

# OPINIONS

## Catholic Courier

©2002, Rochester Catholic Press Association.  
1136 Buffalo Road  
P.O. Box 24379  
Rochester, NY 14624  
585/529-9530  
800/600-3628 outside Rochester  
<http://www.catholiccourier.com>  
e-mail: [info@catholiccourier.com](mailto:info@catholiccourier.com)

President  
Bishop Matthew H. Clark

General Manager/Editor  
Karen M. Franz  
[kfranz@catholiccourier.com](mailto:kfranz@catholiccourier.com)

### Editorial Department

Assistant Editor  
Jennifer Ficaglia *Finger Lakes*  
[jficaglia@catholiccourier.com](mailto:jficaglia@catholiccourier.com)

Staff Writers  
Rob Cullivan *Genesee Valley*  
[rcullivan@catholiccourier.com](mailto:rcullivan@catholiccourier.com)  
Mike Latona *Southern Tier*  
[mlatona@catholiccourier.com](mailto:mlatona@catholiccourier.com)

Staff Photographer  
Andrea A. Dixon  
[adixon@catholiccourier.com](mailto:adixon@catholiccourier.com)

Editorial Assistant  
Louis Litzemberger  
[llitzemberger@catholiccourier.com](mailto:llitzemberger@catholiccourier.com)

Photo Intern  
James Stein

### Business Department

Office Manager  
Mary DiPonzo  
[mdiponzo@catholiccourier.com](mailto:mdiponzo@catholiccourier.com)

Circulation Manager  
Donna Stubbings  
[dstubbings@catholiccourier.com](mailto:dstubbings@catholiccourier.com)

Administrative Assistant  
Arlene S. Gall  
[agall@catholiccourier.com](mailto:agall@catholiccourier.com)

### Graphics Department

Graphics Manager  
Kim Parks  
[kparks@catholiccourier.com](mailto:kparks@catholiccourier.com)

Graphic Artist  
Linda Jeanne Rivers  
[lrivers@catholiccourier.com](mailto:lrivers@catholiccourier.com)

### Advertising Department

Account Executives  
Tracy Moses  
[tmoses@catholiccourier.com](mailto:tmoses@catholiccourier.com)

Donald P. Wilson  
[dwilson@catholiccourier.com](mailto:dwilson@catholiccourier.com)

### 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.

## Norms are 'first step' to remedy confusion

To the editor:

It is with a sense of appreciation and gratitude that I commend the leadership of the Diocese of Rochester for finally having the courage to do the right thing. I write referring to the Thursday, May 9, *Catholic Courier* article "Bishop issues liturgical norms." By issuing its "norms" the diocese is attempting to address serious abuses regarding the Sacred Liturgy. They represent a "first step" in a long series of needed steps to be taken that will clarify and resolve any misunderstandings that have arisen, on the part of some, within the local Church, as to what is considered normative Roman Catholic practice regarding the Sacred Liturgy.

The local Church must never forget that it is organically linked to the greater universal Church. In issuing these "norms" the local Church is doing what is expected of it by the Holy Father himself.

These "norms" are not "new" as some would suggest. They have been the mainstays, based on Sacred Tradition, as to whose role it is to read the Gospel text and who it is that is to "break open" its meaning in the Homily at the Mass. Those roles and functions rightly belong to the priest and deacon by the laying on of hands in their ordination.

Lay persons may give scriptural meditations or reflections in some other context, but not during the Gospel-Homily portion of the Sacred Liturgy. It is not their right, prerogative and privilege; they are not ordained. It is that simple. To espouse any other reality, where the laity and the Sacred Liturgy is concerned is to place themselves outside the scope of authentic Roman Catholic liturgical practice.

My brothers and sisters in Christ let us pray for ourselves and for the Church that we may be faithful witnesses to the Official Magisterium of the Church.

George J. Gublo  
DeWitt Avenue  
Elmira



## Urges pastors to follow rule

To the editor:

I appreciated your May 9 feature article on the liturgical norms to be followed for lay preaching. According to that article one of the norms makes perfectly clear that "lay preaching cannot occur within the celebration of the Eucharist at the moment reserved for the homily."

Regrettably, some pastors will make another norm, i.e., "lay persons can be admitted to preaching in a church or oratory if it is necessary in certain circumstances," the practice rather than the exception and

thereby get around the restriction of lay preaching at the Eucharist.

In these times when the news media is chiding us with heartbreaking reports of wrong behavior by some of our bishops and priests, I think pastors should avoid any chicanery in following these norms.

Granted, many lay preachers do an excellent job, but so can all priests if they put the same time and energy into their preparation as do lay preachers.

Father William Cosgrove  
Chestnut Ridge Road, Rochester

## Norms diminish liturgical roles of church's most active workers

To the editor:

I am writing to express my sadness after reading the article in the *Courier* about the laity and their diminished role in the liturgy. Women's voices in the pulpit and in the church are once again being silenced because of their non-ordained status. This church of ours, this body of Christ, makes me feel like a second-class member. Women are allowed to wash the linens on the altar, wash up the dishes after the celebration, vacuum and polish the pews. I'm guessing that 95 percent of our children in our religion education programs are taught by women and pre-

pared for sacraments by women, yet these same people are not valued or permitted to share during the Mass in the reading or reflecting on the Gospel which they live.

It reminds me of a time in history when black Americans, feeling their inequality, came together to boycott public transportation, local grocery stores and business run by the majority ruling "hierarchy." I wonder what chaos would be wrought if women in the church followed that historical example.

Kathy Velekkakan  
Maple Drive  
Webster

## Poverty, pro-life issues topped list at policy meeting

To the editor:

The recent political action direction meeting with Bishop Clark at the Dugan Center affirmed that many local area Catholics are concerned with the pro-life issue. The meeting format allowed the many attendees to vote for their major interests for future diocesan social justice effort. Of the many topics that arose during the session, pro-life was near the top of social concerns, just below the poverty issue.

Perhaps such enthusiastic pro-life interest is fostered by the distressing fact that the Rochester area is a major hub for the pro-abortion, anti-family movement. One needs only to look at the RU-486 abortion drug implementation study underway at the University of Rochester Medical School, or Cornell University's Weill Medical College research into "artificial womb" development to realize that the culture of death lies not far from our doorstep. Some proponents of womb de-

velopment are gleefully projecting that neither man nor woman will be necessary to produce human beings as this technology evolves.

We need to have a loud voice for life, and as Pope John Paul II has told us in Denver nine years ago, we need "to go out on the streets and into public places" for it to be heard.

Larry Angermeier  
County Road 36  
Honeoye

## Surprised at diocese's haste in firing minister over old allegation

To the editor:

I was surprised to hear about the firing by the Diocese of David Higbee, Religious Education Director at St. Thomas the Apostle Church. My wife and I have five children and have been members of St. Thomas for many years. Through our participation in the parish's adult and children's religious education programs, Irenaeus Institute programs and service on parish council, we have had many opportunities to interact with David during his

10 years at St. Thomas. We have found David to be a devout person who is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the Catholic faith, unselfishly devoting much of his time educating others about the faith. I have never observed or heard about any episodes of inappropriate behavior displayed by David while he has been at St. Thomas.

I am surprised that the Diocese would make a decision to fire someone within 48 hours of receiving an allegation of mis-

conduct that is supposed to have occurred over 10 years ago, particularly since no other complaints were received. I question whether 48 hours is sufficient time to conduct a thorough investigation and provide due process for the accused. If such an allegation were true, should someone be fired for an unfortunate indiscretion that occurred long ago? If so, many of us might be out of work.

Patrick O'Connor  
Lake Terrace, Rochester

Send your views to [letters@catholiccourier.com](mailto:letters@catholiccourier.com) or mail to PO Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624-0379.