

# 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.

## Compelled to write by factionalism

### To the editors:

Recent articles (and letters to the editors) in the *Courier* compelled me to write. They focus on Bishop Clark's authority, Father Robert Beligotti's Auburn ministry, the McBrien column, and controversy focused on Cardinal Mahony and Mother Angelica of the Eternal Word Television Network. The common denominator is a direct challenge to authority exercised in Church context.

Factionalism has and probably will always be a part of Church life. First century Church had its share. Issues centered on who Jesus was. Did he come for Jews or Gentiles? Dietary laws, circumcision, and Gentile membership in Church were debated.

In the '60s and '70s those on the Church left protested — demanding changes regarding birth control, the all-male celibate clergy, etc. One could hear the cries — "the sky is falling." Surely our Church must perish. It did not happen because, in short, God is still in charge.

Recently I have found certain (letters to the editors), on the Church right, to be ill-informed regarding ecclesial order and divisive to the faith community. Apparently a small but vocal group of individuals has appointed themselves "watchdogs" of Bishop Clark's authority. Father Beligotti is challenged in his role as pastor of Auburn. They question *Courier's* continuance of the McBrien column. And Mother Angelica has issued, thus far, no apology to Cardinal Mahony for her highly public criticism of his Eucharistic pastoral.

Mr. Pokalsky (April 30 letter) waxed prosaic regarding the absolute nature of papal authority governing Church Magisterium. Without getting into semantics, he too "picks and chooses" regarding proof texts to support his view on authority. Vatican II documents and New Catechism are used.

What he does not also show in these and other sources is that the Holy Father's teaching, though absolute, is to be exercised collegially. It is exercised in union with all other bishops and in keeping with the pastoral needs of the local Church. This is the Holy Spirit's guarantee against error.

In view of this challenge to authority and during the vocation crisis, I write supporting Bishop Clark's ministry. I may dislike or disagree with something he says or does. Yet I assent to his right to exercise episcopal authority as Bishop of Rochester. I write to pray for clergy and religious throughout this diocese who serve with distinction the needs of the faithful. Kudos too to the *Courier* that respects diversity and whose editorial staff seeks fairness and balance of viewpoint. I recommend the National Conference of Catholic Bishops create an alternative to EWTN, one more reflective of Catholic mainstream.

**George J. Gublo, M.Div.  
Elmira**

## Care to predict the odds of ACLU fighting RICO?

### To the editors:

Regarding "RICO verdict attacks free speech," *Catholic Courier*, May 7: Anyone care to calculate the chances that the ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) will concern itself with NOW's (National Organization of Women's) attack on free speech?

**Christine Bravo-Cullen  
Lee Road  
Dryden**



## America made no admission in publishing vocations piece

### To the editors:

I read with interest the letter of Joseph J. Murray (*Catholic Courier*, May 14: "Applauds magazine for noting the 'facts'" in regard to the article, I guess, in *America* magazine (Feb. 28: "A View of Religious Vocations"). I was disturbed by the article because I fear the writer may be correct in assessing the kind of students many seminaries are accepting today, who will be our church leaders in the millennium.

It is indeed a scary and fast-changing world. I'm not sure I would like to be growing up today. And it's easy to understand why the church, a bulwark of unchanging stability, is a desired haven of safety, certainty and retreat. However that is not the renewed church which Vatican Council II redefined and calls us to. The author and vocation director Albert DiIanni, SM, has high praise for some in Generation X who would like to return "to a more classical form of religious life." I say some because it is my observation that a majority of young people will be

put off by such an image. I think Vatican II knew when it "read the signs of the times" and proclaimed the church as the People of God called to new understandings and insights of what it means to be a Christian community speaking to a humanity plunging headlong into the 21st century.

But Mr. Murray is incorrect, stretching the "facts" far beyond "reality," when he claims that *America* magazine, as its editorial policy, admits that "the so-called renewal has been a horrendous failure and hopes the church will return to orthodox teaching and practice." *America* is a fair and open publication which often prints views from all sides to arouse discussion and critique. That policy in no way implies intellectual approval of every article. A longtime reading of its editorials will show that. Also Mr. Murray neglected to mention that most responses to the article critiqued it unfavorably.

**Vincent Welter  
Roxborough Road  
Rochester**

## Planned Parenthood speaker unfit to discuss gender and relationships

### To the editors:

No one could be more ill-fitted to address women's perspective on gender and relationships than Carol Love, the Executive Director of Planned Parenthood, who was invited by the Downtown Community Forum of St. Mary's Church.

The abortion license has created an adversarial role not only between women and their children, but between women and men and between women and society.

Planned Parenthood advocates fragmenting relationships by isolating the fate of the unborn as a "woman's problem." Women's cry to leave them alone with their pregnancy decision is heard loudly and clearly by a society that is all too eager to really leave them alone.

That's why without exception, our popular feminist foremothers opposed abortion and understood abortion as a symptom of a society that rejected women, rather than one that valued them. That's why in New York State, we'd rather give a poor woman \$300 for an abortion that housing, day care, or education.

Can we really eliminate poverty by eliminating poor women's children any more than we can eliminate crime by eliminating the criminal in capital punishment?

Rather than a relationship based on inclusivity and quality, abortion is about control and domination. Historically, domination is based on a view that those in power are able to control those who they consider to be biologically, geneti-

cally or intellectually unfit, whether Negroes, Jews, Native Americans, or women.

To defend Carol Love's presence on this panel by saying it was not about supporting abortion reminds me of a remark several years ago by the organizer of an appearance of Ollie North in Rochester. I was assured Ollie wasn't invited to talk about the Iran Contra affair, but about human rights.

**Carol Crossed  
Pickwick Drive  
Rochester**

## Holy Spirit year good time to remind selves of need for silence and meditation

### To the editors:

The era of quiet meditation appears to be waning.

Concentration, at times, is not observed. For example, some people talk during the priest's presentation of the sermon.

The re-emergence of concentration on the spoken word shall be gratifyingly beneficial to those who seek a certain meaning during Mass and after Communion.

This, the year of the Holy Spirit, certainly shall be the appropriate time to contemplate the re-awakening of a commitment to a pattern of quiet meditation.

**Joseph P. Leahy  
Hector**