

Bumper-sticker call to pride causes concern

I received the Archbishop's Annual Appeal along with a bumper-sticker that reads, "Proud to be Catholic." Frankly, I am embarrassed by and concerned about the message.

What justifies stirring a toxic brew of pride and religious impulse? Nothing. While there might be such a thing as healthy pride, such in my experience has always dissolved upon reflection into more gratitude and humility; pride is never the final word.

In this regard, it is fair to say that pride in all its many forms is the enemy of holiness. There is one exception, of course. St. Paul allows us to boast in the cross of Christ by which the follower and the world are crucified to each other. But pride in the cross is not pride at all, not in any ordinary sense, for it annuls every other instance of pride, even pride in a religious institution. In the end, the bumper-sticker call to pride that I received in the mail is inconsistent with the call to holiness that I received at baptism.

Jeffrey M. Ross

Baltimore

Ross has a Ph.D. in moral theology from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

To read more letters to the editor, [click here](#).