

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.

Instruction article was misleading

To the editors:

In response to (the Catholic News Service) article, "Vatican rules restrict foreign priests' time abroad" published in the June 14 edition of the *Catholic Courier*, I would like to clarify some issues. I feel the article was misleading because it misstated some important points of the Vatican instruction and was slanted against priests from mission territories.

The instruction does not say priests from mission territories should not come to established territories for study or ministry. Nor does it, as an instruction, abrogate existing canonical provisions of priests' rights. Actually the instruction encourages exchange programs between mission territories and established ones. Moreover, it acclaims the benefits of such missionary exchange programs "since the middle of last century." Also, it says bishops of both ends should collaborate to ensure the welfare of priests who come to the developed countries to study or evangelize.

Additionally, the article misstated the facts of the instruction by saying that the "host bishop has the right to send a priest back in the case of grave problems." This kind of language sounds intimidating to foreign priests and an insult to those of us who have been blessed by the devout, spiritual and humble presence of these priests. The bishops in the established dioceses do not have this right. According to the instruction, the host bishop "must take adequate measures that may even result in the termination of permission to remain in that diocese." This can be done "after having discussed them with the bishop of the said priest." So, the instruction encourages cooperation between bishops of host and home diocese. It does not authorize one to act without discussion with the other. As a result, the CNS report confused the terms "right" and "authority of jurisdiction." If warranted, a host bishop in a mission territory can employ the rule in the instruction to a sojourn priest from an established diocese. Therefore, to write in a manner that does not show this as a two-way street is unfair.

While most priests who come to developed countries return to their home dioceses, others remain. Both situations have occurred. Neither is the norm. This article, however, conveyed the feeling that extern priests decide the grass is greener here and turn their backs on their home. However, some of the priests who remain in this country have a genuine missionary call to be. They are experienced, ready and willing to work and spread the Word of the Lord. It will be proper that dioceses that employ them respect their sacrifices and also compensate their home dioceses. In the United States, some dioceses spend about \$15,000 a year for a seminarian's education. One can presume that bishops in mission territories spend so much on the education of their seminarians and priests. So with the current priest shortage crunch, it would be one-sided in favor of us — America — if we reaped the rewards from these men without compensating the mission dioceses that are affected.

Cathy Cerame
Cabot Road
Rochester



Extern priests give diocese benefit of cultural exchange

To the editors:

Recently I was invited to attend a backyard picnic at St. Jerome's Church. Father Conboy, Director of Priest Personnel, entertained the more than 20 extern priests who serve in our Diocese from around the world. I was invited as a member of the Priest Personnel Board and was particularly pleased to have the opportunity to meet some of the fine men whose names I've only seen on a piece of paper.

I write this letter to make sure that everyone in our diocese knows that we have had many priests from other parts of the world serving among us. We are also working hard to establish ongoing relationships with other dioceses who are sending us priests to help out in our clergy crunch. These efforts are part of our response to the decreasing numbers of priests available for pastoral ministry in our country and our diocese. Often Bishops in other parts of the world send their priests here to further their education and to learn more about our culture. As these fine men obtain more educational credentials here, they are graciously serving as Sacramental Ministers in our parishes and other pastoral settings.

But we are receiving so much more than the sacramental presence of these good and holy men. I've come to appreciate their vitality, enthusiasm and their desire to serve the church throughout the world. Hopefully we are supporting them and helping them to understand what it means to be Church in the Diocese of Rochester, just as they are helping us understand what the church is like in their home dioceses.

As I sat at the picnic table last week, my ears were filled with stories of these men speaking all around me about what the church is like in Nigeria, in Kenya, in Poland and in Sri Lanka. I thought to myself what a wonderful, wonderful experience for us of the universality of our church.

Our diocese is doing a wonderful job in recruiting wise, mature and eager young prospective candidates to serve as priests. But the shortage of priests that we are experiencing is an occasion of another grace, which I hope is not lost upon the people in the parishes of our diocese. We are blessed with the presence of priests from other cultures and other continents.

May we welcome them into our midst and not be reluctant to receive the many gifts with which we have been blessed through their presence.

Father Edward Palumbos
Fairport

Thanks paper for Alzheimer story

To the editors:

On behalf of the Alzheimer's Association and the 24,000 people with Alzheimer's disease in our region, thank you for promoting awareness about the Nun Study funded by the National Institutes on Health (*Catholic Courier*, June 14). Featuring this amazing group of women and their willingness to participate in a study that will assist us in unraveling some of the mysteries of Alzheimer's has provided another way to let the community know how far reaching and devastating Alzheimer's has become.

By the middle of this century more than 14 million Americans will be diagnosed with Alzheimer's, making it the number one public health issue of this

century. The costs associated with Alzheimer's care will bankrupt our Medicaid and Medicare systems, not to mention the devastation it will cause to the millions of caregivers touched by the disease. With the necessary funding by the United States Congress, scientists can work at a much faster pace to unlock the mystery behind this troubling disease.

With a strong community voice we can convince our elected officials that this is top priority for funding in the areas of research and support. Anyone interested in getting involved in Public Policy or Advocacy for the Alzheimer's Association should call us today at 1-800-724-0587.

Teresa A. Stewart
Executive Director
Alzheimer's Association

Send your views to letters@catholiccourier.com or mail to Catholic Courier, PO Box 24379, Rochester, N.Y. 14624-0379