

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.

She blames Vatican II for 'decay'

To the editors:

Hooray for Mr. Antonio LaPietra! In his letter published in the Dec. 16 issue of the *Catholic Courier* he heartily disagrees with Father McBrien's column of Nov. 18 titled "Thank God for Vatican II." Mr. LaPietra's thoughts and comments mirror my own.

Thank God? Hardly. I suspect that God was saddened by the changes that were made to our glorious Catholic religion under the guidance of Pope John 23rd at the Vatican II Council. I know I am.

Can good Catholics not relate the paucity of priests and nuns, the closing of churches and Catholic schools, the changing of morals, etc. to the moral decay that began in the decade of the '60s? The sexual revolution? Things like unwed mothers, the cohabitation of unmarried couples, marriages that can be invalidated by a Tribunal for a price, declining attendance at Mass, the elimination of some Holy Day obligations and the attitude that homosexuals are somehow "special people" and that they require a Special Mass? I have never heard or read anywhere that gay people were excluded from any Catholic services! I could go on and on.

In those 1960s, when my children were being instructed before the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist, they were told that "no matter what you do, God loves you." This, of course, is true, but eliminating the idea of hurting God by our sins doesn't necessarily promote better behavior in 7- or 8-year-olds. Rather the opposite.

I feel that God is keenly aware that Pope John 23rd and his Vatican II Council absolutely did not promote adhesion among those within His church and that He cannot be pleased. Instead of thanking Him, I can only comment, "Please God, rescue us from Vatican III!"

Joan D. Diehl
Canisteo Street, Hornell

Urges church groups to use buying power to influence actions of Communist China

To the editors:

Catholic churches and organizations have fundraisers all the time and they are, in all probability, a necessary evil.

Yet when I received a trinket from the Trinitarian Fathers out of Baltimore, Md., and I saw it was made in China I wrote to them that that was hurtful to all the faiths — both Christian or non-Christian, who are suffering under the policies of the Chinese government.

Now it is the turn of the Falun Gong religious organization to suffer religious repression.

The Trinitarian Fathers wrote back to me that I wasn't the only one to complain, and they announced that any future fundraising promotions would no longer look to China as their origin for merchandise.

Now I see local Catholic churches in the Rochester Diocese using items for sale that have a Chinese origin. Shouldn't they reconsider their purchases in the future also?

Religious persecution in any way, shape, or format should not be tolerated — even in an indirect manner such as fundraising!

God Bless.

Domenick White
Youngs Avenue, Rochester



This New Year's was the best

To the editors:

It was a PERFECT New Year's for me. Being too weak from illness to revel, I planned a quiet evening at home alone. Surprise! New Year's 2000 became my happiest New Year's ever.

First there were the spectacular televised views of people celebrating in many nations all over the globe. Channel 21's super programming was augmented by some channel "surfing." Thus, I savored the moods, energies and cultural styles of many nations. However, they all shared a common, global joy and enthusiasm unique in the history of the world. In those moments of unparalleled global unity I felt not alone but deeply connected to the Human Family.

The significance was clear: What an amazing and vast potential every nation and each of us have to make this a peaceful, happier and caring world.

Between 11:20 p.m. and 12:45 a.m. I briefly attended a holy hour at the place of my baptism, beautiful St. Andrew's Church. Silently worshipping before the Lord Jesus in the displayed Eucharist on the altar, it all came together — acknowledging the Alpha and Omega, the Author of life, my Creator and the Lord of the future, and praying for family, friends and world peace.

At midnight the church bells mixed with booming fireworks followed by a Eucharistic Benediction. Although I went home for more TV, I knew that I had just experienced the evening's best — Perfection Himself, God and His blessing!

May everyone in America and worldwide be abundantly blessed in the New Year 2000!

Donald Messina
Kearney Drive
Rochester

Change is necessary to prevent further decline in vocations, laity

To the editors:

On Sunday January 9, Geneva saluted Monsignor Gerard Krieg for his 16 years of service to our community and for his years of service as a priest. Monsignor made an important remark that I would like to expand on. Families produce vocations. We are seeing a severe vocation crunch. That is a symptom of a greater problem — a loss of faith in our families. It is sad but apparently true.

Simply look and see who is in attendance at any given Sunday Mass and 70 percent are senior citizens. Where are our young couples who spent large sums of money and asked for an elaborate Church wedding in June? Why do we see these same young people coming forward with their babies for Baptism yet ignore the responsibility demanded of them by God?

Folks, let us face it. We may see a drastic decline in priests but we will likewise find a drastic decline of those in the congregation. With prayer, obedience to Rome, good example, using the Catechism of the Catholic Church as our main source for catechesis, and getting rid of Sacramental abuses such as Communion for everyone regardless of religious affiliation or the state of their soul, general absolution services instead of Confession during feast days, and letting priesthood be for celebration of Sacraments and catechesis, we will have vocations.

If things don't change, we will have greater difficulties in the future.

Peter Cole
Ridgewood Drive, Geneva

Try marching for the millennium

To the editors:

Jan. 22 through Jan. 24 is the annual Right to Life March on Washington. So if you are free, then why not call the Rochester Area Right to Life Committee and see about making arrangements to take part in it. It is something you'll never forget! No one ever does who goes there!

The Rochester Area Right to Life Com-

mittee office is at 675 Ling Rd., Suite 3, Rochester, N.Y. 14612. Their phone is (716) 621-4690. Do it for an occasion in the Millennium that will be an experience you will always treasure.

Think of all the exciting people you will meet!

Mary Rita Crowe
East Main Street
Rochester

Tired woman offered Internet-style prayers

To the editors:

My mother-in-law said something that I got a chuckle out of, and I thought I'd share it with you.

You see, she's 85 years old, doesn't own a computer and doesn't know anything about them. However, she hears advertisements on the television about e-mail addresses, etc.

The other night, she went to bed and felt very tired — too tired to say her entire set of prayers. So she said, "Hail Mary, full of Grace-dot-com Our Father who art in heaven-dot-com." She thought they could figure out the rest.

Hope you got a little chuckle out of this.

M. Lewandowski
Cadillac Avenue, Rochester