



Karin von Voigtlander/Catholic Courier

may not be of heaven, but instead, from hell.

I viewed two of the "Crossing Over" shows in the past. What caused me fear was the subject matter of the alleged communications. I find it difficult to believe that those who "passed-over" and communicated with their loved ones would discuss such matters as unfinished craft projects and funky food fetishes. I would expect, instead, that they would be speaking of their joy and peace found in their fellowship with God and encouraging their friends and relatives in their journey towards God and their next life in heaven.

The article finishes by stating that many have re-

turned to their faith as a result of this show. I hope that this is so. However, I fear a danger remains as to the substance and subject of that faith. I further fear the potential impact that the article might have on those who might recognize it as an espousal of such practice, despite the very clear and express directives of the Bible and Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Marie Marton
 Dibbles Trail
 Webster

Group seeks supporters

To the editor:
 The bishops of New York

State are to be congratulated for their exercise of leadership in issuing their recent pastoral statement on the fundamental right of parents to choose their children's schools. However, it will take more than their leadership to achieve the goal of school choice. It will require a strong grassroots effort, with parishioners across the state contacting the Governor, legislative leaders and their own senators and assemblymembers.

Since 1994 United New Yorkers for Choice in Education (UNYCE) has been engaged in the struggle for affordable access to alternatives to public education. Like the bishops, we also support a strong public sector in education. As a non-

partisan, nonsectarian organization, we have worked with the New York State Catholic Conference, educators from other Christian denominations, and both Jewish and Muslim educational leaders. We have also worked with members of the administration and both major political parties.

Each year we draw closer to our goal of passing a bill that will help parents afford to send their children to the schools those parents have chosen. As we continue to build our membership base, we will eventually prevail, and students in all schools, public and nonpublic, will benefit.

Catholic Courier readers are invited to contact the UNYCE office to join in this effort or for additional information. There are no set dues; rather, members contribute what they can afford. We may be reached at (516) 292-1224, or by mail at PO Box 4096, Hempstead, NY 11551-4096. Our e-mail address is unyce@earthlink.net.

Timothy P. Mulhearn
 President, United New Yorkers for Choice in Education

Columnist slams pope

To the editor:

So, Father McBrien launches yet another spirited attack on the Church. This time it is to suggest strongly that the sex crisis is the Pope's fault (Sept. 19). This comes as no surprise.

In 1987 McBrien co-authored a book titled *Church in Anguish*. His essay, supposedly on higher education, is mainly a criticism of John Paul II: the Pope simply does not know what the function of a university is.

A fellow Jesuit Father John J. McDermott reviewed a 1994 book *Modern Catholicism: Vatican II and After*, to which McBrien contributed, saying: "The volume proves very tendentious in its anti-authoritarian animus, especially against the Vatican, and in particular John Paul II."

This describes Father McBrien's attitude in a nutshell. In his criticism of the Dogmatic Constitution of

the Church he finds it too occupied with papal authority and not centered sufficiently on Christ. This despite the fact that this document begins with the statement "Christ is the light of humanity."

Possibly his best-known text, his 1996 book *Catholicism*, reduced the Pope's and bishops' teaching to just another opinion. This was one of the reasons why the National Conference on Catholic Bishops Committee on Doctrine gave it a failing grade: its lack of accuracy. McBrien is inclined to dislike bishops: he stated this in the *Brooklyn Tablet*, March 14, 1974. Why should he, therefore, agree with anything John Paul II, the Bishop of Rome, does? McBrien's slamming of John Paul II is an orchestrated polemic against the Church, designed to confuse and mislead the People of God. The spirit that moves him is not holy.

Jan E. Fredericks
 Birr Street
 Rochester

Stunned by lead story

To the editor:

Never in my 87 years did I ever dream I'd see the day when a Catholic newspaper would hit a person when he's down and then walk all over him. Such is the case with the story on page one of the August 29 *Courier*.

An article one by two inches on an inside page would have been enough if you felt you had to report the story which the daily paper printed in detail.

To give 6" x 10" across the entire front page to an article about an old retired priest is inexcusable. He may be guilty, but rest assured he's suffered enough thinking about his past sins.

Did you check Father's record as a priest? I'm sure in his lifetime many will remember him for the good he's done rather than for this sin of his.

Such reporting does not speak favorably on the *Courier's* management.

Kenneth Wagner
 Murphy Drive, Victor

The *Catholic Courier* provides space for readers 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 to provide a balanced representation of expressed opinions and a variety of reflections on life in the church. We will choose letters based on likely reader interest, timeliness and a sense of fair play. Our discerning readers may determine whether to agree or disagree with the opinions expressed.

Letters must not exceed 300 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 or e-mail to letters@catholiccourier.com. Please include your full name, phone number and complete address for verification.

Letters Policy