

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.

Elections also test our intelligence

To the editors:

In reply to the letter of Judith Kiehl in the *Courier* of Sept. 21, I respectfully suggest that our national elections are not only a test of our character but also of our intelligence. One party and candidates Albert Gore and Hillary Clinton have made it a *litmus test* for any judicial appointment to any federal court to be pro-abortion including partial-birth abortion. This test effectively ipso facto disqualifies Christians from the federal bench. More significantly, the election of the national candidates of that party means the perpetual institutionalization of abortion, partial birth abortion and the culture of death for America.

In *Steinberg v. Carhart*, Justice Antonin Scalia wrote "The method of killing a human child — one cannot even accurately say an entirely unborn human child — proscribed by this statute is so horrible that the most clinical description of it evokes a shudder of revulsion." Five justices of the Supreme Court approved the killing of partially born infants by declaring unconstitutional a state law prohibiting such killing. Four justices were so upset at the approval of such barbarism that some uncharacteristically read their dissenting opinions from the bench.

As a corollary to the cruel killings, we now see the commercialization and sale of the organs of the dismembered infants and fetal experimentation. "The Nazis based their justification for direct medical killing on the simple concept of 'life not worthy of life.'" (*The Nazi Doctors* by Robert J. Lifton page 21). A one-vote majority of the Supreme Court has arbitrarily evolved

a subjective "undue burden" test to determine whether the partially born infant has a right to life. If the powerless and innocent life of an infant child cannot be defended by any legislature because of the arbitrary decisions of our courts, then does any life have any value or any dignity at any of its stages? This is the unspoken issue of the national campaign.

Are we as Catholics and Christians to be-

come the willing accomplices to the use of the abortionist's scalpel and scissors by our silence and our votes? Our response to this issue is such that we do not pass judgment on the issue, but our answer to the issue judges and defines us as a people and as individuals.

Ronald J. Buttarazzi
West Church Street
Fairport

Letter suggests lack of hope

To the editors:

In the Sept. 21 issue of the *Catholic Courier* there are two letters, which in my opinion, emphasize how today's Catholics have lost the substance of Catholic belief. The first ("Elections test our character"), written by Judith E. Kiehl, Pastoral Associate of Holy Trinity Church, leaves me to believe that she is exhibiting a lack of hope when she notes "there is questionable virtue in saving unborn life today if four years later that same life will perish from lack of food or medicine, or be destroyed as 'collateral damage' by a smart U.S. bomb." As a Pastoral Associate, how would she counsel a parishioner who was given less than 50-percent chance of surviving needed surgery? Would she tell him that it was not worth the effort because he might very well die? What hope does she offer with her philosophy toward the unborn? Without hope, many of us would give up the good fight.

The other letter writer, Patti Federowicz ("What is real purpose of new instruction?"), writes critically concerning the

new changes as described in the August 10 issue of the paper. I believe she shows a real lack of understanding as to what takes place at Holy Mass. For example, her question, "Why is it we give such reverence to inanimate elements of bread and wine as the real presence, yet not do likewise to the real presence in one another?" is a real eye-opener to me. Does she not realize that these so-called inanimate elements are the person of Jesus Christ? Is not his personhood worthy of great reverence? Can the person of Jesus Christ be compared to the person of you and me? After all, He is God. We are his creatures. Moreover, God is not "taking up residence within the inanimate, static elements of bread and wine." After the consecration, the "bread" and "wine" no longer exist. Only the appearances of bread and wine are there. The substance which exists is the body and blood of Jesus. This is why we kneel, and the sooner we all realize it, the better off we will be.

George A. Goodwin Jr.
Laredo Drive, Rochester

Offers answers to queries about changes

To the editors:

To answer a few of Patti Federowicz' questions (Sept. 21: "What is real purpose of new instruction?"): We kneel at the Consecration to give reverence to our Lord and Savior Who has not "taken up residence" in the bread and wine, but Who becomes at that moment wholly present to us under the appearance of bread and wine.

So there is no bread and wine present after the Consecration. Jesus is present sacramentally — His whole body, blood, soul and divinity — meaning He is really there physically but in a particular way. Of course Jesus is always with us spiritually, yet if He walked bodily into a room where I was, I would want to kneel, as I suspect

would Ms. Federowicz herself. Certainly we would, at a minimum, stand. Our faith tells us Jesus is just as present in the Eucharist. Hence the "rubrics" which simply make explicit the proper reverence due our Lord.

A corollary, then, for her next question about Eucharistic ministers. The Eucharist is anything but "inanimate elements of bread and wine." I sure don't speak for the Vatican, but it seems to me that having one person distribute with some ceremony the elements of Communion to the Eucharistic ministers underscores the holiness of the Blessed Sacrament, and "consecrated hands" — Federowicz' somewhat flippant reference notwithstanding — are perhaps the proper ones to remind us of the reverence due, not to the hands themselves, but

to the One Whom they were consecrated to serve.

Finally, none of this takes away from our acknowledging Jesus' presence in one another, as Ms. Federowicz mistakenly implies. As Catholics, we know that what we do with our bodies affects our souls and that "as the Church prays, so she believes." Therefore so-called "insignificant" things like kneeling, genuflecting and waiting humbly for the distribution of the Eucharist instead of assertively "going up to take it ourselves" definitely not only reflect, but affect, our attitude toward the proper worship of God the Father, and of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.

Karen A. Webb
Lilac Drive, Rochester

Disputes notion that laity needed new Instruction

To the editors:

I was intrigued by a statement made by Father Jack Healy in his Sept. 21 letter ("Semantics belie practice of preaching") that "To the faithful of the diocese, the widespread and common practice of a lay person preaching at Mass has become a matter of concern." The implication in Father Healy's statement is that the restrictions on the role of the laity in liturgical worship,

which are proposed in the revised General Instructions, are in response to the expressed need of the Catholic faithful. I am a faithful Catholic in this diocese and I do not share his concern.

My concern is that some powerful Church leaders seem intent on erecting more barriers to involvement of the laity in the life of our Church at a time when she most needs the talents of the faithful.

What motivates the proposed restrictions? A true concern for the quality of preaching would have manifested itself in proposals for improved training of preachers and homilists, both ordained and non-ordained. Certainly a true concern for the quality of preaching would not have resulted in the suggestion that it be limited to a shrinking number of already burdened preachers and homilists. No, it appears that the proposed Instructions are motivated, instead, by fear of where the Spirit might be leading the Church, and perhaps a misunderstanding about the roles which the laity have already assumed in the Church.

I hope that the Vatican leaders will reconsider whether they have taken the spiritual best interest of the faithful into account as they revise rules which affect the lives of so many. Church canons and instructions should work to bring us collectively closer to our God, not create artificial divisions which serve only to frustrate the spiritual gifts of the faithful.

Michael J. DeMott
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Masses fill void for those who long for Latin

To the editors:

To Robert J. Miller (*Catholic Courier*, Sept. 21: "Wishes for reversal of changes already accomplished") and all other faithful Roman Catholics who love the old Mass and sacraments, our Holy Father gave permission in 1984, then again in 1988, for the celebration of the Traditional Latin Mass. Currently over 120 dioceses, including Rochester, provide Traditional Roman Rite Latin Masses. St. Stanislaus Church in Rochester is host to that Mass at 1:30 p.m. every Sunday and at variable times on Holy Days. It is well worth the drive. Visitors are pleasantly surprised at the number of

youth and young families who attend alongside the middle-aged and senior citizens.

The diocese of Buffalo also hosts the Traditional Rite Mass, and Bishop Mansell has graciously scheduled a High Mass for the Jubilee Indulgence at St. Louis Church in Buffalo on Sunday, October 15, at 3 p.m. Members of Una Voce-Rochester are planning a pilgrimage from Rochester for the occasion and invite those who are interested to call (716) 654-7421 for information.

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