

# 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.



## Continue jubilee evangelism

### To the editors:

As a follow-up to the Jubilee 2000 theme: *Open Wide the Doors to Christ*, I hope the diocese plans to do everything possible to keep the doors of our churches open and maybe have banners that say: *The Doors are Open... Welcome Home*. Evangelization efforts need to be concentrated to invite people to come back to church and be part of a parish family. Church documents seem to consider parishes as fundamentally important to the Church as the family is to society. "One of the most significant sections of *Human Life in our Day*" (*Humanae Vitae*) has to do with the structure of a parish and its relationship to the families that comprise it and reads in part: "Parishes should make the needs of the family and the benefits which the family brings to the parish controlling norms in the planning of parish organizations and activities - liturgical, educational, charitable and social." We can only hope that the diocese, too, can make the needs of the family - the parish family - controlling norms in its planning.

Surely, we cannot deny the reality of the growing shortage of priests, but perhaps our diocese could be more creative and

positive in dealing with the situation. For instance, Christmas 2000 is not that far away; and soon we'll be hearing how many shopping days 'til Christmas. May I suggest that rather than accentuate the shortage by limiting celebrations, the diocese publish a "shopping list" of parishes that need a priest for Christmas Masses. Send it to all diocesan priests sharing a Rectory, including those retired, and also the resident and provincial house of religious orders serving in our diocese. With a little advanced notice and planning - and maybe it's not too early to think about Holy Week and Easter, too - perhaps our diocesan priests and these religious communities together can not only keep the doors of every Church open, but also offer people optional times for coming together to celebrate.

Remembering the Jubilee theme of Reconciliation and the Eucharist as the sacramental focus of the Holy Year, let's encourage every parish to reach out and welcome people home to celebrate the Eucharist often with their parish family.

Annette DeCarolis  
Most Precious Blood Church,  
Rochester

## Put hold on changes to churches

### To the editors:

According to the article "Diocese places a hold on changes in liturgy" in the Sept. 21 edition of the *Catholic Courier*, the diocesan Office of Liturgy advised parishes not to change current liturgical practices until the official text of the new "General Instruction of the Roman Missal" becomes official later this fall.

From the preliminary study text that was summarized in the *Courier* (Aug. 10) and commented on by Joan Workmaster, it appears that the new regulations will mandate significant changes and/or clarifications in the liturgies and design of our Catholic churches. Sensibly the director of liturgy advised putting a hold on implementing the anticipated changes until the official text is received.

Would it not also make a lot of sense, and also be more theologically sound, to put a hold on the renovations that are causing so much division and conflict in our parish families?

It seems quite clear from the August 8 article that the new instruction from Rome will *not mandate*, to cite one of the key changes, the removal of the tabernacle from its honored placement in the sanctuary. It will be interesting to see the official wording describing this change as well as other regulations regarding statues, kneelers and the crosses/crucifixes used in processions and at the altar.

It will also be interesting to see how the diocesan liturgical office handles these new official, church mandates. Isn't it time to recognize that the liturgical movement of the past 20-30 years - resulting in the removal of tabernacles, statues and kneelers - has been an experiment that has been tried and failed?

Frank Ferris  
Concerned Friends of St. John's  
Spencerport

EDITORS' NOTE: Mr. Ferris attached a list of 50 signatures from members of Rochester-area parishes, largely St. John's in Spencerport.

## Take action to end spread of hate crimes

### To the editors:

When we think of hate crimes we think of the holocaust, Native Americans, and the Civil Rights Movement. But hate crimes happen in our society everyday. Our society automatically thinks times have changed; we can just forget about the hate crimes from the past. But this thought was proved wrong last week. The U.S. agency just had their first apology made to the Native Americans last week, for crimes they committed hundreds of years ago! It is very sad that it takes our country hundreds of

years to apologize for the massacre of thousands of people. This has to change. Every day I read in the papers about crimes committed. There are Aryan, Nazi groups in cities all over the U.S. Young people are being killed for their sexuality, race, and religion. Instead of listening to the news and feeling bad, we should be acting on it. We should be changing and acting for a better society, not wishing for it.

Meaghan Thaney  
Emeralda Road, Rochester

## Sees future in horrors of method

### To the editors:

We are now on the final run down for the upcoming election and the voters are weighing the issues. The most important issue is not at the top but at the bottom of the list. The whole list should be turned upside down. This issue is about partial birth abortion. Our Congress has passed a bill to ban partial birth abortion, which represents the opinion of the majority of the people in the country, three times during the Clinton Administration. The President has vetoed it three times.

I cannot think of anything more hideous than penetrating and sucking out the brain of an infant while in the process of being born. Can you just imagine the pain that precious little being is going through at that moment?

Women who elect to have this procedure say they have a right to choose. We can all agree with that, but the time to choose is not after you're pregnant, but before you're pregnant. It is at that time she has a right to choose.

If the people of this country don't stop this partial birth abortion with this election by electing a person for President who will sign this bill instead of vetoing it, we should hang our heads in shame.

One candidate says he will sign such a bill into law, while the other one would again veto such a bill.

At this election we have our first real chance of changing this issue. If we fail in this we are no better than Hitler, who sent millions of Jewish people to the gas chambers. The German people were not responsible but the government was. Hitler was a dictator and his S.S. troops carried out his orders. The average citizen had no say in the matter. In this country we have a choice, a vote. Our government has allowed this murdering of the innocent but we can stop it by our votes.

Recently, I heard from a highly reliable source the statement that certain universities would like to have this partial birth abortion extended for the first 20 days of the baby's life so tissue and organs can be harvested. If the baby isn't up to someone's standards, its life can be terminated. Now it is really getting scary. The next step could be you or me. As we get older and need replacement parts and retreads, someone could say, "Sorry, too old." Then terminate US.

The old saying is: What goes around, comes around.

Curtis V. Amesbury Sr.  
Chili Avenue, Rochester

## Couple urges giving tax savings to schools

### To the editors:

For those public school taxpayers that received a reduction in their school tax bill this month, under New York's Star program, and wish to help their Catholic schools, they could consider contributing a portion of their savings to the school of their choice.

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