



Karin von Voigtlander/Catholic Courier

This painting of Madonna and child decorates the hallway of the former Ss. Peter and Paul Parish rectory at 720 W. Main St. in Rochester. The rectory is now home to five Sisters of St. Joseph who will live in community there along with new Catholic school teachers.

MORE LETTERS

— and so we should be, for Catholic with a small “c” means comprehensive and universal. God gave us free will and made us diverse, perhaps as the young St. Thomas More suggested, because he wanted to be worshipped in many different ways. It refreshes my spirit to be part of a faith including roughly two billion people in the world — of all levels of education and income, and of various cultures. In faith we are one, but let us celebrate our diversity! *The Catholic Courier* is, in truth, a Catholic newspaper.

James S. Taylor
Aurora

War needed to defend way of life

To the editor:

Sister Schoelles and the Fuersts in the Jan. 16 issue of the *Catholic Courier* comfortably condemn the actions that may be taken against Iraq. The writers refuse to accept the harsh reality that an asymmetrical war of State-sponsored ter-

rorism is being waged by Iraq and terrorists in the name of religion against the United States and others.

A military encounter with Iraq is neither a “first strike” nor a “preemptive strike.” 9/11, the genocide in the Sudan, the murder of civilians in the Bali disco etc. are the “first strike”(s).

In the “West and the Rest” (2002) Roger Scrouton comments:

“Terrorism is not, after all, an enemy but a method used by the enemy. The enemy is of two kinds: the tyrant dictator, and the religious fanatic whom the tyrant protects. To act against the first is feasible ... But to act against the second requires a credible alternative to the absolutes with which he conjures. It requires not only to believe in something, but to study how to put our beliefs into practice.”

Just as threatening as are the weapons of mass destruction, nihilism and moral relativism are corroding the core beliefs which are the basis of Western civilization — Christianity, reason and Law — and its survival.

The moral basis of an

armed encounter with Iraq is simply our right to defend and protect our lives, culture and religion from extinction.

Ronald J. Buttarazzi
W. Church Street
Fairport

Why reduce uniqueness?

To the editor:

Why are all the churches losing their Roman Catholic individuality. Why are the statues disappearing? Why is the tabernacle being moved from the main altar and visible display to a side altar, out of the way?

Are we ashamed of who we are and what we represent?

My home parish is St. Cecilia's and the feeling of warmth and sacredness is an essential part of our church. I am very afraid that we will be losing that in the near future. I fully understand that our faith and religion is more than the building, but the feeling of spirituality does come from the surroundings.

Please stop to think about what is happening. We are already short of clergy — both nuns and priests — why make finding a vocation even more difficult. Are you attempting to make the Catholic Church more ecumenical so that we look like the churches of all the other denominations? Is the reason to enable clergy from other denominations to say “Mass” in our churches? If that is the reason, couldn't it still be possible to keep our uniqueness and not just be part of the crowd?

Mary Anne Adams
Walzford Road
Rochester

Central spot helps people fix their eyes

To the editor:

Allan Miller's letter and the editorial refutation concerning the removal of the tabernacle in the cathedral merits consideration (Dec. 12). The editors correctly quote the 1984 recommendation from Ceremonial of Bishops “in accordance with a very ancient tradition.” Today, however, fewer Catholics than ever believe that God is truly present in the Blessed Sacrament.

The so-called experts say

that it is only a symbol — and not even the primary symbol; primacy belongs to the people. We, sinners, are more significant than the contents of the tabernacle. Go figure.

In the light of this spiritual atrophy, it seems strange that the Renovation Committee wants to move the tabernacle. Canon Law decrees that the tabernacle be placed in a setting that is “prominent, conspicuous, beautifully decorated, and suitable for prayer” (#938.2). Here we are, spending millions making the cathedral brighter, “more reflective of its inner beauty” — and then we push aside the reason for beautification. Why shelve the true gift — God, as one preacher intimated, and venerate the wrappings? Does anyone believe that a 12-seater chapel will be more conspicuous than the cathedral proper?

In the November 1999 liturgical meeting of bishops in Washington, D.C., bishops, archbishops, and cardinals spoke about how much their congregations valued having the tabernacle front and center in the sanctuary. Think for a moment: had there been an iron-clad Vatican mandate to remove tabernacles, the bishops would not be talking about keeping them central.

The recommendation is, after all, only a recommendation. Our present, visual age seems to require that we keep what is important, and no one is more important than Jesus, front and center. “Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, who inspires and perfects our faith” (Hebrews 12:2).

Jan E. Fredericks
Birr Street
Rochester

Letters Policy

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.