

# 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.

## We must put our faith in Holy Spirit

### To the editors:

I am writing in regard to the opinions of Joan D. Diehl in the Jan. 13 issue of the *Courier* ("She blames Vatican II for 'decay'").

I am amazed when I hear of her and ones like her criticizing and bashing Vatican II. Our glorious Catholic religion calls us to follow the successors of Christ. That would be Rome and the head of our Church, Pope John Paul II.

I invite Ms. Diehl and others like her to read pages 1 and 2 especially in our Catechism of the Catholic Church. It states the intentions and purpose of Vatican II were and are to guard and present better the precious deposit of Christian doctrine in order to make it more accessible to the Christian faithful and to all people of good will.

To quote Pope John Paul he states, "In 1985 I was able to assert, 'For me, then, who had the special grace of participating in it and actively collaborating in its development, Vatican II has always been and especially during these years of my Pontificate the constant reference point of my every pastoral action in the conscious commitment to implement its directives concretely and faithfully at the level of each church and the whole Church.'"

We as a "whole Church" need to collectively put our faith in the Holy Spirit and never presume to know the mind of God. Many people believe they are enlightened by the Holy Spirit personally and privately but believe the Holy Spirit perhaps makes mistakes when he enlightens Christ's Vicar on Earth or his bishops.

Jesus promised his life-giving spirit would guide his apostles in all truth. The Church, yes, our beloved Catholic Church, is divinely protected against teaching error.

The Lord told his apostles, "Whoever listens to you, listens to me; whoever rejects you, rejects me." The Gates of Hell will not prevail against Christ's Church on Earth. This the Lord promised!

As a country, a nation, a world, we need to focus on the love the Lord wished to promote among his people. We need to humble ourselves and let the Lord's will be done and not our own. We need to educate ourselves in the faith and pray for wisdom and knowledge, so that we may always do, say and promote only that which the Lord intended.

I ask that we all pray for ourselves and each other and ask the Lord to soften our sometimes hardened hearts. God bless you and yes, thank you, Lord, for Vatican II.

**Amy Flanagan**  
Lawrence Road, Hilton

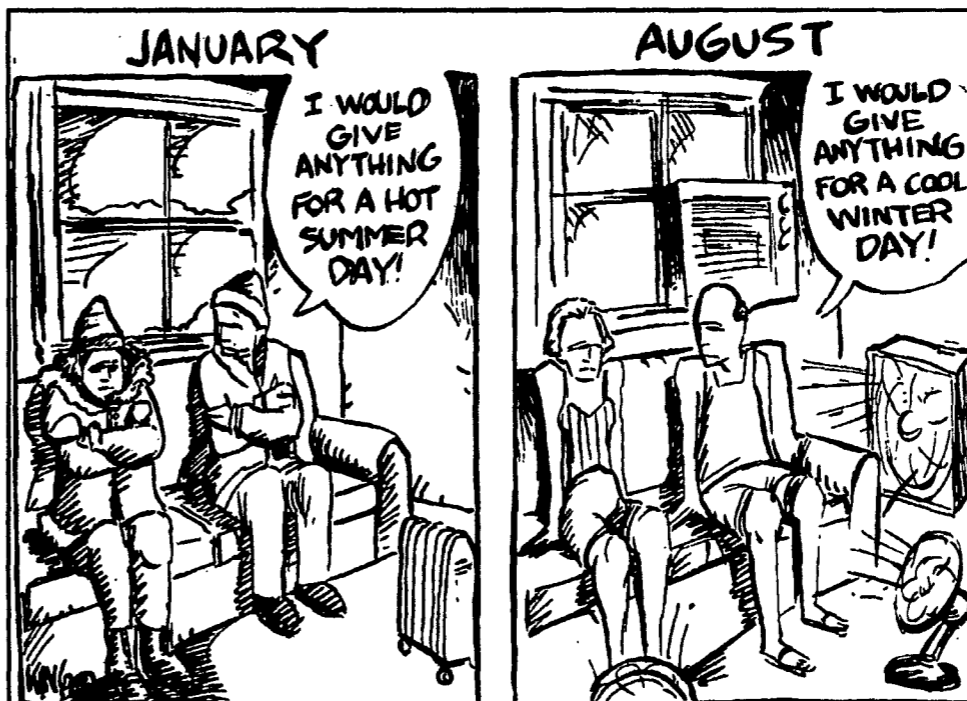
## Thanks pastor, offers wishes for next post

### To the editors:

Father Mull, goodbye, good luck, and God bless!!!

You stepped in and won our hearts with your deep Love and Reverence for the Lord, after the death of our beloved pastor, Father Miller. You guided us through our grief and helped us grow in the face of adversity. Your mild manner and gentle ways were truly Holy. It's hard to believe that your time as pastor of Sacred Heart Cathedral will draw to a close this June. While we know that it's time for you to go, we will miss you none the less. You will always hold a special place in our hearts. We are forever in your debt for your tireless dedication and personal sacrifices on our behalf. We can only hope that your next assignment is richly rewarding. Goodbye, good luck and God bless!

**Alan Rector**  
River Street, Rochester



## Council addressed salvation

### To the editors:

In response to the Jan. 20, 2000 letter to the editor "The Bible specifies what we must do to be saved," below are excerpts from the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church promulgated by the Second Vatican Council:

"The Church recognizes that in many ways she is linked with those who, being baptized, are honored with the name of Christian, though they do not profess the faith in its entirety, or do not preserve unity of communion with the successor of Peter. ...

"... (W)e can say that in some real way they are joined with us in the Holy Spirit, for to them also He gives His gifts and graces, and is thereby operative among them with his sanctifying power. ... (No. 15).

"Finally, those who have not yet received the gospel are related in various ways to the people of God. In the first place there is the people to whom the covenants and the promises were given and from whom Christ was born according to the flesh (cf. Rom 9:4-5). On account of their fathers, this people remains most dear to God, for God does not repent of the gifts he makes

nor of the calls he issues (cf. Rom 11:28-29).

"But the plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. In the first place among these are the Moslems ... Nor is God himself far distant from those who in shadows and images seek the unknown God...

"Those also can attain to everlasting salvation who through no fault of their own do not know the gospel of Christ or his Church, yet sincerely seek God, and, moved by grace, strive by their deeds to do His will as it is known to them through the dictates of conscience. Nor does divine Providence deny the help necessary for salvation to those who, without blame on their part, have not yet arrived at an explicit knowledge of God, but who strive to live a good life, thanks to His grace. Whatever goodness or truth is found among them is looked upon by the Church as a preparation for the gospel. She regards such qualities as given by him who enlightens all men so that they may finally have life. ... (No. 16)"

**Richard Apenowich**  
Penfield Road  
Penfield

## 'Word of God' shouldn't be altered

### To the editors:

Well another Sunday has come and gone and I have had to sit in the pew and listen to the lay reader and the priest stumble over the readings and the Gospel at any mention of "man," "men," "all men," etc. as they change these words to be politically correct.

Like last Sunday for example, Dec. 26, the part of the reading from Colossians 3:18, i.e., "You wives submit yourselves to your husbands for that is what the Lord has planned for you." This was left out of the reading. When asked why I was told that this part of the reading was too sensitive. Is our faith so weak or shallow that we are threaten by such words

in the Gospel as "men," "man," etc.?

One thing our Lord was not politically correct. When the Pharisees confronted our Lord for healing on the Sabbath He did not respond by saying if my healing on the Sabbath is offensive to you I will stop.

After all the readings we close by saying The Word of the Lord. We are also encouraged by our clergy to read the Bible and attend Bible study groups but I guess even it if is "The Word of God" if it is sensitive or offensive to us we can leave it out and not believe it is The Word of God.

**C.J. Prevost**  
Dunmow Crescent, Fairport

## Objected to harsh words about evangelicals

### To the editors:

We were saddened to read Father McBrien's harmful words describing evangelical Protestants in his columns of Jan. 6 and 13. In this Octave of Christian Unity we are urged by the Church to reach out in love to members of other religions and search for paths to unity.

And on this anniversary of the birth of the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., a martyred evangelical Protestant minister, we are asked to search our hearts and pray that God will rid us of

bigotry and prejudice.

The accusatory and unfair language in Father McBrien's columns brings dishonor on the Church.

It seems to us that we should cherish the good example shown by our evangelical Protestant neighbors by their good lives, their strong families, and their love of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Mary Lou and Ed McGarrell Jr.**  
Wall Street, Elmira

**EDITORS' NOTE:** Publication of the McGarrells' letter was inadvertently delayed by approximately three weeks.