

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.

Disservice in stifling theologians

To the editors:

Leon Suprenant (*Catholic Courier*, Aug. 13: "Don't brand critics 'heresy-hunters'") equates theological argument and legitimate scholarly disputation about non-dogmatic doctrinal issues with their total rejection by those scholars. He calls respected scholars like Father Richard McBrien, Notre Dame Professor and author of "Catholicism" and "Encyclopedia of Catholicism," "dissent theologians." He would have us believe that because they dispute and debate about doctrinal issues and find problems and inconsistencies therein, that, ipso facto, these dedicated people actually "teach falsely." In addition, he informs us that he and his group who have united to defend our faith should be able to expect — demand? — that these theologians be punished for the error of their ways.

Perhaps this group wants the Church to return to the practices of the Inquisition. History tells us of many theologians who were excommunicated and even burned at the stake for "teaching falsely." We wonder what happened to those earlier theologians who disputed the accepted doctrines of those eras dealing with

Canon citations show alterations are wrong

To the editors:

As inclusive language continues its invasion of sacred Scripture, it might interest Catholics to know that it is illegal.

Father T. J. Miller, OCSO, writing in a Lubbock, Texas, diocesan newspaper quotes Canon 838 of the Code of Canon Law that requires that "Holy See review and confirm all liturgical texts."

Regarding illicit alterations "beginning with one from the Second Vatican Council: 'Not even a priest may add, remove or change anything on his own authority.'"

This is clear, at least to me, that church law has spoken on inclusive language: it is wrong, i.e., sinful and should be discontinued.

Robert W. Bart
Ithaca



usury, slavery, the earth-centered solar system, Limbo, and salvation outside the Church. More recently we know the same example made of Father Charles Curran for his scholarly work. Perhaps our evolution as Church and our quest for truth would have been quicker and less awkward had these theologians been encouraged in their scholarly pursuits rather than having been silenced and punished. Is it not the theologians' obligation to assist the People of God as we work through our doubts and concerns? Even from the earliest days, the Church, although inspired by the Holy Spirit, still did not have immediate recognition of the whole truth of every relevant issue facing it. The living, God-imbued mystery that is the Church has evolved dynamically over time

in its journey to become more perfect in Christ. The Church is a "Christ-work-in-progress" as each of us is. A very important part of this evolutionary process is the Church's quest for a truthful understanding of how the People of God should express their love of God and of each other. We need our theologians to help us, both laity and clergy alike, in that quest to better understand our relationship to our God and our responsibilities toward one another. Any attempt to stifle our theologians in their pursuit of truth — especially in the name of "defending our faith" — is to do us who are the Church the greatest disservice. What is there to fear? The truth shall make us free.

Raymond S. McCormick
Cross Ridge Road, Pittsford

Seeks details of EWTN's 'opposition'

To the editors:

As a young Catholic, I look forward to Father McBrien's series on the reforms of Vatican II. I was 11 years unborn when the council closed, so I have no memory of what the Church was like beforehand.

I was also intrigued by Father McBrien's references to a "highly vocal and powerfully connected minority of Catholics" who seek to "erase the memory of the council or reinvent it through a cynical manipulation of its history." He names only one part of this group by

name — Mother Angelica's Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN).

I wonder if Father McBrien would care to specify how EWTN is opposing the Council. I am a regular viewer, and it seems to faithfully communicate the teachings of the Pope and Magisterium — at least as contained in the new Catechism of the Catholic Church. Or is the Pope too involved in the anti-Vatican-II alliance?

Chris Potter
Scottsville Road, Rochester

Courier writers should speak up on Clinton

To the editors:

I have observed many changes to the *Catholic Courier* over the past few years and on balance I think it is a better newspaper than it was five years ago. One of the changes I observed was an attempt to tone down some of the negative letters to the editor by some self-proclaimed experts on what the church is all about.

Hopefully therefore this is not another negative letter. However I do find it somewhat disconcerting that almost one half of a year has gone by, and I have yet to read one article in the *Courier* concerning the moral aspects of some of the issues going on in Washington. In defense of the *Courier*, it is not alone, since with only one exception, I have yet to hear any of the church leaders speak out on the issue also.

I certainly believe in the separation of church and state, and yet the evidence is still being collected. However, is there anything wrong with some of our Catholic leaders speaking out hypothetically and stating if certain incidents actually occurred — they can fill in the blanks — they are morally wrong. That is to say, I think the church has an obligation

to speak out on contemporary moral issues and I think the *Courier* would be a better newspaper to print them.

At the very least someone in the church leadership should take issue with the fact that the majority of people — according to polls — who say that even if

certain alleged immoral events occurred, there is nothing wrong with them. I find that in itself very distressing, especially for it to be repeated week after week, with no one in a church leadership position saying that it is simply wrong.

Bernard Streb
Rosewood Drive, Pittsford

Solution exists for priest shortage

To the editors:

One thing bothers me about the unending requests for priestly vocations heard from our pulpits and read in our bulletins. God, being loving as God is, gives the Catholic Church all the vocations it needs. Why then are we suffering from a huge lack of priests? I would not blame it on the single celibate males who do not become priests, for their full cooperation with God's call is an integral part of a priestly vocation. If they don't respond, there are reasons and they wouldn't make good priests anyway.

I believe the Catholic Church limits itself terribly when it says to God "regardless of the number of vocations you give us, we will accept only the vocations giv-

en to single celibate males." Talk about shooting ourselves in the foot!

And what about our currently active priests who are doing the best they can to live out their vocations in as loving a way as possible? Our church adds and adds to their duties, reducing their efficiency and person contact as they hurry from one pressing ministerial responsibility to another. My own pastor is currently pastor of two parishes. In our diocese, some priests administer up to six smaller rural parishes.

I'm sure that our church hierarchy can find a solution to this sad situation. I wonder why they don't?

Dan Quilty
Kosciusko Street, Rochester