



Editor's Note: The intended purpose of this "For the Record" feature on the Diocese of Cleveland web site is to correct misinformation or omissions in stories written or aired by the media. In this particular case, the reader reaction directed to the Diocese following publication of Cleveland Plain Dealer columnist Regina Brett's April 20th opinion piece "Cardinals Chose More of the Same" urged a response:

Newspaper columns are expressions of opinion, however, the fact that they are opinion, does not preclude the author from basic journalistic practices such as factual accuracy, fairness, balance and good taste. There is no excuse or legitimate reason for any column to be blatantly offensive. There is a distinct boundary between a piece which is thought-provoking and one that is offensive. Regina Brett's April 20, 2005 column "Cardinals Chose More of the Same" crossed that boundary into the abyss of "offensive." To reference the new Pope as "rats" and to suggest that his age, "at least he's old," implies that he will die sooner than later, is outright loathsome and clearly offensive. Such writing could only be offered out of ignorance and anger.

Columnist Brett has long expressed her distaste with the Catholic Church and its teachings, this time however, she not only offended the Church, she also offended those who stand for good journalism.