

OPINIONS

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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, NY 14624. Please include your full name, phone number and complete address for purposes of verification.

Critics use pedophilia to advance own ideas

To the editor:

The holy priesthood and the entire Catholic Church is under attack because of the actions of a small number of individuals who have committed horrific acts.

Sadly enough, the attacks are not only from the media, but also from members of the Church. They blame the causes for pedophile priests in the Church on celibacy, opposition to abortion, lack of women in the priesthood etc. They fail to recognize the millions of priests who are heroes, martyrs, and are there to teach, guide and make us a holier people. Why would we want to change this? Oftentimes one may be quick to criticize our Church teachings and its leaders, simply because they do not confirm to one's perspective.

Pedophilia is a disorder also found in married persons — i.e. parents molesting their own young children, teachers, ministers, coaches, nurses, doctors, social workers etc. Therefore, celibacy is not the cause of this problem.

For those who have been seeking a rationale for priests to marry, they will have to look for other reasons. Women in the priesthood would not solve this problem — women have been known to molest children, as well.

The most far fetched of all is condoning the slaughter of 40 million unborn infants. If people wish to take a stand on these issues, that is their prerogative, however, let us not mix apples and oranges in trying to solve this complicated problem.

Fortunately, we now know a great deal more about this disorder. We know it is not a condition where one may repent and reform their lives with expectations of returning to work with young people. This was the honest belief of the past. Pedophiles will continue to repeat their offenses.

Therefore, the Church, as in many other institutions in our country, are seeking to remove all persons posing this threat. Children must be protected in all walks of life. This is not only a Catholic Church problem, but one that is compelling — nationally and internationally.

The Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ can empower us to reason more clearly. Jesus was our first and most holy priest. He bore persecution and death for our sins. May He console the millions of priests who are suffering because of the actions of others and may the light of the Holy Spirit guide and protect our Church leaders.

Rita B. Sartori
West Clinton Street
Elmira

Questions 'immorality' of avoiding taxes

To the editor:

As usual, Father McBrien presented an excellent essay on the tax avoidance of some companies (March 14). Although I too decry when someone is not paying their fair share of taxes, there are some interesting aspects to consider when a company increases its cash flow through paying less taxes as allowed by an imperfect law.

Patriotism is defined as love and support of one's country. As a company increases its available cash, this then allows it to purchase job creating machinery, expand operations, etc., thus creating eco-



Asserts abusers should be banned from all ministries

To the editor:

The occurrence of pastoral abuse, sexual or otherwise, toward children or adults, is shameful and abhorrent. What a disgrace this is for a church that claims to be "the" church instituted by Christ himself.

I am dismayed at the comment made by Raymond Grosswirth in last week's issue (March 14). Mr. Grosswirth states that, "just as one should not give a chronic alcoholic a job in a bar, priests with a history of pedophilia should not be assigned to parish ministry." A priest, or anyone associated with the church "posing" as the caring voice of Christ, with a history of pedophilia or any other kind of sexual misconduct, shouldn't be assigned to ANY ministry! They should be in jail where all who prey on others' innocence and trust should be. Or at the very least kept away from the public.

The picture on page 5 showing priests standing behind Bishop O'Connell in a

show of support sickens me. I am amazed that the church allows the support of people in ministry who abuse. What does this message send to people, especially the victims of these perpetrators? But how commendable of Bishop O'Connell to let us know that, "there was nothing in the relationship that was anything other than touches." Well, that eases my mind! And then for him to call what he did to that CHILD a relationship just makes things worse.

I fully understand that we're only human and we makes mistakes, including people in the church. But claiming to be something we're not and then using that to inflict pain and suffering on innocent people, and then finding ways to justify the behavior so that the perpetrator looks like a victim, to me, should put us on a psychiatric ward, not as leaders in the church.

Margaret Fletcher
Washington Street, Geneva

Column showed executives' greed

To the editor:

There are those who downgrade Father Richard McBrien every chance they get. Most times I feel he is one of few who make us think. This week he really hit the nail on the head ("Corporations choose profits over patriotism," March 14).

He shows the corporate world for what it is: mostly greedy, uncaring people looking for all they can get out of anyone and give as little as possible in return. They have no loyalty to any moral or decency codes. Their workers are exploited while they skim the profits off the top and frequently are first to complain of the burden they have to carry for the taxes providing the poor of this country with the basics. While they wallow in their luxuri-

ous homes with several cars in the garage, travel the world and spend their time on the golf course, helping the downtrodden with food and shelter is distasteful to them. For some reason they are blind to the fact that hiding their wealth in other countries or behind tax loopholes only makes the burden larger for those left without adequate jobs and paychecks to shoulder. Sometimes they give large donations to one cause or another but it is often with an eye on the tax break they can squeeze out rather than being charitable.

It is about time they took a good look at themselves and put the blame where it belongs. Nine times out of 10 it is not the unproductivity of the workers but the corporate bigwigs bleeding the companies to death that causes them to collapse.

Downsizing has been rampant but usually that just puts the weight on the remaining workers who are forced to do several jobs on the same pay. Is it any wonder people are worn out and unable to cope? This precipitates a rash of medical problems and more expensive health care for all. This is also distasteful.

Take a look at the Bible. Time after time the ones who took advantage of others paid for it later. If the retribution is not in this world, God has the final say and they will get their just rewards. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" is still the best policy.

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