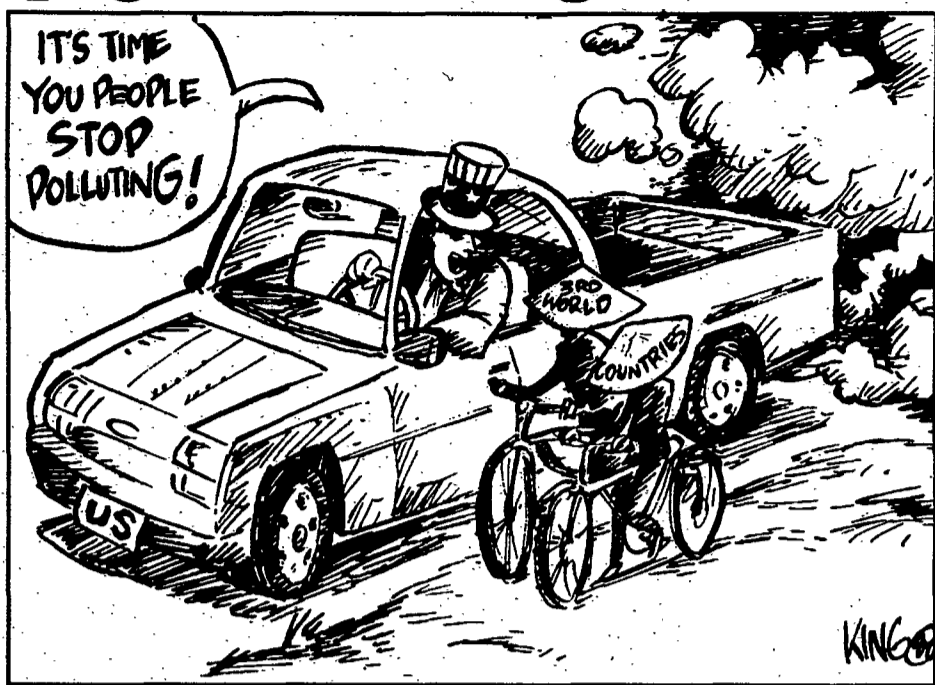
Offer 'police' rebuke in the St. Paul's spirit

To the editors:

I would like to encourage Marilyn Smith ("Don't judge Mass-goers by their appearance," April 2) to attend Mass in whatever clothing she has. Some years ago, my severe allergies made my skin so sensitive that I was unable to wear anything but a soft, cotton sweat suit. Yes, some remarked that I was not appropriately dressed, but at least I was there; my allergies are now so severe that I cannot attend Mass at all.

When the "clothing police" make their judgmental comments, one can offer it up in the spirit of St. Paul and remember that our blessed Lord went to the cross clothed in nothing more than a crown of thorns.

Christine Bravo-Cullen
Lee Road, Dryden



Suburbanites rave over Rogers House

To the editors:

Try it — we loved it.

Sometimes some of us become so insulated in the suburbs that our only contact with the city is the morning newspaper.

The other day my wife and I were making plans on where we would have dinner that evening. We went through our list of local restaurants. Having read the *Courier* from stem to stern, we had a flashback — how about Rogers House on Central

Park.

Well how does five-star sound? The restaurant was spotless, our waitress was both knowledgeable and personable, our meals were top shelf and the atmosphere was homey.

Rogers House, you have two converts and we are going forth and spreading the good word.

Cheryl and Ed O'Shaughnessy
Granger Circle
Webster

More on Father McBrien

Emphasize positive, not 'balance'

To the editors:

Refer please to your editors' note in the March 26 issue concerning Father McBrien's column. Once again your continued stand on "balance" is brought out in regard to your choice of columnists. We are fortunate to have a spiritual paper for our Diocese, one that pertains to life in the Church. Since this issue of "balance" has been one of contention by several readers, as always it is wise to turn to Scripture. What would Christ say about the "middle of the road?" In order to build up faith is

it not best to stress the positive? Does it not follow that the result of no stand leaves many suspended as to the proper position of our Church, the very leadership, unity and love that Christ so desires? In all Christian fairness to Father McBrien, after prayerfully considering the answers to the above questions, it would seem that only a rare occasional printing of Father McBrien's column is warranted.

Clara Pasto
Columbia Street
Corning

Galled by 'racism' of columnist

To the editors:

As a Black Catholic immigrant it was very galling for me to read Father McBrien's censorious denunciations of non-White and especially African priests as being unable to be understood within the highly developed United States. Over the years I have often heard similar comments from Caucasian nuns about Black priests: especially the "fact" that they become priests not to spread the Gospel, but to improve their lifestyle.

I am much heartened by the stance of a former Rochesterian priest, now a bishop in Syracuse, to speak out against this racism within the Catholic Church. I applaud Bishop Moynihan of Syracuse for his courage in discontinuing Father McBrien's column in his diocese.

Racism of any stamp has no place within the Mystical Body of Christ.

Jan E. Fredericks
Burr Street
Rochester

Column illuminated weak paper

To the editors:

Your columnist Father Richard McBrien, who is sometimes faulted for his alleged extremism, has written an April 9 column ("Holocaust document does not go far enough") that is a brief but illuminating and balanced view of the March 16 Vatican document on the genocide of the Jews during the war years.

Compared with the dramatic 1997 apology of the French bishops, the Vatican document, the result of an 11-year

self-scrutiny, written in the uninspiring style of a Roman dicastery, and eloquently exculpatory of church leadership, is a disappointment.

It is not, of course, the last word. That will probably come, and soon, from Pope John Paul II himself, prompted by his profound and personal love of the Jewish people as well as his own candor and humility.

E. Leo McMannus
Sail Pointe Circle
Venice, Florida