

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

## Help available for hungry families

### To the editor:

Thank you for highlighting the problems that limited-income families face in meeting their family's basic need for good nutrition in the April 4 article, "When children miss a meal." Federal nutrition programs such as Food Stamps, School Meals, and Summer Meals are powerful tools in reducing hunger for such families.

The Food Stamp Program provides a basic safety net to over 18 million Americans and is targeted to those most in need. Of those households utilizing Food Stamps in 2000, 53.9 percent contained children. Households with children received 87 percent of all Food Stamp benefits. Twenty-one percent of Food Stamp households contained an elderly person and 27.5 percent included at least one disabled member. Approximately 89 percent of Food Stamp households had gross incomes below the poverty line.

Unfortunately, many persons potentially eligible for Food Stamps aren't currently participating for a variety of reasons — from lack of knowledge about eligibility rules, to fears about paperwork and bureaucracy delays. According to the Nutrition Consortium of New York State, Inc., only 37 percent of Wayne County residents potentially eligible for Food Stamps actually participate in the program. In Monroe County 63 percent of those potentially eligible receive Food Stamps.

A second food resource is the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program. Almost every school provides lunch and many now offer breakfast as well. Because breakfast attendance is much lower than for lunch, advocates are promoting the benefits of breakfast to school personnel and parents so that more children will be encouraged to "kick-start" their day with a healthy meal. Studies released by the states of Minnesota, Maryland and Massachusetts all point to a direct, positive link between School Breakfast participation and school performance. Participating students increase their standardized test scores, are better able to pay attention in class, and are absent and tardy less often.

Another important resource is the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) which provides meals and snacks to children 18 and under when school is out. Nationally, only 14 percent of the low-income children who receive free or reduced-price school meals participate in this program. Locally, the SFSP is available in a number of communities, including the City of Rochester, Greece, Lyons, Newark, Wolcott and Clyde. However, there is a need to expand to additional areas.

If you want to learn more about these programs, or wish to find out if you are potentially eligible for Food Stamps, call the YWCA Nutrition Outreach Project at 585/325-1440 for those residing in Monroe County, or the Nutrition Outreach Project at Legal Assistance of the Finger Lakes at 315/781-1465 for Wayne County residents.

**Sue Segelman, YWCA Nutrition Outreach Project Coordinator**  
**Judith Peters, LAFL Nutrition Outreach Project Coordinator**  
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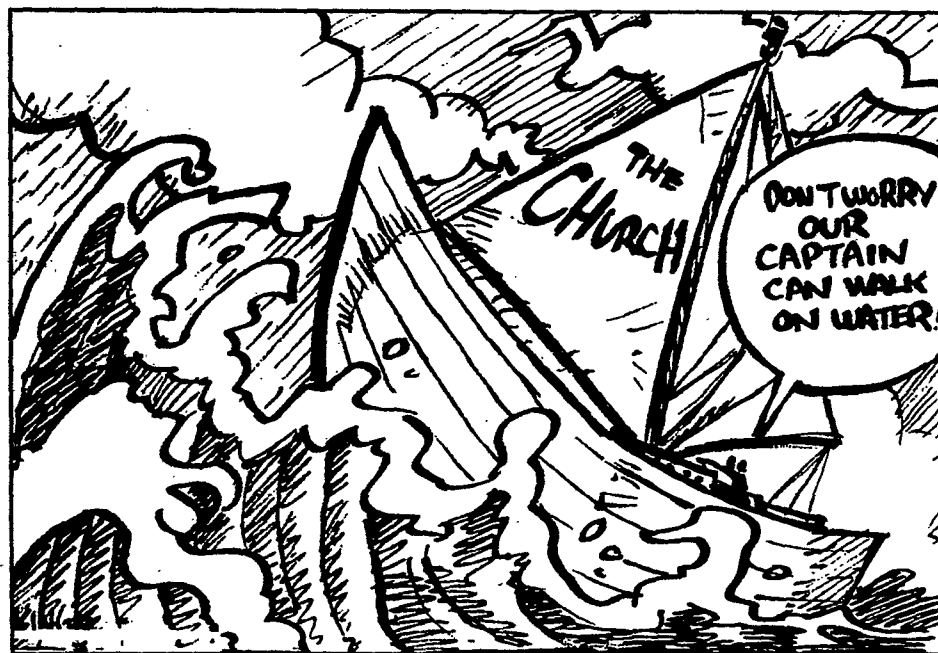
## 'Milestones' issue was paper's best since '54

### To the editor:

What a pleasure it was to read last week's (April 11) *Catholic Courier*. SO POSITIVE! Great things about great people. Please let's have more of same.

This was the greatest issue of the *Courier* that has been printed since I've been in Rochester in 1954.

Stephanie K. Heise  
Bay Road, Webster



## Limit blame, compensation

### To the editor:

For the first time in my 50 plus years as a practicing Roman Catholic I find it necessary to speak out about the deplorable condition the American Catholic Church finds itself in. No I am not talking about the earthshaking question of whether to shake hands during the Mass. The Church has come under attack from two formidable groups, the predominate liberal media and a greedy unethical group of trial lawyers. The liberal media wants nothing less than the discreditation of all religions and the lawyers hunger for no less than 30 percent to 40 percent of every dollar in every Catholic pocket as their share of the massive judgments they seek in lawsuits against the church.

The media would have us believe that celibacy is the leading cause of sexual abuse in priests and that the church is saturated with pedophiles. The lawyers state that only billions of dollars from the Catholic Church will heal their clients. The facts of the problem are that a small minority of priests have turned out to be sexual predators and bishops such as Cardinal Law have magnified the problem by allowing these criminals to continue their access to parishioners. Father Donald Cozzens, Vicar to Priests in the Cleveland Diocese, has studied many of these priests and found "No remorse in any of these priests, only a sorrow at having been

caught." I wish Cardinal Law had spoken to Father Cozzens, as it is the Cardinal who should resign for the good of the church.

I hope all Catholics will unite in a solid front and take the following actions.

A. Offer our sincere apologies to the actual victims of these crimes and see that they receive reasonable compensation keeping in mind that the enrichment of lawyers is not the purpose of this action.

B. Limit the blame to where it truly belongs, the actual criminal priests and their superiors who directly enabled them to continue their crimes while having direct knowledge of the situation. The Church has a duty to inform the legal system of all criminal allegations they learn of immediately!

C. Show our individual support for the many GOOD PRIESTS who touch each of our lives in so many positive ways.

D. Be aware of the rash of anti Catholic legislation and biased media stories that we face today. We can learn much from the methods used by many African American and Jewish organizations to compel legislators and media corporations to act in a fair and just way in regard to their interests. The use of the ballot box and economic measures such as boycotts can help us to see that truth and justice prevail.

William G. Reilly  
Corning

## Lawyers' guild leadership sings praises of former spiritual adviser

### To the editor:

On April 15 Father L. James Callan died after serving the Diocese of Rochester for 57 years as a faithful and devout priest. During that time he undertook, for at least the last 15 years, to act as the spiritual adviser to the St. Thomas More Lawyers' Guild. This was no mean accomplishment because it compelled him to engage often in highly disciplined and erudite discourse with practicing lawyers on many complex questions arising under both civil and canon law.

Moreover, the post of spiritual adviser involved conducting an annual day-of-recollection for the members of the Guild, during which he would remind us that the highest authority remains for Roman Catholics the laws of God and that man's laws may not contradict God's laws and still be morally legitimate.

As a diocesan priest and pastor, the people knew Father Callan as a kind and dedicated minister. To us of the Guild, he was far more. He was exceptionally learned in moral theology, canon law, the Thomistic principles of Natural Law, and

the Catholic Catechism. We were profoundly impressed with his ability to cogently criticize moral autonomy, moral relativism, and the popular acceptance of the doctrine of situational ethics.

His most marvelous instructions to us were on the existence of Purgatory. He believed that most of us are sinners, and that we needed the sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist — Father's vocabulary shunned modern euphemistic terms like "reconciliation" and "banquet" — more than the others. Even with this sacramental help, and God's infinite mercy, few, if any, of us would leave earth and arrive at once in heaven. No, he said. A cleansing process had to intervene — and that was Purgatory.

God blessed the Guild with Father Callan's guidance far beyond what we deserved. May God spare him from the pains of Purgatory and admit him at once to the joy of heaven, for he suffered with us long enough.

Mary E. Aramini, president  
John Manning Regan, past president  
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St. Thomas More Lawyers Guild