

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.

Writer tries to undercut validity of *Novus Ordo*

To the editors:

I wish to respond briefly to the letter of Jean Lloyd of Aug. 26 which was in response to my letter of Aug. 5. Ms. Lloyd makes the astonishing point that Latin is to be preferred because the meaning of the words is unchangeable. How can she possibly know that?

And, if she's right, then why don't we read the New Testament in Koine Greek — an equally dead language. No one can possibly believe that Scripture becomes inerrant because it's in Koine Greek!

What is so astonishing is that a liturgy in a language which very few understand is to be preferred to one in the language of the people.

Ms. Lloyd, like many "Traditionalists," deliberately tries to sow just the slightest doubt regarding the validity of the *Novus Ordo* (New Mass) by saying a slight deviation may affect the validity of the Mass. To those of us who have great faith, we won't be fooled by such specious talk.

The same thing — 'slight deviation' — can, and did, happen in the Latin Mass, as I remember from my days when I was an altar boy in the '40s and '50s, such as Latin rattled off so quickly and slurred. Remember? And we thought it was valid. Indeed it was valid even in those extreme cases of unintelligibility.

But I, too, love the cadences of Gregorian Chant and the clear enunciation of the Latin words of the whole Mass. And I love the beauty of the present Mass in my native language.

Donald L. Muench
Smallwood Drive
Pittsford

EDITORS' NOTE: The author e-mailed this letter from England, where he is temporarily residing, hence the time lag following publication of Ms. Lloyd's letter.

Work, pray now to stop profit from abortion

To the editors:

Recently I read in the July issue of *Life Issues Connector* magazine an article by Dr. John Wilke entitled "Partial Birth Abortion, Baby Parts Sold For Profit." It's time we open our eyes and face this atrocity. If we know that baby parts are being sold, it is up to us as Christians to end this barbaric procedure. This is murder. There are an average of 1.3 million abortions each year. Insurance companies pay approximately \$300 per abortion, which means in hard cold facts, the doctors are making \$390 million dollars a year. Not too bad for killing babies.

Also we have the ongoing controversy of Fetal Reduction. Some leftover embryos are a big money-maker if the doctor chooses to sell them. Doesn't this all sicken you? We need to pray, fast and write to our representatives to end partial birth abortions. If everyone puts a little effort into this we will be a success in doing God's work. Let's end this now.

Karen McDade
Northbrook Way
Webster



No guarantees in marriage

To the editors:

In response to "Vatican tags cohabitation study group" (Oct. 7) my children and I are living proof that indeed — there are no guarantees in the institution of marriage.

I was married in the Catholic church in 1970 and that same marriage was annulled in 1997 after a three-plus year battle for divorce in the legal system. It was devastating for all concerned, especially the children — three. They will always carry the scars of divorce...a particularly cruel one!!!

So why do people co-habitate? It feels less binding and doesn't suck all of your being out. If the relationship falters and/or ends you aren't quite so vulnerable as I felt ending our 22-year marriage. Throughout our marriage I felt I worked at keeping it a viable relationship. I gave

my all — and then some to be a loving family — and somehow this failed. What seemed to "society" a great marriage was not!!

We have choices every day to work on the good in life or slip into the "not so good" choices in life.

It is only through the grace of God that I have survived. It is always a "fight" to talk to this man I gave my life to for so many years. There is mistrust on both sides and what people see each day is not always what is real!! Of course everyone knows this.

I would love some guarantees for my upcoming marriage in November. Do you guys mail them out? If so please send one A.S.A.P.

Julie DeMott
Deerhurst Lane
Webster

Abuse of Communion erodes true fellowship of communion

To the editors:

Recently, I attended the funeral Mass for a close friend. The celebrant, the parish pastor, invited the congregation, Catholic and non-Catholic to receive Holy Eucharist. This practice of reception of the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar without regard to the Catholic doctrine, discipline and previous reception of the Sacrament of penance allows many sacrileges to occur.

This abuse happens frequently in our diocese at funerals, weddings and other ecumenical gatherings. The reverence, awe, and preparation that should accompany the partaking in the Eucharistic meal as adoration, thanksgiving and reparation to our God becomes secondary to a humanistic feel-good-at-any-price theology. This emotionalism erodes true fel-

lowship of a challenging encouragement to worship and love God above all others. The lack of conviction to powerfully speak truth regarding the mercy and justice of God attainable in the receiving of the truly present Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament weakens the individual and shared faith experience of all Christians.

Shame on this celebrant and all priests who continue in their error for they know better.

I urge all Catholics to pray in thanksgiving for the blessing of the priesthood for they bring us Christ and prayers for their protection from growing discontent, disobedience and erroneous theological teachings and practices.

James P. Burke
Bent Oak Road
Rochester

Mass contains elements of theater

To the editors:

In a recent course at the local community college I offered the idea that the Eucharist can be likened to theater. A Eucharist celebration has actors (the priest and lay assistants), action (the giving of thanks and praise to God the Father for life and death of Jesus) and an audience (the congregation).

The Eucharist celebration satisfies Aristotle's unities of action (the 45 minute commemoration of Jesus' work), its altar and pulpit. Like theater, the Eucharist has an idea — to commemorate Jesus' life, word and saving activity. It has language — the prayers prescribed in liturgical doc-

uments and the words of Scripture. The Eucharist celebration has music — the organ which is played at various times during Eucharist and the songs of the choir and congregation. The Eucharist celebration has spectacle — such as an opening and closing procession and the walking up to the altar by the congregation to receive the body and blood of Christ. The priest is robed in church vestments. This corresponds to costumes in the store.

For the above reasons a Eucharist celebration is theater.

Tom Fogarty
Walnut Street, Auburn

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