

# 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.

## Time to end the sins of patriarchy

### To the editors:

On March 6, the *Florida Catholic* published the results of a questionnaire given to women who would be attending the bishops' Committee on Women in Society and the Church. Many of these women claimed that women's voices were seldom heard, almost never if they "appeared to be militant, combative, single-minded or insubordinate." These were not women on the fringes but were chosen by their bishops as respected leaders in their dioceses.

Since then a scandal has exposed the sexual exploitation of nuns by priests in Africa. The Vatican ignored this problem although it was informed of it over six years ago. Indeed during that time the Vatican has proposed Africa as a model where there is an abundance of priests. Observe carefully two patriarchal societies, Africa and the Church, where the voices of women are not heard.

Nearly 25 years ago, Father Emmett Haloran preached a wonderful homily at St. Charles Borromeo about Jesus feeding the hungry multitude. The reading ended, "The people who were fed numbered four thousand not counting women and children." My heart pounded when Father asked, "Since when don't women and children count?" His point was clearly stated that women and children counted for Jesus and he listened to their voices.

Two great scandals of the Church in our time are pedophilia and abuse of women, sins of patriarchy where the voices of women and children are not heard because they are not valued. Walter Wink's trilogy, "Naming the Powers," "Unmasking the Powers" and "Engaging the Powers," confronts the satanic forces that divide us, taking on a life of their own, establishing creations of systemic evil and structural sins that invade even the best institutions. The Church is in a crisis, a crisis of patriarchy, and we need to name, unmask and engage this crisis. We have to speak out clearly and powerfully with a voice that is militant, combative, single-minded, even insubordinate. We must put an end to the sins of patriarchy and allow the gifts and fruits of the Spirit to flow freely.

Emmett Neary  
Bakerdale Road  
Rochester

*EDITORS' NOTE: A Catholic News Service report on the survey Mr. Neary mentions appeared on page 5 of the Catholic Courier's March 8 issue.*

## Do you suffer from 'pew rage' at weekly Mass?

### To the editors:

We've all heard of road rage, but what about pew rage? It can become a habit.

You get up early Sunday morning, go to church, and sit in the same pew as always, guarding your spot like a hen so nobody else can sit there. Pew rage.

Somebody new shows up. You ignore her because she's not an official member of your parish. Pew rage.

A baby begins crying, and you raise your eyebrows because a mere infant has dared to make a noise. Pew rage.

You hear organ music. You like folk rather than organ music. You grumble at the person sitting next to you, voicing your discontent. Pew rage.

A man ambles up the aisle to receive Holy Communion, but you have already decided that he is too sinful to receive the Host. Pew rage.

The priest bestows his blessing upon you at the end of the Mass. You didn't hear him. Pew rage.

M. Cathy Helmes  
Ronald Drive  
Rochester



## Restore esteem for family

### To the editors:

The Church seems to have a propensity for the inane while; metaphorically, "Rome burns." Instead of building for the future, we prepare for disaster! In this atmosphere it is not difficult to prophesy; we are headed for chaos! Where are our leaders? Did Jesus lead by consensus? Has the "Spirit of the Lord" gone on sabbatical in the Rochester diocese? Following is my attempt to stimulate the Church to action.

The lack of candidates for the Priesthood is directly related to the lack of commitment to marriage and family life. The marriage vow which can now be so easily retracted has lost its significance. In the attempt to remove the word "sacrifice" from our vocabulary it has become prerequisite to removing the words "responsibility" and

"commitment". In this atmosphere who would opt to become a priest?

While space prohibits full development of this thesis, I suggest that the increase in anti-life activities such as abortion, euthanasia and disregard for the care of the elderly are all related to the lack of esteem for family. Recently we were told in a Gospel message that the Apostles were given the authority to forgive or retain sin. Both elements of this authority should be given equal consideration by the Church as a useful tool in leading us to salvation. Perhaps the admonition "spare the rod and spoil the child" would be best directed to the hierarchy of the Church.

John Slauson  
Earl Street  
Weedspott

## Put end to violence in every form

### To the editors:

Violence affects the poor, elderly, youth, spouses and the most innocent, the unborn. Laws created buffer zones near abortion - killing - clinics to protect clients and workers. What about the babies? Two people enter a clinic but sometimes, only one leaves alive. Probably 99.9 percent of people who are against abortion are against violence. Violence at clinics is not the answer; it won't stop the Doctors from killing. Violence will stop through peace and the power of prayer! Please pray for the parents, the abortionists, their staff and pray for the tiny, helpless victims, the babies.

What causes retaliation? Think of human history - fight fire with fire. You hit me, I hit you. You fire a rocket, we fire two back. When two countries fight, a third intervenes with bombs to stop the violence. If someone gets you mad, you get back at them with violence. Yes, we have to protect ourselves; our country, our people but we cannot fight violence with violence. Let's stop all the violence beginning with violence toward our future citizens, unborn babies!

Remember that no killing is right - one of the Commandments states this.

Steve DeLucia Jr.  
Webster

## Alerts parish to new pastor's 'shortcomings'

### To the editors:

This is a red letter alert to Assumption Parish. Father Ed Palumbos of St. Charles Borromeo has announced his transfer to your parish. You might want to reconsider accepting him. His hair is almost entirely gray. He has arthritis and I am convinced that if you look closely he is getting a bald spot on top. I also think he is losing his hearing.

If this is not enough, he is too sociable. He has a sense of humor and is very likable.

Do not plan on catching up on sleep during his homilies. They tend to be inspiring.

Should this not discourage you and you still welcome him, promise one thing. In the years to come, if you find him wandering the town of Fairport, please do not place him in the Baptist Home. Check his medic alert bracelet. It will read "Return to St. Charles." We will welcome him home with open arms.

Diane Sousa  
Frear Drive, Rochester

## Why must event take place on a school day?

### To the editors:

As an educator and taxpayer, I am questioning "Bring Your Daughter/Child to Work Day."

I think this is a wonderful idea, but I question why it has to be on a school day?

There are 365 days in the year, of which 180 are student school days. With most Americans working around 245 days a year, I do not understand why this day cannot be

one of the approximately 65 working days when there is no school.

I understand that this day is a learning experience, but with the New York State standards and testing in various grades, educators and students need all of the precious time they have in school.

Kathy Peters  
Huff Street  
Waterloo