



Karin von Voigtlander/Catholic Courier

through and until the end. There was no milling around in the back, very few leaving the worship space for any reason at all, and only the occasional whisper and sharing between those sitting next to one another. We again thank Bishop Clark for his words and gentle encouragement for all of us gathered that evening to be aware of what was taking place in our midst. It was a genuine "call to worship," and, indeed, worship it was!

Good Shepherd Parish
Staff
Henrietta

Act against Roe vs. Wade

To the editor:

My question to my fellow Catholic brothers and sisters in the Faith: Where are you in the pro-life movement? Have you forgotten it or don't care that 4,000 babies are killed in this country every day? Are you still praying for the end to abortion and the conversion of those who are killing the pre-born baby, writing pro-life letters to the editor in your local newspaper, coming out to the killing centers and peacefully protesting the brutality of abortion, for both baby and mother? Or are you apathetic to the cause — letting someone else do the work because it doesn't really affect you?

January 22, 2003 the pro-choice side will be celebrating 30 years of *Roe vs. Wade*, and it's partly our fault. Where are you when the babies are being killed? And what will you say to the Lord when He asks you?

Mary Melfi
Cutter Drive

LETTERS

al sensitivity they must scrutinize wording appropriateness for leading their people to worship of God, not worship of community. After all, we are not there to be entertained.

Many of us feel that our cherished Catholic faith is subtly being chopped into little pieces. Meaningful hymns do nourish spiritual hungering. Is it too much to ask for a couple old hymns to balance the new tunes? There is aching and longing to pour heart and soul into singing hymns worthy of giving glory to God!

Joanne Lepkowski
Ross Street
Owego

Music can be inclusive

To the editor:

It was with interest that I read John Compton's letter (Nov. 28) concerning hymn singing in church and referring to St. Gerard's Church in Roanoke, Va. Having been a visitor to that church, I can verify that what he said about the service and the congregation's warmth and inclusiveness is true.

A good friend of ours, Fa-

ther Wayne Ball, was the pastor of St. Gerard's prior to Father Tom Mattingly. At the time he became pastor there, the parish needed strong leadership to bring together several factions. It was his enthusiasm and skills with people that began to make things happen. A linguist who speaks seven languages, Father Wayne initiated the Hispanic ministry, which had been absent in the Roanoke area, and made believers of the skeptical "old-timers" who began to accept the "outsiders," along with their very different musical style and language.

The black members of the parish come from a long heritage of congregational hymn-singing, as well as of reverent observance of the Sabbath — everyone always dresses in their "Sunday Best." The Hispanics bring a special joyfulness to the celebration. It is a small parish, so everyone knows everyone else, thus the camaraderie, and visitors are made to feel very welcome.

I would agree that "it is not the lyrics that moves the congregation," as Mr. Compton says, but it is not the melody, either. It is the

leadership, and it sounds as if Father Mattingly has done a good job of carrying on Father Wayne Ball's mission.

Barbara Rice
Braunston Drive
Penfield

Thankful for 'quiet' rite

To the editor:

This letter is a follow up to Bishop Clark's description of the joint celebration of Confirmation between Guardian Angels and Good Shepherd parishes in his recent column *Along the Way*. We, the staff, of Good Shepherd would like to thank

Bishop Clark for his genuine and pastoral "call to worship" at the end of his homily. The quiet and prayerful silence of the people gathered to witness and celebrate the 81 young people receiving Confirmation on Monday November 25 was unlike any other Confirmation any of us has experienced before. For the first 15-20 minutes into the actual Confirmation Rite, the combined music ministry of Guardian Angels and Good Shepherd parishes offered no music whatsoever. Yet, there was a beautiful quiet that accompanied those moving forward to be anointed. This prayerful silence lasted

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.

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Letters Policy