



Karin von Voigtlander/Catholic Courier

MORE LETTERS

brutal and ruthless, and the spirit of ruthless brutality will enter into the very fiber of our national life, infecting Congress, the courts, the policeman on the beat, the man in the street... Conformity would be the only virtue, and every man who refused to conform would pay the penalty." Wilson was issuing a dire prediction, not promoting conformity.

Instead of drawing a lesson from history, Ms. Bosco has twisted the past beyond all recognition and besmirched Wilson's reputation.

Is Ms. Bosco just lazy or simply ignorant of the past? Or is she so infected with self-righteous arrogance that she believes anyone connected with any war must be evil? Regardless of the answer, it is she that has ignored the past.

Ed Groszewski
Hinkley Lane
Rochester

Will backers put money behind word?

To the editor:

I support the "living wage" program reported in the August 7, 2003 *Catholic Courier*. However, when businesses participate in the program, how do the do-gooders and politicians who demand the living wage ensure that those business owners will receive an income adequate to support the business and his/her family? Will they and all

who agree with them shop exclusively at, and contract with, only businesses paying the living wage, even when the prices and costs are lower at competitors who are not in the program?

Robert S. Kowalski
Alfonso Drive
Rochester

Does Jesus care about 'petty' issues?

To the editor:

The older I get, the more amused I'm becoming over what I perceive as petty little concerns. If we as Catholic Christians are to lead others — and one another — into a deeper relationship with Christ, then why are we so divided over what should be done with the cathedral, and how it should be done? Does Jesus really care? I'm just asking.

Also, does Jesus Christ believe that Harry Potter is teaching witchcraft to our young people — in addition to a number of us adults? Again, just asking.

Finally, at least for now, does Jesus have a preference for the Mass in Latin or in English? He didn't speak in either language while on Earth. C'mon everyone, let's wake up. There's work to be done. I fail to see how our mission involves these petty little concerns.

Robert P. Cirre
West Meadows Drive
Rochester

Consider call to church ministry



Patricia Schoelles, SSJ

The Moral Life

I've been in the business of preparing people for church ministry for 16 years. In 1987 I worked at St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, teaching moral theology and doing formation work with young men preparing for priesthood. Here at St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry, I work with both men and women preparing for service as deacons and lay ecclesial ministers.

Through my work I've come to realize that the journey from first experiencing the "call" to work in the church on behalf of the coming of the kingdom of God to actually doing it is complex.

Lately I've been reflecting on what happens in the life of a person who embarks on this journey. Like everyone else, I worry about too few men considering priesthood. I am also aware that Catholic parishes and service agencies need many more people than are now coming forward for other ministries. I even spend a few minutes ruminating about what needs to happen in order for us to attract more qualified people for this type of work.

Unfortunately, my solutions are rather scarce. I don't think, for example, that we can recreate today the atmosphere that must have permeated Auburn a few decades ago, when so many men and women accepted the call to the ministry available to them in those days, primarily priesthood and religious life.

Sometime we should engage in a formal study of the kind of interaction between families, parishes and the surrounding culture in that great center of Catholic life! I don't think there is any "one fix" for the situation that prevails today. In fact, I have stopped listening to most of the solutions offered for this condition.

We can, however, all identify traits that are important for those who may be called to accept a church vocation. My own list includes:

- Having a sense that God is inviting you to move to a deeper level of service.
- Feeling satisfaction when participating in church activities.
- Wanting to join with others in helping God's kingdom to flourish on earth, through the mission of the church.
- Having a sense of enjoyment in thinking about the ways of God in one's own life and the lives of others, and in working to enhance the understanding and experience of God.
- Having a respect for forms of piety different from one's own.

People who sense that God may be inviting them to pursue a church vocation have more to do than simply "have a sense of it." Taking up a vocation entails a fair amount of preparation and discernment. For example, an academic program of learning to think about God and understand God's ways is important. Church workers need knowledge of the Bible, church history and structure, doctrine and moral teaching, and some skill in working with people who need special help in times of crisis. People seeking church work also need to know how to perform tasks such as leading prayer, facilitating meetings, working with young people, old people, demanding people, generous volunteers, and people from other faiths and walks of life. Taking up church work also requires a developed ability to be self-reflective and to become aware of one's own shortcomings, strengths and personal pitfalls.

The work of the church relies on institutions such as St. Mary's Seminary and St. Bernard's to prepare people for church work as priests, deacons and lay ecclesial ministers. The work of the church relies also on people like you considering whether you — that's right, you — might be called to take up this work yourself. Think about it.

Sister Schoelles is president of St. Bernard's School of Theology and Ministry.

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