

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.

Story gave undesired impression

To the editors:

I believe you made an error of editorial judgment with the news story "Event promotes women's ordination" on page 3 of the July 27 edition.

First, I leave it to you to struggle with why a Catholic publication of the Diocese of Rochester wants to report on the activities of members of a breakaway church which organized the conference on women's ordination, a subject the Pope has determined is not open to discussion among Catholics. Surely you should have realized that your coverage of the conference keeps the pot boiling and constitutes an act of defiance similar to that of the breakaway church.

Sadly, but apparently taking sides with the breakaway group's committee, you have damaged your credibility as a Catholic newspaper.

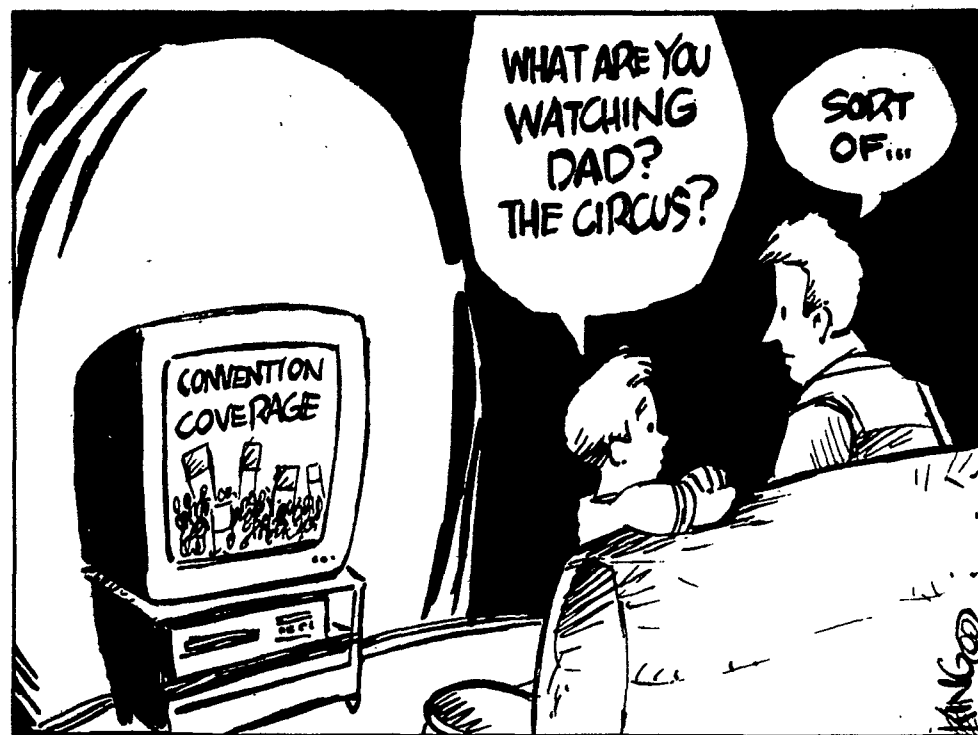
Second, you may think you provided balance to your coverage by attaching a review of the Pope's position on the issue of women's ordination to the tail end of your story. However, that was not the case. Tacking on the Pope's declaration at the end of the piece opens you to the criticism of "burying" the Pope's stand. Apparently, you made the risky assumption that most newspaper readers continue to the end with all the stories they begin. By relegating the Pope's position to the end, you actually tell readers that's where you think he belongs — at the very end!

In the future, if you intend to continue reporting the breakaway agenda, there are ways you can balance your coverage of breakaway events. One way will be to separate the Catholic Church's position from the main story, such as in a side story with its own photograph if the main story has one. Also, the copy can be highlighted by being enclosed in a special border or with the body type made larger or bolder.

I hope these suggestions will be helpful. Nobody I know wants the *Catholic Courier* to become a breakaway newspaper.

Deacon Al Bergeron
Alberta Drive, Penfield

EDITORS' NOTE: We agree with Deacon Bergeron that the article could have been organized to better integrate church teaching and that the graphic presentation could have been improved as well. Although the overall effect may have given the impression that the newspaper sympathizes with "the breakaway agenda," that certainly is not the case. Like the same issue's cover story on challenges to the Holy See's U.N. status, the article was intended only to report on national/international efforts — centered on a local event — to exert pressure on positions of the Catholic Church.



'Missed boat' on SBI event

To the editors:

Did someone miss the boat?

Under Diocesan News July 27, nearly full-page coverage was given to an "International Conference on Ordaining Women in the Catholic Church." The event was organized and sponsored by a committee from Spiritus Christi Church, a group that "divorced" itself from Rochester's Corpus Christi Church, so it was not diocesan news, not sponsored by the Diocese of Rochester; and your reporter indicated that the diocese had declined comment.

How did you miss the boat? Where was your coverage of a really GREAT event that took place at St. Bernard's Institute July 11 and July 12? It was well publicized ahead of time so surely you were aware of this two-day seminar entitled "Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Theology." Close to 200 attended. I even talked with a St. Bernard's graduate who came from out of state to gain more knowledge to take back to ministry in her parish! The topics were fascinating and the lecturers

the best in their field. Some of the titles: "Moral Theology for the New Millennium," "The Questions of Jesus and Non-Christian Religions," "Ministry in Transition," "Contemporary Trends in Sacramental Theology and Liturgical Practice," and others.

Have you forgotten the first goal of our Diocesan Synod: "Life Long Religious and Moral Education?" Isn't this one of the prime reasons for our having a diocesan newspaper? Please, please send your reporter or reporters out to interview those who spoke at St. Bernard's July 11 and 12. What they have to offer could be the source of several *Courier* articles!

Grace B. Carnes

Eagle Ridge Circle, Rochester

EDITORS' NOTE: We did not realize until after it was over that the event at SBI would be so well-received. Had we known earlier, we doubtless would have sent a reporter to write a story for our issue of July 20 — not July 27. There's no connection between a July 11-12 event and one that took place almost two weeks later.

Devout parishioner will be missed

To the editors:

St. Mary's, Our Lady of the Hills in Honeoye, N.Y. is missing one of its pillars this week with the passing of 94-year-old Eustace Deisenroth.

Eustace as he is fondly known has been a member of St. Mary's for almost 50 years. He has been a model for all of us to emulate.

A devoted daily Communicant, he did it all: opened the church, lit the candles, rang the bell and in winter shoveled the walkways.

At this time in history when many have forgotten or ignore signs of our faith, Eustace always tipped his hat when he passed a Catholic Church and bowed his head at the name of Jesus.

His legacy reaches deep into the community and his example of Christian love

will long be remembered. As his remains were carried from the church, the bell rang joyously 94 times, from the bell tower he helped design and build.

Eustace's life and times were dominated by his devotion to his wife Betty and his family.

To those of us whose lives he touched and have inherited his example of all that is good in humankind these are the gifts he has bestowed on us.

Today I am certain he is with God in His Kingdom which he so richly deserves. I hope that being his friends perhaps he will whisper our names to the God we share in the Communion of Saints.

So be it!

Hazel Erbland
Grandview Drive
Honeoye

Letters show God blesses those who welcome 'strangers'

To the editors:

I have enjoyed the letters recently from parishioners around the diocese lauding the talents, priestly care, and gifts of their departing pastors. The heartfelt testimony of those who wrote reminds me that each of us is called to serve God's church. As part of that call parishioners need to be open and welcoming to the stranger that each "new" pastor is when he arrives on his first day.

I thank those who did write to the *Courier* as they gave voice to many of us who shared their experience and feelings in June. We need to thank God for the priests and religious called to serve in our

diocese. We need to welcome these strangers into our parish and lives as friends.

We are all called to serve each other and build God's church together. The letters in the *Courier* point to evidence that God blesses the people and parishes that do so. The boxes of Kleenex were handy for many of us in June — the goodbyes difficult. However, we thank God that we were blessed by someone's gift of presence in our lives. We thank God that prayers of safe journey for our pastors and others to their new assignments were answered. We thank God for our faith in Him, and trust the shifts are best for all of

us. We thank God for the friendships made and for new opportunities that now await former pastors, and ourselves.

Parishioners across the diocese are being called again to open their hearts and welcome in new strangers. Let us unwrap and value the gifts that arrived at our parishes the end of June. May we throw open the door to welcome them in faith, friendship and freely give ongoing support they all will need. To me the best way to honor any former cherished pastor is to welcome his replacement and trust God to do the best with us He can.

Ann Argetsinger
Regency Lane, Ithaca

Send your letters to cathcour@frontiernet.net