

Catholic Courier

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1150 Buffalo Road
P.O. Box 24379
Rochester, NY 14624
716/328-4340
800/600-3628 outside Rochester
<http://www.catholiccourier.com>
e-mail: cathcour@frontiernet.net

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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.

Nothing private about it

EDITORIAL

More than a week after President Bill Clinton's Aug. 17 "apology" for misleading his wife, staff and the American people about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky, people still debate whether that relationship should be the subject of an investigation.

Although there are many persuasive arguments for halting the investigation, one of the most frequently cited is that President Clinton's infidelity is a private matter between his wife and himself, and thus it is no one else's business.

Unfortunately, it long ago ceased to be a private matter.

It is not a private matter because he is the President of the United States, a public official elected by the people and an employee of the people. He has now essentially acknowledged that he pursued sexual activities in his office, during work hours, with a subordinate. In most companies, those are grounds for disciplining or firing.

It is not a private matter because he distorted the truth in a sworn deposition in a civil proceeding. Even though the case was later dismissed, it was moving toward a public conclusion at the time he gave his statement.

It is not a private matter because after giving his deposition, he went before the American people and

publicly deceived them on national television.

It is not a private matter because he at least allowed — perhaps even encouraged — his wife, staff and friends to spend months defending him and unknowingly stating falsehoods.

It is not a private matter because some of the president's staff addressed the matter on his behalf while on the public payroll.

It is not a private matter because, as president, he is a public symbol to the people of the United States and the world.

It is not a private matter because, while he has not used the word "sin," he has in effect acknowledged sinning. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says "sin is a personal act" that "injures human solidarity." "Personal sins put the world" in a "sinful condition." Even the private sins of individuals affect us all and help to create an environment that allows sin's influence to spread. In the end, all sin is public.

Whatever the outcome of the current investigation — whether President Clinton ultimately faces censure or even impeachment — his actions set a tone for the moral climate of the nation.

And there's nothing private about that.

Thanks God for scholar's contribution

To the editors:

It was with a sad heart that I read of the death of Father Raymond Brown, the celebrated and famous Scripture scholar. Father Brown made Scripture study respectable among Catholics following Pius XII's letter *De Afflante Spiritu* on biblical research.

I had the privilege many years ago to be in the company of Father Brown for a full day during his visit to St. John Fisher College. Father Brown was visiting the College to give a talk on the Infancy Narratives just before the beginning of the Advent season. The Kearney Auditorium was filled to overflowing for the event.

The day that I spent with him, also in the company of Mr. Robert Gullo, Director of the Library at the time, is something that I cherish in my memory. Father Brown showed himself to be a man of consummate wisdom and scholarship, and also as a gracious and gentle human being. He had expressed an interest in visiting the Mormon sites near Palmyra and so we took him there. The day was filled with marvelous conversation about the meaning and fact of revelation as the Church and Scripture scholars and theologians understand it. And, of course there was discussion about the claims of Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormons. Although he was in firm disagreement with the Mormon claims, he spoke of them respectfully and thanked the caretakers at Hill Cumorah and the Smith Home for their charity in allowing him to examine rare documents from 150 years ago.

But what was so astonishing and wonderful was the clarity of his mind and the articulation of his faith and beliefs in the teaching of the Church. He was a man of great intellect and faith. He was devoted to Truth and did not let attacks deter him from pursuing the truth. We ended this remarkable day with a hot roast beef sandwich at an eatery in Pittsford before returning to the campus.

We should all thank God for the work and example that Raymond Brown gave to all of us. May the Angels lead him to paradise and may he rest well in the bosom of Abraham and in the presence of our God.

Donald L. Muench
Smallwood Drive
Pittsford



Diocese should tout web site

To the editors:

In my opinion the reason the diocese's web site has not had many visitors, (only 538) is that its existence is unknown, as it was to me until I visited the web site known as "The Catholic Community Forum" (www.catholic-forum.com).

I found this site's address on the front of a monthly calendar published by the parish where I attended Mass in the diocese of Buffalo this past weekend.

It is also my belief that these web sites and other Catholic web sites addresses need more dissemination. Because as good Catholics we all need access to in-

formation about our religion to counteract the multitude of disinformation that is on the web and elsewhere in this world.

J.L. Ward

Ross Road, Canandice

EDITORS' NOTE: The Diocese of Rochester has not made any effort to publicize its web site (<http://www.dor.org>) because that site is still under construction. Diocesan officials tell us that they will publicize the site to parishes and individuals — and register it with the various search engines — as soon as it is completed. Meanwhile, the Catholic Courier's site can be found at <http://www.catholic-courier.com>.

Virtual pilgrimage available online

To the editors:

It was wonderful to read about the recent ecumenical pilgrimage to Israel (*Catholic Courier*, Aug. 13). For those with access to the Internet, one can take a virtual pilgrimage to the Holy Land at <http://www.jesus2000.com>.

In addition to the Vatican's magnificent web site, we recommend visiting EWTN

(<http://www.ewtn.com>), and CatholiCity (<http://www.catholicity.com>) with free Roman Catholic "Crosstalk" e-mail discussion lists, and home to several Catholic apostolates including the Mary Foundation for Catholic audiotapes and St. Jude Media for Catholic novels.

Mr. & Mrs. Anthony R. Brach, M.I.
Melrose, Mass.

Listen, follow example set by Bishop Clark

To the editors:

A man filled with love for His Father. Speaking of God's love to the believers and non-believers. Welcoming the children, elderly, the sick, those at the margins of society, the sinners — us all. Blessing bread and wine and sharing it with the believers. Falsely quoted and accused by a minority for showing God's compassion. Jesus Christ — yes — but also Bishop Matthew Clark.

We are not suggesting that Bishop

Clark is our Savior. We Christians all have Jesus in us. If we carefully listen to Bishop Clark's words and follow his examples, we will learn how to bring God's peace and love to our homes, workplace and world. He challenges us to greet with understanding even those we fear or those who are different from us — loving the person and not the sins.

Ron and Martha Jodoin
Park Acre Road
Pittsford