

## 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.

## Asks a halt to behavior

### To the editors:

To whom it may concern: Corpus Christi parishioners.

The Lord is saddened by your behavior. The Bible plainly says that whatever you do unto another person you are also doing unto Him. Your temper tantrums are appalling, reminding me of a little child who can't have his own way. The Lord expects us to be obedient unto the Church authority.

I have heard people refer to your group as a cult. How sad. Your leaders Mary Ramerman and Father James Callan should have made peace with the church members and officials and stepped aside gracefully instead of generating you into being rude, rebellious and sacrilegious beings. Your actions in church, during Mass and your attitude toward your new Pastor Father Daniel McMullin were totally appalling and disgusting. You have been irreverent unto Jesus, the one whom you say you praise and worship, the Jesus you say you serve.

Maybe your group should re-think what being a Christian is all about and read your Bible once again. Your spiteful acts need to be repented of so you can really hear what the Trinity is saying unto your church.

I say these things in holy love to my fellow Christians, that you may listen and make the necessary changes in your life.

A first step might be to welcome your new pastor and demonstrate love with Christ-like behavior. May you define and apply love. Most of all - I think your parishioner Nia Brosen said it best, "As we dry our tears, we most welcome you."

God bless you and guide you and may the high praises of God be in your mouth.

**Mary Post Guinta**  
Genesee

## Witch remark draws response

### To the editors:

If ever there was a subject of Catholic history mangled by widespread exaggeration and myth, it would be the Inquisition. The *Catholic Courier's* feature article (Nov. 19), though full of some useful information, did also conclude with a grossly inaccurate representation.

For the record, witch trials are largely the property and responsibility of Protestant history. In fact, the burning of alleged witches was a practice almost unknown in Catholic countries. The Spanish Inquisition, for example, found no evidence of witchcraft. At the same time, Protestants in England were particularly busy torching hundreds of "witches." In Protestant Germany, thousands of convicted "witches" were burned at the stake.

As for the history of the Inquisition, its purpose was meritorious but its process was marred at times by misdeeds and excess. In establishing the actual facts about those past transgressions, we should not be reticent about including the good points and characters which also comprised the Inquisition. A fair and balanced understanding can be found in Fernand Hayward's *The Inquisition*, (Staten Island, N.Y.: Alba House, 1965). In addition, a forthcoming Vatican document following the recently concluded symposium will be a valuable resource in the service of truth and reliable fact.

**W. Randolph Smith**  
Rochester

**EDITORS' NOTE:** According to the New Catholic Encyclopedia, during the great witch persecutions, "Catholic territories emulated Evangelical areas," and "the witch craze and witch burning were not limited to a single religion."



Greg Francis/Staff photographer

Father James Callan is interviewed by the media outside Downtown United Presbyterian Church prior to a "supplemental" religious service Dec. 7.

## Time to 'return' to old roles

### To the editors:

I read with interest Bishop Clark's recent proclamation regarding uncompromising obedience to the Vatican.

As a life long Catholic, the Church is the only sexist organization to which I still belong. I have supported the Church because I was hopeful that maybe attitudes

would change for my daughter and now, granddaughters. Apparently, this is not to be in my lifetime!

So Ladies, let's get back to what we do best, man your mops and clean the church.

**Marion L. Brown**  
Irving Road, Rochester

## Priest forgot his duties to church

### To the editors:

As a good and faithful Catholic, I wish to express my feelings concerning Corpus Christi problems. Father Callan, at the time of his ordination, was a good and faithful priest. As the years went by, he got involved in everyone's lives by going against the Church teaching and trying to be a hero in the eyes of the gay, poor, etc. people.

He forgot his priestly duties and took upon himself what he considered to be higher than the Pope.

As Catholics, we should all pray for Father Callan and hope he comes to his senses and starts being a priest and asking

for forgiveness for all the trouble he brought to the Catholic Church.

I met Fr. Callan at my father's house when he had a party to celebrate his ordination. At that time I thought he would make a great priest. But now, I'm sorry for him and pray that he'll come back to the Church's teaching and make peace within himself.

We as good Catholics should support Bishop Clark on his decision concerning Fr. Callan and pray for his return to good health. God bless Bishop Clark.

**Catherine Fagg**  
Phoenix Street, Canandaigua

## Institutional history narrows faith

### To the editors:

There are two distinct ways to write a history of the Roman Catholic Church. One is an institutional history which begins, in the words of Bishop Matthew Clark, with a "Jesus that sent out apostles with a set of norms to guide their dress, their manner of ministry and the content of their preaching." The institutional history concludes, logically, with the authority of the diocesan bishop, "as a successor to the apostles and as a vicar of Christ."

A second history of the Church is the history of popular Christianity. It is a history of survival in hostile conditions. The message of Christ constitutes, especially for the marginalized, a permanent reserve of revolutionary hope for an inclusive community. Church history instructs Father Jim Callan to ask legitimately what Jesus would do in present situations.

The two Church histories are largely independent of one another, yet both inform the life of the practicing Catholic. On the one hand, the Church has endured for two thousand years because of a strong institutional framework. On the other hand, the Church has been involved in extreme forms of intolerance.

Roman Catholicism decays, it seems to me, when it follows the pedantic spirit, in the invention of creeds, formulas, articles of faith, doctrines, and apologies. We become increasingly less pious as we increasingly justify and rationalize our beliefs and become so sure that others are wrong. The consequence is that the more we justify our beliefs, the more narrow-minded we become. This has made it possible for Roman Catholicism to be associated with the worst forms of bigotry, narrowmindedness, and even personal selfishness. A pedantic Catholicism nourishes selfishness in our personal lives, not only by making it impossible for us to be tolerant of others, but also by turning the practice of our religion into a private bargain between God and oneself. The sense of self-justification replaces true community.

The church requires a strong institutional framework, but when the institutions oppress, every honest Catholic is compelled to recognize this decay and make room for the revolutionary Christ.

**Anthony Favro**  
Red Lion Road  
Henrietta