

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.

Is the city now place for mission?

To the editor:

On June 25, 2002, I retired as Pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Rochester having served there for 17 years. It was a blessed experience as the people shared with me the presence and the movement of God in the church of the city. I am deeply grateful to the people of Our Lady of Perpetual Help for they are a beautiful and generous people whose hospitality and love reached out to touch me and the people of all cultures. They are a rainbow people coming together in vibrant liturgy and service to praise the God of all peoples. Their vision embraces the House of Mercy in their outreach to the larger community.

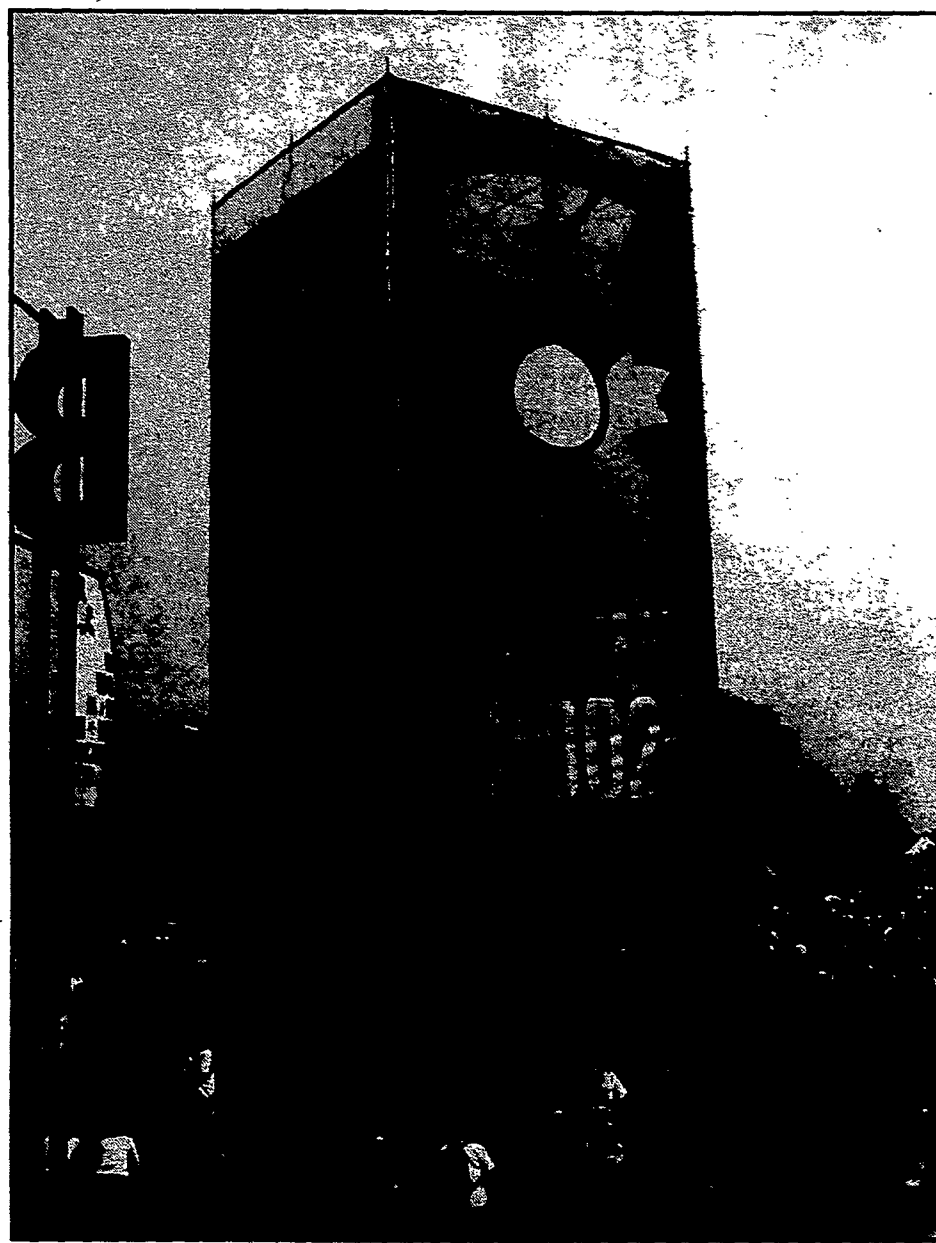
Thank you and God bless Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish as they move into the future under the pastorate of Father Peter Deckman.

In my retirement, I am now on the staff of the House of Mercy on Hudson Avenue, Rochester and live at Corpus Christi Rectory. Thank you to Sister Grace Miller, the staff and people of the House of Mercy for their tremendous hospitality and welcome. Thank you to Father Vincent Panepinto and the people of Corpus Christi for their gracious welcome.

As I travel in the areas of my work and living, many memories are triggered in my life. For a year and a half I worked in the mission of Tabasco, Mexico. I have also, several times, visited the country of Guatemala. In both countries I was saddened by the poverty and the struggles of the people. What has impacted me now is that the poverty and the struggles of the people are present here in the City of Rochester. As I drive through the streets of Rochester, the poverty and suffering are as glaring here as in Mexico, Guatemala and other Third World countries.

Over the past several years we have had many meetings about the presence of the Church in the city as we experience the shortage of priests, sisters, personnel and the declining source of revenues in the Church. The language is: "down-sizing" of the parishes, forming "mega churches," and celebrating "mega Masses." We focus energy and resources in sending personnel and money to the missions in other countries. My question: "Isn't the Church in the City of Rochester mission territory? Should we not invest more personnel, money and other resources in the mission territory of the Urban Church?"

Father Neil R. Miller
House of Mercy
Rochester



A scene from World Youth Day at Exhibition Place in Toronto.

Catholic Courier

Letter got voting data wrong

To the editor:

The letter in the July 18 *Courier* from George E. Perrin contains misinformation that must be corrected for the benefit of your readers and Catholics throughout our Diocese. The letter refers to the passage in the New York State Assembly and Senate of the Women's Health and Wellness Bill.

Senator Mike Nozzolio was the only State Senator representing parts of the Rochester Diocese to vote against this bill. He is deserving of the Church's appreciation.

Senators Randy Kuhl and James Alesi voted in favor of the "Women's Health and Wellness" bill (full State Senate vote June 17, 2002.) The bill compels Church agencies to purchase contraceptive coverage in their employee health insurance plans. If signed into law by Governor Pataki, as he has indicated he will do, hundreds of religious hospitals, schools and charitable agencies will be forced to violate their fundamental moral principles.

Our parishes, Diocesan Public Policy Committee, staff from Catholic Charities and institutions and Bishop Clark should be commended for their efforts to include conscience protection in this bill. The passage of the bill without meaningful conscience protection was opposed at the Bishop's Legislative Luncheons, the Public Policy Forum Day and addressed by parish social ministry committees throughout the Diocese through postcard mailings, petition drives and visits to senators and assemblypersons.

Catholics in the Diocese of Rochester should be aware of the accurate voting records of their elected representatives in order to ensure accountability in our system of democracy. Members of the Diocese also need to be recognized for their dedicated work in the public policy arena.

Jann K. Armantrout
Life Issues Coordinator
Diocese of Rochester

Couple traces abuse scandal to the sexual revolution

To the editor:

It seems to us that the scandal in the Church can be traced to the rebellion by prominent theologians in the 1960s and '70s against the teachings of the Catholic Church on sexual morality.

They consequently embraced the views of secular society, pushed on us by Hollywood, that sex outside of marriage is normal and acceptable.

The writings of these theologians who are in revolt against the teachings of their Church have had a powerful influence on the formation of priests and the views of bishops.

Is it a surprise then that some priests have been emboldened to break their solemn vows?

Or that some bishops have mishandled the abusers?

We are reaping what these theologians have been sowing.

We pray that the Holy Spirit will give

our bishops the wisdom, courage, and ability to educate us on authentic Catholic morality, proudly and convincingly.

We thank God for our holy, committed priests and religious. And for husbands and wives faithful to each other.

And we thank God for single people leading chaste lives and giving such good example.

Mary Lou and Ed McGarrell Jr.
Wall Street
Elmira

Priest-columnist qualified to speak broadly

To the editor:

Two books which can be helpful in the discussion of homosexuality are: *The Truth about Homosexuality* by John F. Harvey OS-FS, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 1996, and *Beyond Gay* by David Morrison, Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, Huntington, Ind. 1999.

As regarding Father Albert Shamon and some recent opinions concerning him which have been printed in the *Courier*, I would like to add one more opinion. I was a student of Father Shamon in St.

Bernard's Seminary and I have had the privilege of serving with him in this diocese since 1974. In my opinion he is eminently qualified to write, speak or preach on any subject which may concern God's people in regard to their temporal well-being and eternal salvation. Dogmatic, moral, scriptural and pastoral theology, and their practical applications, are well within Father Shamon's areas of expertise. Thank you, Father, and keep up the good work!

Father Bill Leone
St. Anne Church, Rochester