

# OPINIONS

## Catholic Courier

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 1150 Buffalo Road  
 P.O. Box 24379  
 Rochester, NY 14624  
 716/328-4340  
 800/600-3628 outside Rochester  
<http://www.catholiccourier.com>  
 e-mail: [info@catholiccourier.com](mailto:info@catholiccourier.com)

**President**  
**Bishop Matthew H. Clark**

**General Manager/Editor**  
**Karen M. Franz**  
[kfranz@catholiccourier.com](mailto:kfranz@catholiccourier.com)

**Editorial Department**  
[newsroom@catholiccourier.com](mailto:newsroom@catholiccourier.com)

**Assistant Editor**  
**Kathleen Schwar** *Finger Lakes*  
[kschwar@catholiccourier.com](mailto:kschwar@catholiccourier.com)

**Staff Writers**  
**Rob Cullivan** *Genesee Valley*  
[rcullivan@catholiccourier.com](mailto:rcullivan@catholiccourier.com)  
**Mike Latona** *Southern Tier*  
[mlatona@catholiccourier.com](mailto:mlatona@catholiccourier.com)

**Staff Photographer**  
**Andrea A. Dixon**  
[adixon@catholiccourier.com](mailto:adixon@catholiccourier.com)

**Editorial Assistant**  
**Louis Litzenberger**  
[llitzenberger@catholiccourier.com](mailto:llitzenberger@catholiccourier.com)

**Photography Intern**  
**David Wallace**

**Business Department**

**Office Manager**  
**Mary DiPonzio**  
[mdiponzio@catholiccourier.com](mailto:mdiponzio@catholiccourier.com)

**Administrative Assistant**  
**Arlene S. Gall**  
[agall@catholiccourier.com](mailto:agall@catholiccourier.com)

**Circulation Manager**  
**Donna Stubbings**  
[dstubbings@catholiccourier.com](mailto:dstubbings@catholiccourier.com)

**Graphics Department**

**Graphics Manager**  
**Kim Parks**  
[kparks@catholiccourier.com](mailto:kparks@catholiccourier.com)

**Graphic Artist**  
**Linda Jeanne Rivers**  
[lrivers@catholiccourier.com](mailto:lrivers@catholiccourier.com)

**Advertising Department**

**Account Executive**  
**Donald P. Wilson**  
[dwilson@catholiccourier.com](mailto:dwilson@catholiccourier.com)

**Classified Advertising**  
**Joyce Kluchko**

**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.

## Professor responds to column

**To the editors:**  
 In response to the Father McBrien column "Mary Co-redemptrix only a rumor" (Feb. 1), a few clarifications should be made:

1. The Church teaching regarding the Blessed Virgin Mary as "Co-redemptrix" is not simply a "pious belief held by some Catholics" but the documented Papal Teaching of John Paul II, and of the Papal Magisterium for over a century. John Paul has used the title "Co-redemptrix" over six times, and in recent years Vatican theologian Father John Galot, SJ, has published several articles on Mary as Co-redemptrix in the official Vatican paper, *L'Osservatore Romano*. Even if some within the Church have difficulty with the teaching, Marian Co-redemption is already an official Church doctrine and therefore demands for ourselves as Catholics and for our brother and sister Christians greater explanation and understanding.

2. The title, "Co-redemptrix", regarding Mary is properly translated "woman with the Redeemer" and not a fourth person of the Trinity. There is an infinite difference between the divine Person of Jesus Christ and the human person, Mary. Nonetheless Mary's unique participation in the redemptive work of her Divine Son calls for a proper appreciation of the woman, the "New Eve," who subordinately shared in the Redemption of humanity.

3. Christian truth by its nature unites; only the denial of truth divides. I therefore must agree with the endorsement letter of the late Cardinal O'Connor for this new Marian Dogma as a true service to Christian unity and the Church imperative for authentic ecumenism when he said "clearly, a formal papal definition would be articulated in such precise terminology that other Christians would lose their anxiety that we do not distinguish adequately between Mary's unique association with the redemption and the redemptive power exercised by Christ alone."

Perhaps better than issuing absolutist statements like "it will never happen" regarding a proposed new Marian Dogma, it would be more appropriate to keep an open mind and heart as to how the Spirit may inspire John Paul II regarding the spiritual Mother of all peoples.

**Dr. Mark Miravalle**  
**Professor of Theology and Mariology**  
**Franciscan University of Steubenville**

## Contradictions raise skepticism, concern regarding Ashcroft

**To the editors:**  
 The Jan. 25 front page lead article ("What does Ashcroft flap mean for Catholics?") was confusing to say the least regarding the statement "Catholic officials expressed admiration for the Christian beliefs held by Ashcroft." The article then tells how the Judiciary Committee rightly questioned Ashcroft's "Christian" beliefs as they relate to his record of discrimination against blacks and gays, opposing social justice issues, intolerance toward Mormons and Catholics and delaying school integration. While the Christian Coalition applauded these extreme right wing positions, hopefully mainstream Catholics would be both concerned and skeptical.

**Paul R. Stack**  
**Middle Street**  
**New Bern, NC**



## Jesus doesn't want us to fear

**To the editors:**

In speaking to my Catholic brothers and sisters and others, it concerns me to hear them say that they do not know if they are saved and will they make it to heaven. I also get discouraged when I here them say that you are boastful and prideful if you say that you know you are saved. Is salvation not what Jesus offers us? We do have assurance of salvation through Jesus Christ. That is why God sent Christ. How can we live in freedom that Christ provides, if we live in fear and question if we are going to heaven or not.

Jesus promises us that we will be with him in heaven if we believe in him and what he did for us, repent of our sins, give our life and hearts totally to Jesus and live for him. Our hearts and lives need to change. The Bible calls this a conversion or born again experience. The promise of everlasting life is given to us by Jesus. Many people state that you are making salvation too easy by saying this. God makes salvation easy. We make it hard. It is not by anything that we do to attain salvation.

It is what Jesus did on the cross. He did it all for us. He died for our past, present and future sins. We just need to accept it into our hearts and then live it.

Remember the thief on the cross who lived a life of sin and never followed Jesus. He gave his life to Jesus that day and asked Jesus to remember him in his kingdom. Jesus then said to him, "I assure you that you will be with me in paradise this very day." All the thief did was accept Jesus into his heart and believed in him. He did not do any good works. This is the beautiful love of Jesus and why we can be sure of our salvation.

Being saved is not freedom to sin, we are all sinners; it is freedom to know your eternal destiny will be with Jesus if you truly believe in him. How exciting this is. We should not live in fear or doubt of our eternal destiny. Jesus wants us to live in freedom not to fear or doubt. His theme throughout the Bible is do not be afraid. Let's listen to him.

**Dan Giancursio**  
**Macedon**

## City church offers European art, architecture as backdrop for Mass

**To the editors:**  
 This is for all communicants who are dissatisfied with their parishes' renovations for whatever reasons.

Please come join us at the beautiful Church of St. Michael at the corner of Clinton and Clifford avenues. There is a community-wide service every Sunday at 7 p.m. which brings worshippers together from all over the Rochester area.

The liturgy committee at St. Michael's has prepared a solemn Mass that conforms to the standards of Vatican II but is reminiscent of the pre-Vatican II rite in every way, from the music of the old masters played on the beautiful 1909 pipe organ, to the incense and candles, to the cantorial reflections at the conclusion of the Mass.

The evening Mass is followed by a social gathering in the campus convent. It is always lively, as there are regularly new people in attendance from various parish-

es and denominations around the community.

Come park in the secure lot early enough - 10-15 minutes - to hear the magnificent bells which you yourself can peal by pulling the ropes in the church entryway. For a preview of the astounding architecture that awaits you beyond the doors of St. Michael's, log on to [www.stmichaelsrochester.org](http://www.stmichaelsrochester.org).

Catholics all agree that Mass is still Mass even if celebrated on the tailgate of a station wagon. But most would also agree that the architectural and musical elements that European artisans traditionally created to enhance the Mass are without any modern comparison. So come to St. Michael's and step into the Old World every Sunday at 7 p.m.

**Mary Ann Cole**  
**Jersey Street**  
**Rochester**

## Finger Lakes group needs more participants

**To the editors:**

In response to Barbara Fredericks' letter asking what we are doing to end the horror of abortion: A group gathers to say the Rosary at Planned Parenthood in Newark every Monday at 1 p.m. People from Lyons, Stanley, and Shortsville have participated and I would like to especially mention a very special couple, Frank and Mary Griffin both in their 80s who travel from North Rose, religiously. We have never drawn more than 15 activists, as much as we have tried. Many people

give us a thumbs up, and one young man passing by stopped to join us. Of course, we have had others give us a not too friendly gesture. Other denominations have been invited to join us, but unfortunately abortion seems to be a Catholic issue to so many individuals. That being the case, we would like to see many more Catholics put forth time and sacrifice for this most horror of horrors.

**Mary Gilardo**  
**Colton Avenue**  
**Newark**