

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.

Sponsors appreciate blessings

To the editors:

This past October and November we had a wonderful experience in our lives. We as grandparents were asked to be sponsors for our granddaughter and grandson as they were going to make their confirmations at St. Catherine of Siena Church.

We had to attend several classes with them to prepare them for this event. Prior to this we met with Father Jim Lawlor and the children for a little conference. Father Jim had such a sweet spirit and the light of Jesus really did shine through him. Such a nice welcome to this parish.

The classes were taught by Gail Brooks and her assistant, Phyllis Hager. The teachings on the Holy Spirit were great and we had so much fun that even we as grandparents learned so much for which we had not experienced when we were confirmed years ago. Gail was truly a great teacher. She and Phyllis always greeted us with a sweet spirit and smile when we came to all the classes.

On confirmation night at the special Mass, we were sorry that Bishop Matthew Clark could not be with us all due to another commitment, but we were really happy with Father Joe Hart whom the bishop sent in his place.

Father Hart gave the nicest talk to the children and his homily was a good teaching to the children upon receiving the Holy Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit. It was so touching to us all. Father's story about the little boy talking to Jesus was so sweet, and the special touch of "God" for his sister was so special. Jesus really does make a difference in our lives if we only let Him do so. We also enjoyed meeting Father John Norris, who took part in the Mass also.

We were not only honored to be chosen to sponsor our grandchildren for their confirmation, we were also happy to be at St. Catherine of Siena Church for this special occasion and wonderful welcome.

Thank you St. Catherine of Siena for making us so blessed. We are so thrilled that through this all our grandchildren received the Holy Spirit and we will our do our best that they remain this way.

God bless you all, Gail Brooks, Phyllis Hager and mostly Father Jim Lawlor and Father Joe Hart for the love of Jesus that you show and for the special persons that you both are. Your work for Jesus really shows. Keep it up till the last day.

Tony and Dorothea DioGuardi
Route 2, Mount Morris



Make New York hunger free

To the editors:

March 15 is Hunger Awareness Day, a day designed to draw attention to the extent and severity of hunger in communities throughout New York State.

One out of every four children in New York State lives in poverty. There are currently over 2,900 food pantries and soup kitchens serving over 1.6 million people each month. Unfortunately, even as the state enjoys a so-called economic boom, hunger continues to grow in New York State.

The Food Stamp Program could be the most immediate and effective remedy for hunger. Yet, in New York State, nearly 50 percent of those estimated to be eligible for food stamps do not receive these ben-

efits. Misinformation, stigmas, and bureaucratic barriers contribute to this low participation rate.

It is now time to focus upon long-term solutions to hunger, not short-term budget cuts that will not end poverty. New York State needs affordable housing, decent paying jobs and job training opportunities, education and child care for all. There is already too much hunger in our community. Is it not time that the Governor and other state leaders work to make New York a hunger-free state for all?

Judith Peters
Nutrition Outreach Coordinator
for Wayne County
Legal Assistance of the Finger Lakes
Geneva

Highlight vocations on feast day

To the editors:

We are in sore need of more priests. In my church, St. Michael's of Penn Yan, we have set aside the Feast of St. Joseph's Day, March 19, 2001 to pray and fast for the intention of priestly vocations.

We invite all parishes of the diocese to unite with us in a simple supper of bread blessed by a priest and water and to offer up this sacrifice as a petition for more youths to answer the call for vocations.

I know that we pray each Sunday at intercessions for vocations. Maybe it is not working because prayer without fasting is like limping on one leg.

The reading on Ash Wednesday calls us to proclaim a fast, gather the people, notify the congregation, gather the children. FAST and PRAY. Perhaps the Lord

will be stirred to concern and take pity on his people. He is kind and merciful.

As a worthy Lenten sacrifice, we hope to establish the Feast of St. Joseph's Day" (March 19) as a day set aside each year as a fast day for the intention of priestly vocations.

At St. Michael's, Penn Yan, the Catholic Daughters will be selling bread after all Masses on March 17 & 18 in anticipation of the fast on March 19. Any group in your church could take on this project as a convenience to parishioners. At the end of Mass, Father will go to the bread tables and bless the bread. What a beautiful way to honor to St. Joseph, our protector of the church. Pray that he will intercede for us.

Loretta Parshall
St. Michael's, Penn Yan

President Bush merely followed law on executions

To the editors:

Like many others, the Mulligans ("Appalled that church apparently embraces 'righteousness' of Bush", Feb. 8) could use a course in government. This is a republic, not a democracy.

1.) President Bush did not execute "200

people" of his own free will as governor of Texas. He followed Texas law enacted by duly elected representatives of Texas. Put blame where it belongs or change the law. We have the same in New York state.

2.) Stealing the election? I am a lifelong registered Democrat. Our government of

"checks and balances" has worked for over 200 years. The U.S. Supreme Court vs. the Florida Supreme Court I call a tie. Electoral vs. Popular.

I do care if a person disgraces his or herself personally. However, to disgrace the office of president and then to be exposed by admitting to lies, paying fines, etc.! Without end so far.

One thing that really bothers me are those who accept such people — and their approving cohorts. As a common citizen, could you get away with the same actions if you didn't have power and/or money?

President Harry Truman had a sign on his desk: "The buck stops here." Hopefully, President Bush believes that and not obfuscate English as did the last president.

As in God's law one has to obey our law and not bend it to an "I want."

Shirley F. Schuhart
Whalen Road
Penfield

Program offers screening for senior citizens

To the editors:

Your article in the January 11 issue of the *Catholic Courier* on elderly assistance was very informative. As the Nutrition Outreach Project coordinator for the YWCA of Rochester and Monroe County, I often talk to older adults about Food Stamps and other food programs. I assist people with getting Food Stamps and also refer them to other food assistance programs. The list you provided in the article will be a valuable addition to my referral resource list.

The YWCA Nutrition Outreach Project pre-screens Monroe County residents for Food Stamp eligibility, provides applications and instructions on how to apply and offers training about food programs. All pre-screenings are confidential. We encourage people to call us at (716) 325-1440.

Sue Segelman
Nutrition Outreach
Project Coordinator
YWCA of Rochester
and Monroe County