

OPINIONS

Catholic Courier

©1999, Rochester Catholic Press Association.

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

President

Bishop Matthew H. Clark

General Manager/Editor

Karen M. Franz

Editorial Department

Associate Editor

Lee Strong

Copy Editor/Staff Writer

Kathleen Schwar

Finger Lakes

Staff Writers

Rob Cullivan

Genesee Valley

Mike Latona

Southern Tier

Staff Photographer

Greg Francis

Business Department

Circulation Manager

Donna Stubbings

Office Manager

Mary DiPonzio

Secretary/Receptionist

Arlene S. Gall

Advertising Department

Advertising Director

Jodiann Marcello

Account Executives

Otto Bruno

Production Department

Graphics Manager

Kim Parks

Graphic Artist

Linda Jeanne Rivers

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.

'Sloppiness' increasing in today's Mass

To the editors:

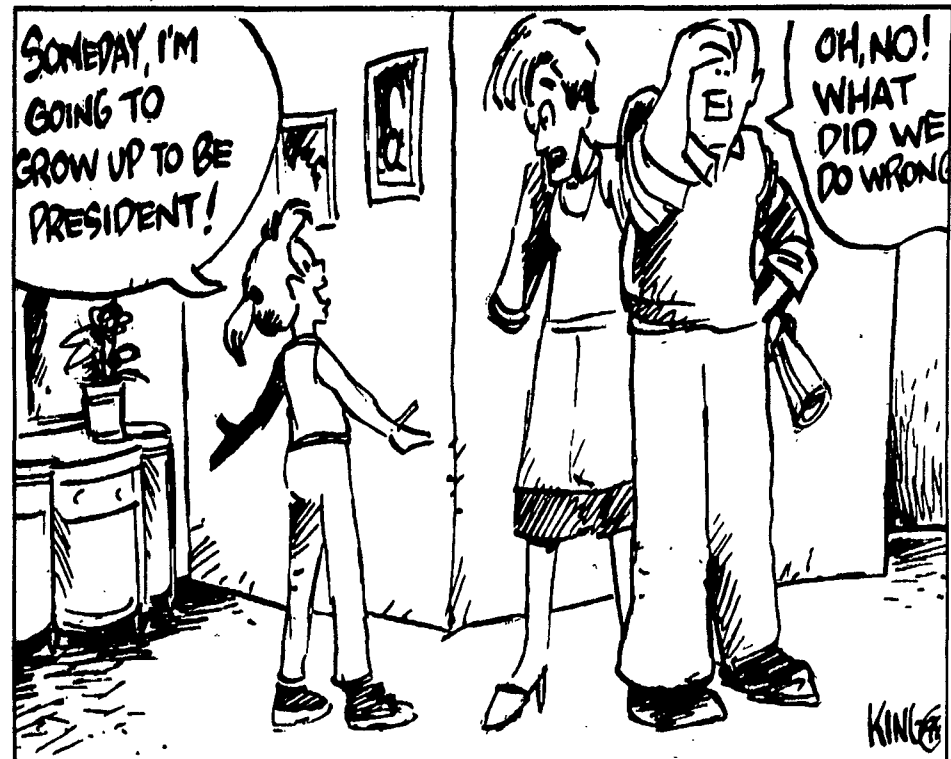
A couple of years ago in your newspaper columnist George Weigel, a Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C., wrote about liturgical sloppiness brought about by abuses of extremism from Vatican II.

The eucharistic ministers are cited: "One wears a skirt that ends an inch and a half above the knee. Another wears a leisure suit."

Things have worsened considerably. A summerlong parade of shorts and T-shirts, especially scandalous for the obese — flopping about with no undergarments. One such, typically clad as such, boldly sat next to the priest as if she were co-celebrant! One male dressed in shirt and shorts, used his hand as a Kleenex more than once, before handling the sacred Host. Another, clad similarly, had the sacred Cup and wiped her lipstick all over the white cloth, precluding any cleaning. And all scurrying from sacristy to altar like vermin.

Like the columnist, one can observe these abuses in many churches ... "Most take the host from the eucharistic minister and immediately start back to their pews, consuming the host enroute, somewhat in the manner of a snack." And "The liturgical reform never intended to replace the divine action at the heart of the liturgy with a kind of user-friendly suburban religious jamboree..."

Indeed, why are females doing their silly dances in the aisles and on the altar? Why the raucous combos and balloons and chanted hullabaloo to sully the beauty and dignity that traditionally identified



the Holy Catholic Church's liturgy in no need of "reform"?

In his exhortation of 1989 *Christifideles Laici* Pope John Paul II bases his comments on the World Synod of Bishops in 1987 meeting to review Vatican II and correct the extreme abuses arising from it: "...the confusion and the equating of the common priesthood and the ministerial priesthood, the lack of observance of ecclesiastical laws and norms, the arbitrary interpretation of the concept of 'supply', the tendency toward a clericalization of the lay faithful and the risk of creating in reality, an ecclesial structure of parallel service to that founded on the sacrament of orders..."

That eucharistic ministers are supposed to be used only in emergencies, not as routine, the Holy Father directs "That pastors guard against a facile yet abusive recourse to a presumed 'situation of emergency' or to 'supply by necessity' where objectively

this does not exist or where alternative possibilities could exist through better pastoral planning..."

Of lectors and acolytes, the Pope points out traditionally these were steps toward priesthood and if extended to the laity, should be only to men.

Let us listen to the Holy Father and save our church, we who are its body and have the power — not to defame and destroy it as is happening — but to restore and defend it, by word, deed and example.

**Dorothy Louis
Wahl Road, Rochester**

EDITORS' NOTE: Canon 230 distinguishes between installation into the formal offices of lector and acolyte — steps on the way to priestly ordination and thus limited to men — and the "temporary deputation" of both men and women for various liturgical functions, including the proclaiming of the readings before the Gospel. The church also now permits female altar servers.

Reactionaries aborted new church vision

To the editors:

Mr. Carson's comparison of Fr. Jim Callan and Dr. Jack Keyorkian (*Catholic Courier*, Jan. 7) is a poor analogy and a hasty generalization. Dr. Keyorkian has killed many people (with their consent), while Fr. Jim has harmed no one and has probably led more people back to Jesus than any other priest in this Diocese.

When local reactionaries witnessed the

growth of Corpus Christi over the last several years, they prodded Father Curia to come and excise the cancerous tumor. But what if this growth was really Mother Church pregnant with the vision of the post-denominational church? Wouldn't that be an abortion?

With the recent firings and forced resignations of most of the parish staff, I've seen the vibrant spirit of Corpus Christi

parish reduced to a death rattle in less than two months. Fortunately, the Corpus Christi Faith Community is alive and well at the weekly supplemental services. Religion (the letter of the law) is for people afraid of going to Hell; spirituality (the spirit of the law) is for people who have already been there.

**Richard Poydock
Rustic Street, Rochester**

Articles skirted negative effects

To the editors:

I was surprised and disappointed that a Catholic newspaper would print an article about body-piercing that didn't make it clear that this was not a good idea for a number of reasons, not the least of which being that body-piercing could be considered mutilation.

Imagine my disappointment to find an article last week that painted a rosy picture of two unwed parents "making it" with a little help from their parents — quite a little.

I deplore the tone of both articles which made it seem as though these situations were somewhat normal, interesting and tolerable.

You would do the youth who may read your newspaper a better service by pointing out the negative aspects of each situation, not the least of which being that these choices are immoral and to be avoided.

Please consider pointing out the negative consequences of these all-too-frequent behaviors of our youth, both socio-economic and ethical-moral.

**Barbara M. Kelly
Paul Road, Rochester**



Jesus conceived within wedlock

To the editors:

Several years ago the Holy Father published a beautiful tribute to St. Joseph. It was titled "Guardian of the Redeemer." In this letter, he insisted that Mary was legally married to St. Joseph, even though they had not lived together, according to the Jewish customs of the time:

"According to Jewish custom, marriage took place in two stages: first, the legal, or true marriage was celebrated, and then, only after a certain period of time, the husband brought the wife into his own house. Thus, before he lived with Mary, Joseph was already her 'husband'."

Bishop Clark has so beautifully stated that we are a part of the Holy Catholic Roman Church. Belonging to this Church means listening with reverent obedience to the teachings of the Holy Father, even when he is not speaking "ex cathedra." The Holy Father also explains his teachings. He continues in the same paragraph, The words spoken to Joseph are very significant: (Mt 1:20) "Do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit."

**Joan M. Rand
North Drive, Rochester**