

# 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.

## Business should be model for recruitment

### To the editors:

It has been reported that the Diocese of Rochester has given a grant of \$20,000 to start up the Tioga Regional Center. Its purpose, we are told, is to educate lay people, that is, to recruit, foster and train lay leaders to help run the various aspects of parish life. That is all well and good and obviously needed to alleviate the energy drain on priests.

However, I and many others would like to know what the Rochester Diocese is doing to foster priest vocations. Is there a Diocesan Priest Recruitment Center? Is there on a regular basis any money, energy or thrust toward a drive to attract priest/religious vocations? Does the Diocese conduct yearly recruitment campaigns on college campuses? Is there an on-going vocation program on the high school level in which priests/religious reps from various orders explain the unique ways of their particular order's functioning? Then might the young students be invited to experience life in the religious atmosphere of a monastery or convent? Does the Diocese ever direct parishes to set up committees specifically for the purpose of seeking and enlisting new vocations? We have committees for everything else! If we believe in the power of prayer, should not the Diocese strongly suggest that each parish have a prayer group dedicated to praying especially for priests, and for priest/religious vocations? Is the media, TV, newspaper, magazine advertising ever utilized for priest recruitment?

To all the above questions, if not, why not? Big Business does this and powerfully attracts the cream of the crop of our gifted young people. This is cream that ought to be consecrated unto the Lord!

The Holy Mass is the highest form of prayer and the very center of our Catholic faith. We long to make it the holiest moment of our lives. The Eucharistic Liturgy is the very heart and life of the Catholic church encompassing the whole mystery of Jesus Christ. Without the inspired vibrant energy of new vocations and dwindling numbers of existing priests, the Catholic Church will die. God help us!

**Joanne Lepkowski**  
Ross Street  
Owego

## Not relieved by word of agency's 'restraint'

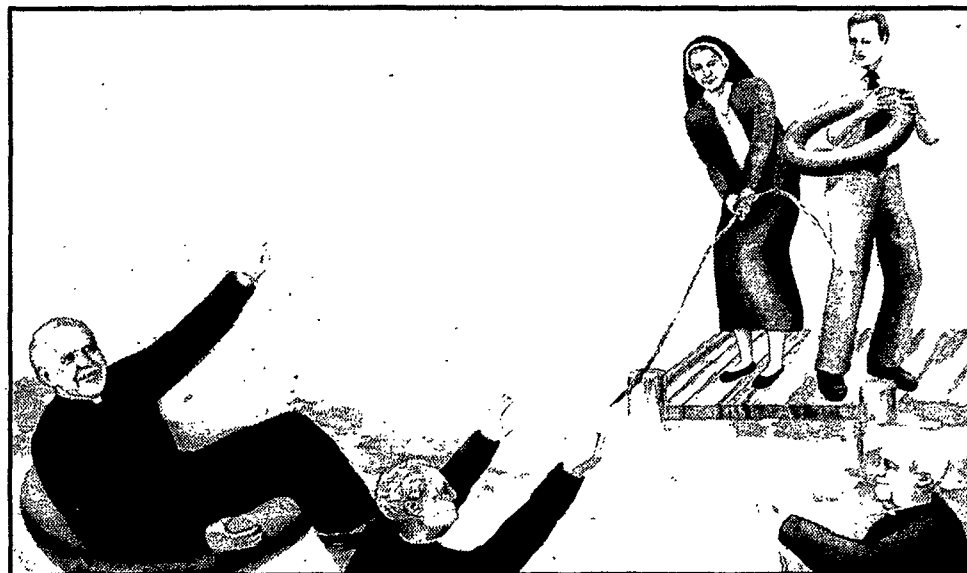
### To the editors:

So the local Planned Parenthood, wonderful organization that it is, refrains from donating for "research" the body parts of aborted unborn children. Well, that puts my mind at ease.

Now maybe they could stop trying to "donate" pro-lifers' figurative heads on a platter to the New York criminal system (Many peaceful Rochester pro-lifers are being sued by Planned Parenthood AND by New York State for peaceful protest on public property inside a 60-foot forbidden zone which essentially bans the First Amendment within its bounds).

And oh yes. I almost forgot. Maybe they could just stop breaking all those unborn babies up into body parts, while they are at it. Then they wouldn't have to worry about those pesky pro-lifers hanging around either.

**Karen A. Webb**  
Lilac Drive, Rochester



## Jesus would not stand by as struggling parishes die

### To the editors:

As the articles in the *Courier* tell us, we are faced with a priest shortage. This has forced the parishes of Holy Apostles, St. Anthony's, Holy Family, and St. Francis to develop a plan to deal with not only the priest shortage, but a financial and parishioner shortage. Well, a year and thousands of dollars later, the only thing we have decided upon is to sit back and see which of the parishes will die off first. I am sure this is not what the Bishop had in mind when he asked us to undertake this task.

In light of our own priest shortage, we must now begin cutting down the Mass schedules. Who will have this Mass? Who will have this feast day? Who will have this holiday? What a headache! In all this mess, who can be focusing on the meaning of the Jubilee? Who can say we are here to worship the Lord? When can we give up a little, to better the faith community in these neighborhoods?

In my opinion, the diocese should allow parishes working on clustering or restructuring projects one year. If after that time a consensus can not be reached, then a decision should be made for them.

We are trying to build up the Church of the future. Why stand by and see even the smallest of parishes die? How neighborly is it to not stretch out your hand to those in need. Instead of sharing our resources and talents, we are hoarding them, all for ourselves. Is this how it will be in the kingdom of Heaven? Will we only sit with those from our own faith communities on earth? Or will we form ONE faith community and live in the Peace of Christ? Perhaps it is time we stepped back and said "What would Jesus do?" I think we all know the answer would not be "Let My Church die."

**Liz Burke**  
Calihan Park, Rochester  
EDITORS' NOTE: Burke identified herself as a member of Holy Apostles Parish.

## Priest shortage highlights option to attend closely to all God's calls

### To the editors:

Regarding the article on vocations in the January 13 *Courier* ("A wider call to vocations"), I could not agree more that the priesthood as we have known it has generally served us well. Indeed, a number of us can probably think of at least one priest who has had a profound impact on our lives.

At the same time, I keep hearing the words of God as spoken through the prophet Isaiah, "I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" (43:19). Certainly it is true that there is an explosion in ministry, with many people — women and men, married people and single people — preparing for and engaged in many kinds of ministry. It is also true that some of them experience a call to the priesthood, a call which has

already been affirmed by the communities they serve. Some of these people are women and some are married men.

I simply wonder if we as Church are asking the wrong questions, given the "call" stories we have heard on recent weekends, which reveal the surprising ways of God. Perhaps it is not, how can we best be doing what we have always done? Perhaps it is rather, how can we as Church listen carefully and attentively to the "calls" of God here and now? And, how can we as Church have the courage and will to best respond to those calls so that we can more fully create dynamic communities of compassion, justice and joy, communities shaped in the image of Christ?

**Gloria Uterino**  
Stone Road, Pittsford

## This is important time to protect the unborn

### To the editors:

I was so pleased to see the article, "Selling of fetal parts draws outcry," (*Catholic Courier*, Jan. 27). The Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court St. Ann #194 and Council #243 of the Knights of Columbus cosponsored this video on Thursday, January 20 at the K of C Hall in Hornell. Despite a cold, snowy night, 50 people including the Exodus Youth Group were present.

Information regarding recent legislation, a sample letter, and a list of the addresses of local, state, and federal legislators, including President Clinton was offered. We encourage you readers to be knowledgeable. This may be the most important time we have to protect the unborn. A prayer service closed our meet-

ing with Regent Dolores Andrus reading a prayer for the unborn. The prayer of St. Francis was recited by Michael Colomaio, Grand Knight, and a prayer for healing by Margaret Brewer, Vice Regent of the Catholic Daughters.

**Dolores Andrus**  
Elmwood Ave, Hornell

## Practice is 'sickening'

### To the editors:

It was extremely upsetting to read your article "Selling of fetal parts draws outcry." This is sickening and we must end this atrocity immediately! Abortion is horribly wrong — period!

**Mary Rupp**  
Ogden Center Road, Spencerport