

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.

Praises late colleague's priorities

To the editors:

Seeing so many Case-Hoyters at Bob Roeding's funeral Mass on Tuesday, July 3 at Holy Spirit Church brought back a flood of memories of some 30-plus years when I was secretary to Harry Wisner and Bill Case of the Case-Hoyt Corporation.

It was a wintry Saturday morning while working at the office that I first met Mr. Robert P. Roeding. Busily typing, I happened to glance up from my work and saw two smiling blue eyes, a thatch of blond hair and a face begging for assistance. I promptly responded, incredulous that the appointment Mr. Case was sure "would never make it in the storm" had indeed arrived — on time and from Pennsylvania no less.

But the meeting was to be an historic one and soon Bob Roeding and Case-Hoyt had found a match. He ignited the bonfire of remarkable friendships, fidelity and hard work that characterized the Case-Hoyt culture. And of course, who will ever forget the dynamic duo of Stites and Roeding? It was only a matter of time before that partnership discovered itself. I could always count on their Monday morning quarterbacking routines to set the week in motion. The peals of irresistible laughter evoked a contagion from the sales office to the press room. Everyone, it seemed, was drawn into the parlay; that is, of course, until Mr. Wisner brought the morning abruptly to attention with the slamming of his door!

A very endearing moment for me happened last fall when I was invited to attend the annual Leo Holmsten Human Life Award Banquet, with Bob as master of ceremonies. During his opening remarks, he mentioned that a former Case-Hoyter was present. Delighted, I eagerly waited to learn who it was. Instead, the surprise was on me and I was truly honored.

Bob was a family man at heart, devoted to his beloved wife, Madeline, and their two children Ginna and Eric. He was a hard worker, a problem solver, a selfless public servant, but perhaps first and foremost, a humorist.

Bob was never allergic to the truth and embraced his faith and its mystery with the same sense of wonder that typified his zeal for life. I am reminded of a recent comment made by Pope John Paul II when asked what was necessary to achieve salvation. He responded, "A sense of humor and faith, and in that order."

Bob, I knew you always had your priorities straight. May God continue to bless you.

Mary Reilich
 Greenknolls Drive
 Rochester

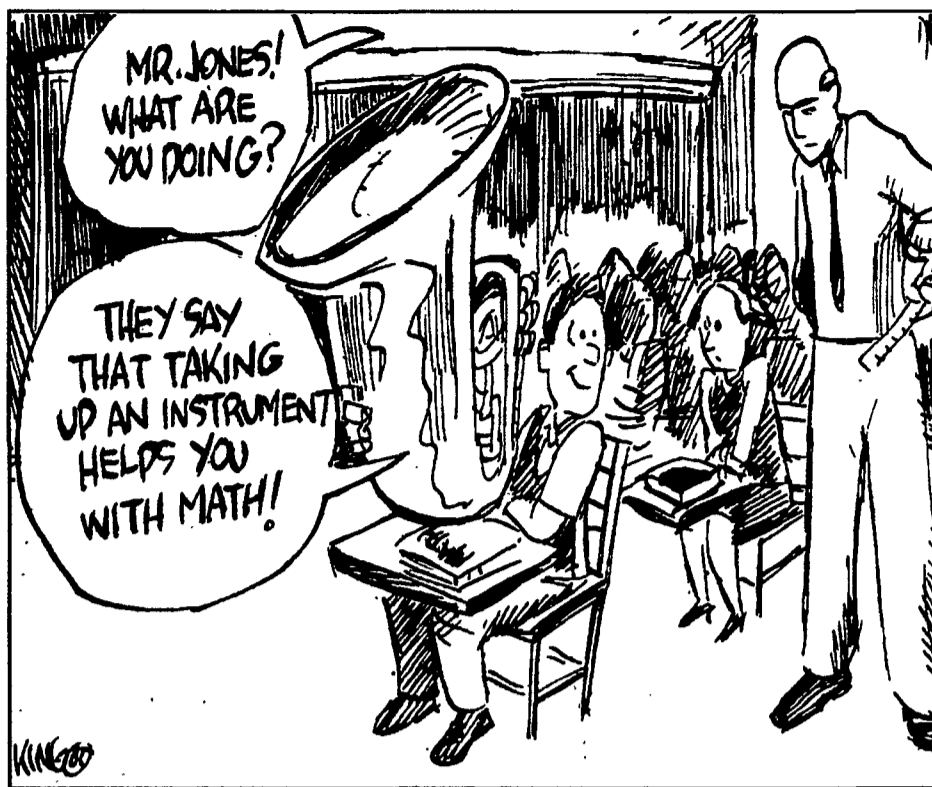
Book offers insights on cultural changes

To the editors:

Our churches used to be filled with people in the 1940s and 1950s. Today this is not the case. Where have the people gone to? A book of essays entitled *Religion and Popular Culture in America* tells us our culture has changed since the '40s and '50s.

This book edited by Bruce D. Forbes and Jeffrey H. Makas supplies some of the answers that our religious leaders are seeking. And the bibliography contains valuable clues on the impact of our changing culture on religion. I recommend it.

Tom Fogarty
 Walnut Street
 Auburn



Rely on Jesus, not pundits

To the editors:

In his letter (*Catholic Courier*, July 12, "Writer leaves just one option") dismissing Mark Carver's assertion that unconditional nonviolence is the only option in keeping with the teachings of Jesus, Robert Bart draws his views from such sources as *The Wanderer*.

However, as true followers of Jesus, we are better served drawing our teaching and examples from The Source rather than the writings of contemporary pundits. Nowhere in the New Testament does Jesus' teaching allow for the justification of the force necessary for survival.

In Matthew 5:39 Jesus teaches us, "When a person strikes you on the right cheek, turn and offer the other." When Jesus is arrested and one of his followers cuts off the ear of the high priest's servant, Jesus tells him, "Put back your sword where it belongs. Those who use the sword are sooner or later destroyed by it" (Matthew 26:52). Even in the face of

death, Jesus shows the way we should live. As he is being crucified, he holds no animosity toward those who kill him; rather in the most unselfish act of love, he asks God to forgive them. "Father, forgive them, they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34).

Jesus' very clear teachings allow no room for misinterpretation. His example throughout his life and especially in his death, eschews the use of force even at the cost of his own life.

Jesus' actions and words are consistent with what we would today term pacifism, i.e. active, unconditional, nonviolent love of our enemies. If we strive to be true followers of Jesus, living life as Jesus would, we can also be termed pacifists, turning the other cheek when threatened. God's ways are not to be altered to suit worldly pragmatism.

Michael Bezila
 West Newton Street
 Boston

Scholarship should not be tainted by best-selling book's propaganda

To the editors:

It was good to see your article "U.S. cardinal warns against politicizing WWII research" in the issue of August 9. Cardinal Keeler's warning ought to be heeded. A sober look at the facts ought to be heard over the shrieking polemics which are so often served up to us in the name of "research." True research should never be politicized. But beginning with "The Deputy," a dramatic presentation which — to its credit — never even pretended to be a portrayal of actual events, and continuing to John Cornwell's blatantly dishonest best-seller *Hiller's Pope*, the public view of the historical record has been set askew. We are forbidden to judge the motives of our fellow human beings (Mt 7:1), but we are not forbidden to judge their works. The "historian" who wrote *Hiller's Pope* wrote an artful piece of propaganda — and I use that term in its most pejorative sense. Historians have complained that there is scarcely a page in Cornwell's book which does not contain errors of fact or egregious distortions.

But the book is a best-seller, and that is the challenge which provokes the Cardinal's response. We can wring our hands about Cornwell's calumny, we can grieve over the fact that a good man's name has been unjustly besmirched. Better yet, we can make sure that we are well-informed on the matter. There are a number of honest histories in print. One of the better ones is by Margherita Marchione, who is an historian, not a playwright nor a pro-

pagandist. She wrote a wonderful book titled *Pope Pius XII: Architect of Peace*. It is an excellent read and is a good personal response to the Cardinal's plea for the exercise of reason and fair play.

Deacon Gregory Sampson
 Thomas Avenue
 Rochester

The future is here — consolidate parishes

To the editors:

I would like to compliment Father Kevin Murphy for raising a subject in his recent letter ("Pastor proposes establishment of large, centralized Mass sites," July 26) that many of us have been whispering about for the past few years. How do we as a diocese and a people plan to deal realistically with fewer priests?

I favor a little more direct and, yes, even painful approach to the situation than Father Murphy. We need to consolidate and close parishes; it's that simple. It is unfair and very selfish of us to think our priests should make themselves sick as is currently the case in order to serve us.

We are not using our resources either efficiently or effectively at the present time: We are only fooling ourselves if we fail to ignore the realities of the future. The future is here!

Alan Rector
 River Street, Rochester