

# 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.

## Courier 'owes' readers story on massacre by U.S. forces

### To the editors:

One can only conclude from its two articles on Korea (June 29 and July 6) that the *Courier* staff believes U.S. Catholics who participated in the Korean War were justified and heroic. The *Courier* will perhaps lobby now for this to be declared the first just war in Church history.

Sadly, the *Courier's* observance of the "jubilee" of the war only reflects the choice of our bishops to ignore the contradictions of the Church's just war teaching and history even as they try to proclaim a jubilee of Jesus' birth and a Consistent Life Ethic (CLE). One of these contradictions is illustrated by the way the *Courier* does not even mention just war criteria while implying justification. All the just war criteria are supposed to be met all the time for a war to sit well with Church teaching. The U.S. met none of the criteria at any time but such information would not have fit in so well with the secular observance of the "jubilee" which seems to have been the purpose of the articles.

Without going into how the U.S. took over an imperial role in Korea from the Japanese after WWII, how it divided the country, etc., the *Courier* simply accepts the war. The war is accepted as, "marked by atrocities on both sides..." Will Catholics then give up their atrocities when others do so first? This is a step down from just war theory while nonviolence remains a non-thought.

Though it printed two long articles on Korea, the *Courier* could find no Catholics much opposed to U.S. actions. You owe your readers an article on the No Gun Ri massacre that revealed the true U.S. colors last year — absolute disregard for freedom, self-determination and life itself.

More could be said about Korea's Catholic president who was once imprisoned for opposing corrupt U.S. supported regimes. Current information on Korea's great Catholic poet, Kim Chi Ha, whose whole life has been a passionate prayer and sacrifice for unification could be provided.

In any case, please stop the just war charade. In the life and Gospel teachings of Jesus there is no possibility of confusing the calling of a soldier with a life of discipleship. The Church did not suffer this confusion for its first 300 years.

I am sure God has now shown the depths of mercy to Steve Salerno but there may be a sterner judgment for bishops and editors who fail to dispel confusion between "patriotism" and the Kingdom of God. No CLE or catechesis will be effective in ending Catholic participation in abortion/war/militarism until our teachers eschew all just war theories in favor of Gospel reality.

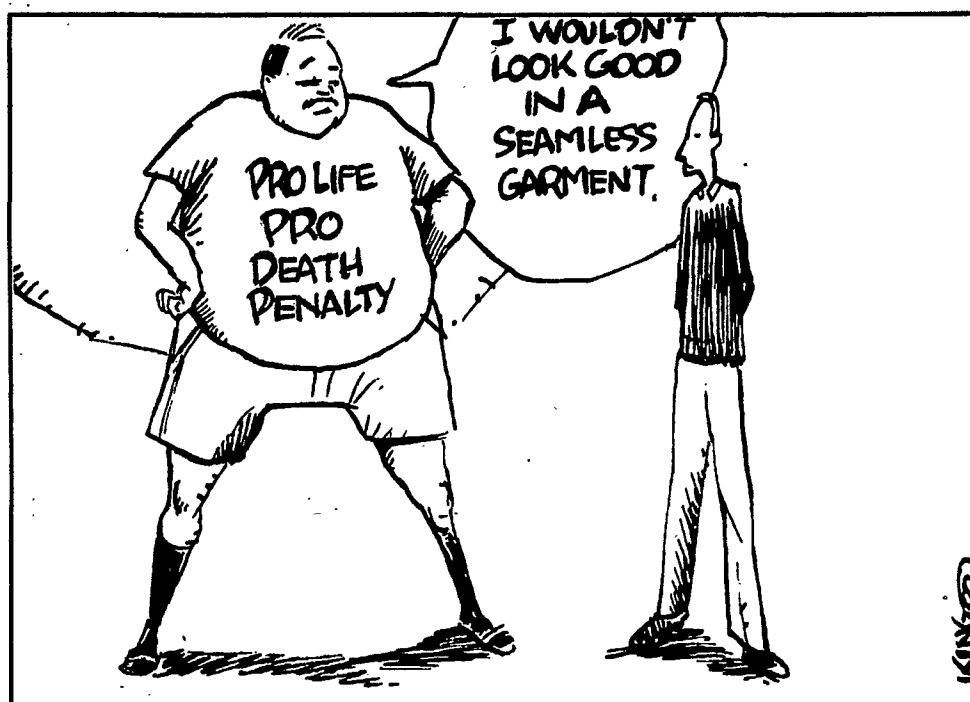
**Mark Scibilia-Carver**  
**Cold Springs Road**  
**Trumansburg**

## Lieberman isn't really first Jewish candidate

### To the editors:

Re: *Catholic Courier* August 10: "Lieberman receives mixed reviews," (which states) "Lieberman... is the first Jew in U.S. history to be selected as a major-party nominee for president or vice president."

Apparently the Republican party is not a major party or did we forget Barry Goldwater, their 1964 Presidential nominee?



## Church teaching based on need for self-defense

### To the editors:

Mr. Ervin's letter in the July 27 issue of the *Catholic Courier* about the death penalty ("Death penalty not part of dogma") seemed very well balanced until he got to the question "Please tell me why he (Timothy McVeigh) deserves anything better than the death penalty?"

Prior to this time he correctly pointed out that the Church allows for the use of the death penalty in very limited situations. I believe that the Church is attempting to teach us that in very limited circumstances it could be necessary to use the death penalty to rid society of a threat that can't be handled in any other way. But the thrust of the Church's position is one of self-defense, not one of vindication or retribution against the aggressor as Mr. Ervin's question seems to advocate.

If we look to the section of the Catechism of the Catholic Church that discusses the death penalty, especially paragraph 2267, we see the Church's position coming through loud and clear: "If bloodless means are sufficient to defend human lives against an aggressor and to protect public order and the safety of persons, public authority should limit itself to such

means, because they better correspond to the concrete conditions of the common good and are more in conformity to the dignity of the human person."

So Mr. Ervin's question might be more balanced and more in line with Church teaching if he were to ask "Is society any safer or less threatened by imposing the death penalty on Mr. McVeigh vs. a sentence of life in prison without parole?"

We are blessed to be members of a Church that can faithfully and accurately teach us, through the Magisterium, what it is that God wants of us in situations like this. Through the Church, the pillar and foundation of truth, we have access to the answers of the trying questions of our times — the questions that tend to evoke very personal and emotional responses from each of us — like the death penalty, women's ordination, homosexuality, abortion, and a host of others.

Will we continue to pursue our own will on these issues, or will we surrender our will to the will of the Father — as Jesus did?

**Michael A. Gallagher**  
**West Church Street**  
**Fairport**

## Vocations drawn to school that doesn't 'waffle' on truths of faith

### To the editors:

The introduction of foreign priests into our diocese should be seen as a much needed blessing to our parishes (*Catholic Courier*, July 20: "Global priest presence on the rise in diocese"). While I am sure the priest per parishioner quota is different in these countries, I also know of a priest from Africa who told me that every family had at least one priest or religious.

I would also politely but firmly question Father Lee Chase's information on orthodox dioceses and religious orders who lose vocations (*Courier*, July 13: "Critical 'house' can't foster vocations"). Dr. Warren Carroll who founded Christendom College in Front Royal, Virginia, stated that his diocese of Arlington is boom-

ing with vocations. Dr. Carroll's college is known for staunch orthodoxy to the Catholic faith.

I am finishing my Master's degree at Franciscan University at Steubenville. We have about 80 to 100 men in the minor seminary program. We also have a group of women who are preparing to enter religious life. Why do we attract the vocations? We don't waffle on truths of the faith and morality. There is a distinction between priests/religious and laity. Church teachings on the Creed we profess and the life that Christ calls us to live are what keep people coming to us.

Let us make the necessary changes in how we run our parishes. No longer should a sister or lay person be giving a talk in place of the homily. Let us stop giving Eucharist to Protestants as well as allowing those in serious e.g. mortal sin to receive Jesus.

I have seen fine examples of good priests here in our diocese in such men of God as Fathers Paul Bonacci, Albert Shamon, Bill Cosgrove and his brother the late Father Jim Cosgrove. These men provided us with our Sacraments and strong teaching on the Gospel. May our future priests model their good examples!

**Peter Cole**  
**Ridgewood Drive, Geneva**