

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.

Don't miss opportunity to tell Mom you love her

To the editors:

A husband/father shared his life with his loving wife from June 6, 1938, until October 11, 1997. He has stated that during these years of marriage, he never heard his wife utter one ill word against anyone and that they never had an argument! Unbelievable, but true!

His wife carried a perpetual smile. She never complained when in pain. She loved everyone and everyone loved her. If she may have had a dislike for anyone, she was the only one who knew along with our Father. Over the years she deprived herself of many personal things saying, "Oh, the girls need them." True mother's love in action.

She always made excuses for the wrongs of others. Saying something like, "Maybe they don't know any better."

During her lifetime her favorite prayer ritual was praying the rosary — every chance she had. Upon retiring nightly her last words were always, "Good night, I am going to bed. If I don't finish my rosary, the angels will finish it for me."

For 16 years she was afflicted with Alzheimer's and two years with cancer and her last six years in a nursing home. The staff loved her and her perennial smile. One resident in a wheel chair fell in love with her and would visit her room during her last two years daily after meals, hold her hand and just look at her. I believe just drank in the angelic and celestial atmosphere — just to be with her. What a loving pall!

This husband further stated that there are also many other mothers on earth — bona fide angelic creatures for you and I to enjoy, now!

The husband's tears were missing at her passing but his heart was filled and exuding with oceans and oceans of love to this day for her — missing her until they meet in their heavenly home.

Yes, she is missed as are others like her by their loved ones — mothers/wives. It is said in Scriptures that our deceased loved ones are closer to us in death than were in life. One might say not so. Answer: Where is God? Everywhere. If God is everywhere, so is his home, heaven! Our departed loved ones then are closer to us than we can ever imagine. If you do not believe, when you meet God for judgment, argue with Him, not me.

I believe I have made my point about our dear loving mothers living and deceased. Love, honor, obey, respect and thank them for their kindness every chance you have and most importantly, tell them and tell them again and again. "I love you." "I love you." Tomorrow may be too late!

I wonder who this man is who enjoyed such a loving wife for 59 years? It is I! Lucky me! A loving gift from God. A loving wife and mother, Mary Jane Vasco Mastropietro, along with three beautiful daughters to put the frosting on the cake — Rosemary, Marguerite and Maria Christine. Two elementary teachers and a principal, also at the elementary level.

In closing, Happy, Happy Mother's Day to each of our mothers wherever they may be, near or far. Take a second right now and tell her, "Mama, I love you." Friends, do it. You will feel so much better and will make your dear mother's heart burst and exude with so much love for you, more than you can ever imagine.

To my mom and my dear Mary, I love you!!! God bless!!

Francis Mastropietro
Clark Street
Auburn



Annulments needed, trying

To the editors:

My marriage of 22 years was legal with a state license and spiritual with a church ceremony. Just as a lawyer, judge and court declared the legal marriage dissolved, I turned to the church, my priest and the diocesan tribunal to be part of the spiritual process.

I realize that Scripture and the church are against divorce. I accept and support that the Catholic Church has a system that asks people to examine and reflect on a divorce and the issues relating to the respect and bond of the marriage sacrament — rather than just a quick form. I felt like the process was a way of penance. What a complex process for the church and the tribunal! They are not looking at whom to fault or blame. Respectfully, the tribunal can evaluate from what is submitted if a marriage still holds a spiritual union. To continue a marriage beyond repair would only create a disrespect to the sacrament.

I received a church annulment. I do not

think of it as voiding 22 years of my life. The court ended my marriage legally — I needed to resolve and acknowledge the spiritual marriage.

All that I had to work through in the legal process, many months, pages and questions, documentation, appointments and legal fees. I wanted to say, "Enough, I'm tired of thinking, living and feeling all that is related to the pain of divorce!"

Since I wanted the church to be a part of the marriage process 22 years before it only seemed right to work through the spiritual divorce. I am thankful for the support of clergy, family and friends that helped me.

Perhaps some people can ridicule the annulment process and the changes in proceedings. Whether we are a part of a family, organization or business there are guidelines and directions to follow.

Patsy Lynn Brown
Culver Parkway
Rochester

Amid tragedy, sees God in school

To the editors:

As I stood in front of my student body at Bishop Kearney High School Wednesday morning, I was going over the right words to say in light of such a senseless and brutal tragedy whose shock wave has rippled to every doorstep in America. I looked out at those gathered and observed a seriousness and concern on the students' faces.

The room was filled with a silence as many looked on hoping for some type of answer.

While I'm sure the bloodshed in Colorado was addressed in classrooms and in the cafeteria, this was the first time we had met to talk about the tragedy as a collective school body.

This is a time to evaluate our relationships with others and with God. In the week following the tragedy, I did some self-evaluation.

As I stood in front of both students and faculty I was prepared to share what I had

found. I realized that there is no place that I'd rather be than right here, right now at Bishop Kearney — surrounded by a community of exceptional students and faculty for whom I care deeply.

So, I shared with the students that I am fortunate to be at Bishop Kearney where when I look out I see: leaders not blind followers, a community that pulls together with a senior class of 130 that is as close as I've ever witnessed, faculty that day in and day out make the effort to know their students as more than just students, and families that care enough to provide their children with a Catholic education.

While such an event forces everyone to scratch their head in wonderment, in the midst of an unthinkable tragedy, I take a step back and see God at work right here at Bishop Kearney.

Father John Costello, SJ
Bishop Kearney High School
Rochester

Change brings stress, but is sign we're alive

To the editors:

I just returned home from the parish assembly where the strategic plan was discussed for Yates, Ontario, and Steuben Counties which has resulted from the scarcity of clergy. The church hall was filled to capacity with concerned members expressing both positive and negative opinions. The planning committee has done a marvelous job of tackling this complicated project and the Knights of Columbus served a great brunch more quickly and efficiently than you could slip on a banana peel.

This period of change will bring with it positive and negative stress but sitting in neutral and idling is not without stress also. Not that neutral is a choice we have. But I see the greatest stressors being exerted on the priests who are being affected by these changes in a very personal way. They need our support more than ever to

continue the work they are called to do which they do so well and so unselfishly.

Every living thing is in a constant state of change. Babies become children who become teenagers who become adults. We grow fatter, shrink skinnier, grow hair, lose hair, have good times/hard times, enjoy good health, survive devastating disease, celebrate life and suffer tragedy. Life is full of changes and has its rhythms, all of which are meaningful. We can only do the best we can with what we have. A positive effort on the part of everyone will result in a positive outcome. And then, change will come again. It's a sign we are living. Thank God! It is in Him that we live and move and have our being. My prayer is that all of us, clergy and laity, experience peace as we work out the glitches and walk together into the new millennium.

Janet Osgood
Walnut Street, Penn Yan