Tax plan ‘horrible’ news to charities

By Liz S. Armstrong
WASHINGTON (NC) — Buried among the complex details comprising the U.S. Treasury Department’s tax reform plan are proposals which could bring unsettling financial news to charities and donors alike.

“It’s not bad news; it’s horrible news. Horrendous,” said Bob Smucker, vice president for government relations at Independent Sector, a coalition of non-profit public interest and charitable groups. He estimated the plan, if implemented, could precipitate a 20-25 percent reduction in charitable contributions nationwide, or a loss of some $13 billion.

Causing particular concern to charitable groups are suggestions to:
• Only allow a tax deduction for charitable contributions for that portion of the taxpayer’s donations exceeding 2 percent of the taxpayer’s adjusted gross income, and
• Drop permanently the charitable deduction now allowed, at least on a temporary basis, to taxpayers who do not itemize.

Although it is hard to define exactly what the proposed changes would mean to individual tax returns, the 2-percent proposal would apparently work like this:
A taxpayer with an adjusted gross income of $25,000 who usually gives $1,200 a year to charity could no longer deduct the whole $1,200. Under the new plan, the taxpayer could only use $700 for deduction.

Continued on page 3

Nearly Nativity time

A shepherd offers his gift of a little lamb to Mary and the Christ Child as St. Joseph looks on in this rehearsal for the annual Nativity play which Our Lady of the Lakes in Miami Lakes, like many other parishes, will be staging the week before Christmas. From left, Laura Leon, Joseph Leon, and Brei Thompson as the shepherd. (Voice photo/Prent Browning)

Many Catholic teens having sex

OK birth control, have seen porno

(Last in a 3-part series)

By Ana Rodriguez-Soto
Voice News Editor

Almost half of the high school seniors in Catholic schools polled by The Voice have engaged in sexual intercourse, and almost a quarter are having sexual relations regularly.

The Voice survey of a sampling of 181 twelfth-graders in six Dade and Broward Catholic high schools also found that the majority of the students believe sexual intercourse outside of marriage is okay.

In addition, almost all of those polled disagree with Church teaching that using artificial methods of birth control is always immoral. A majority said they would consider using such methods once they get married.

One area where there was agreement: The vast majority of students believe abortion is wrong in all except life-threatening circumstances, and two-thirds think abortion on demand should be outlawed.

These statistics emerged in the answers to 23 questions which constituted the third and last part of the Voice’s 66-point survey. In addition to delving into the teenagers’ sexual beliefs and practices, the questions examined the degree of pornography to which the seniors have been exposed.

In the previous two issues of The Voice, the results dealing with religious beliefs and practices as well as drug and alcohol use were reported.

Sexual experience
One overwhelming message came through in this third part of the survey: The seniors are not as sexually naive or inexperienced as many parents and educators might expect.

Forty-seven percent of those polled (Continued on page 14)
Conscientious objection endorsed

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (NC) — The North Carolina Council of Churches endorsed the concept of selective conscientious objection and asked that it be incorporated into federal statutes. Father George M. Kloster, chairman of the council's Peace and National Security Committee, told the organization's executive board that selective objections could be used in two contemporary applications: military people who reject the morality of nuclear warfare, and those who may be called upon if the United States intervenes militarily in Central America. U.S. law permits military exemptions for persons universally opposed to war but does not extend exemptions to those opposed to a particular war.

Bishops oppose sterilization

NAIROBI, Kenya (NC) — Kenya's bishops, including Cardinal Maurice Otunga of Nairobi, have criticized a sterilization program sponsored by two charitable organizations as an "insult to the women and men of Kenya, a violation of human dignity." The bishops' statement, published in local newspapers, described the tubal ligation process as "mutilation of the reproductive organs for the direct purpose of preventing conception." The bishops called on Kenyans to refrain from "such an unfortunate approach to controlling fertility" and called on the government not to support the program.

Pope mourns deaths in India

VATICAN CITY (NC) — Pope John Paul II has expressed sorrow over the poisonous gas leak in central India which killed or injured thousands of people. At the end of his weekly general audience, the pope referred to "a new suffering for a people who have been so tried in recent months." On Dec. 3, poisonous gas leaked from a pesticide factory on the outskirts of the central Indian town of Bhopal and spread through nearby residential areas.

Fr. Flanagan stamp in the works

WASHINGTON (NC) — Father Edward J. Flanagan, legendary founder of Boys Town, will be featured on a 1986 Great American Series stamp, the U.S. Postal Service announced. A design for the stamp was not released. The priest, who died in 1948 of a heart ailment, was immortalized on film in 1938, when Tracy won an Academy Award, helped to establish Boys Town as one of the nation's most successful youth training centers.

Archbishop Casey on the mend

DENVER (NC) — Archbishop James V. Casey of Denver was released from St. Joseph Hospital in Denver Dec. 13 following 38 days of care for a ruptured abdominal organ and resulting complications, a hospital spokesman said. The 70-year-old head of Colorado's largest diocese will be recuperating at his home in public relations until he is able to return to his pastoral duties. The archdiocese was responding to stories that appeared in New York papers on the New York Appellate Division of the Supreme Court "did not contain any new issues." This was on appeal to the New York Court of Appeals. A Vatican official said recently that a list of its objections to the book is forthcoming.

Priest barred from preaching

WARSAW, Poland (NC) — Cardinal Jozef Glemp, Poland's primate, has banned a priest known for his outspoken attacks on Poland's Communist government from preaching in Warsaw churches. The cardinal also criticized "preachers who wish to voice their own teaching in their own way." CARDINAL GLEMP said that there had been an "influx of complaints" about Father Stanislaw Malkowski, and repeated warnings to him, including a Nov. 15 warning from Warsaw Auxiliary Bishop Wladyslaw Mziodek. The cardinal's statement was reported in the Washington Post. The story said that the statement was dated Nov. 24, two days before Cardinal Glemp traveled to the Vatican for conferences with Pope Paul II. Father Malkowski would be allowed to continue his religious duties at a Warsaw cemetery where he holds his only official religious post, the newspaper reported. THE CARDINAL said that church authorities have received complaints from Catholics about priests who "allow themselves to carry away the world's religious feelings." Instead of "preaching divine truths," the priests "enter into non-theological discussions that have nothing in common with true patriotism," he said.

He said the criticisms particularly concerned the activities of Father Malkowski. The priest is considered even more fiery a critic of the government than Father Jerzy Popieluszko who was murdered in October, the Washington Post reported. The Polish government said three Interior Ministry police officers have confessed to the killing. An Interior Ministry colonel will be indicted for plotting the crime, according to the government newspaper.

ALL FOUR potentially face the death penalty.

‘Christ Among Us’ not shelved

SAN FRANCISCO (NC) — Harper and Row has announced that it is publishing a new edition of Anthony J. Wilhelm’s “Christ Among Us,” a book that the Vatican ordered Paulist Press to quit publishing and distributing last spring. The new edition will not carry the imprimatur, the official church clearance for publication. More than 1.6 million copies of the book were sold between 1967 and 1984, making it the most widely used non-catechetical text in the United States. Last April, however, the Vatican asked that the imprimatur be withdrawn from the book, on grounds that it was unsuitable for use as a catechetical text. Father William de la Salle said recently that a list of its objections to the book is forthcoming.

Officials fight N.Y. Archdiocese

NEW YORK (NC) — The New York Archdiocese has denied charges by city officials that it has broadened its dispute over hiring of homosexuals to challenge laws against discrimination in areas such as race, sex and religion. According to an archdiocesan statement, a brief of appeal submitted to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court "did not contain any new issues." The archdiocese was responding to stories that appeared in New York papers the previous day in which city attorney Frederick Schwarz was quoted as saying, "I can't believe that the archdiocese is free to defend itself in this case without preventing us from barring discrimination on the basis of race, sex or religion."

Park Service allows nativity scene

WASHINGTON (NC) — The National Park Service will still allow a nativity scene to be erected in its annual Christmas display despite objections raised by the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Interior Department spokesman Tom Wilson said that the department in essence responded to the B'Neill B'rith criticisms by reaffirming its approval for the nativity scene in a statement a day earlier. That pledge said the scene would be included in the federally sponsored Christmas Pageant for Peace, which takes place annually alongside the National Christmas Tree on the Ellipse, next to the White House.

Bank protests apartheid

TORONTO (NC) — The Bank of Nova Scotia, Canada's fourth largest, said it would stop buying South African gold coins from the South African Chamber of Mines after the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and other church groups protested the purchases. The bank's decision "will send a signal to the international financial community that there is increasingly less enthusiasm about supporting the apartheid regime in South Africa," said a spokesman for the Canadian bishops.
Tax plan may help poor, hurt charities

Another proposed change with possible ramifications for the poor — outside of the changes to charitable contribution deductions — would be an end to deductions for taxpayers' payments of local and state taxes. As some analysts suggested, this could adversely affect city and state services by forcing states and localities to lower taxes to help taxpayers cope with the burden imposed by loss of the deduction.

Smucker, whose Independent Sector represents such non-profit public interest and charitable organizations as the U.S. Catholic Conference, National Conference of Catholic Charities, American Red Cross and National Wildlife Federation, said the proposed tax changes come at a time when the voluntary sector is already being called upon to do more for the disadvantaged because of federal budget cutbacks.

This "flies right in the face of strengthening the private sector," he said. The 2-percent proposal "would just decimate giving," Smucker predicted. "That effect would just be enormous because of the major tax disincentive to give to charity."

"Quite clearly, the 2-percent threshold will have a substantial impact on what small and moderate contributors will do," said Matthew H. Ahmann, associate director for governmental relations for the National Conference of Catholic Charities. With the 2-percent rule, "the impact on charitable groups will be severe," especially the countless charities relying on the small - and moderate - donation contributors...
It's hard to stop rumor about Jesus sex film

Try, try again

By NC News Service

The office of Illinois attorney general has launched a “determined” national effort to kill a false, 7-year-old rumor that a movie on the alleged sex life of Jesus is being produced by a Chicago-area filmmaker.

Bill Schaub, information officer for the attorney general, said the office has begun a “slow and methodical” letter-writing campaign, soliciting the help of nationally syndicated columnists, television evangelists, major church denominations and leaders in “putting the word out” that the rumor is not true.

“It is incumbent upon us to do anything we can to stop this,” Schaub said in a telephone interview.

He estimated that the Illinois attorney general’s office has received more than 180,000 letters since last December alone and an average of 15 telephone calls a week protesting the purported movie. Some of the letters are reproduced copies addressed to previous attorneys general.

The rumor about the bogus movie stems from a 1978 article in a now-defunct Chicago-area gossip magazine, Modern People, which reported that a film portraying Jesus as a homosexual was being planned in Denmark.

The film eventually was cancelled, but the rumor took on a life of its own.

Modern People began receiving thousands of letters a week and about 20 phone calls a day protesting what some believed to be the role of the magazine in the film’s production. At the same time a flood of protests from church organizations and individuals began pouring into the office of the Illinois attorney general, urging legal action against the film-makers.

Schaub said the action to counter the rumor is being undertaken because the number of letters and phone calls his office continues to receive each year from people who are “greatly distressed” shows no sign of abating.

“There is no need for this new statute,” said John S. Baker Jr., a lawyer arguing on behalf of the state of Alabama.

“It coerces only silence,” Baker said of the law. “It does not coerce religious belief. It does not affirm prayer, but decided to consider the prayer, constitutional issues are raised and ‘you’re allowing the state to promote religion,’ Williams told the high court.

He said that an earlier Alabama law merely calling for a moment of silence for meditation but not specifying prayer was sufficient. In contrast, the statute mentioning prayer implies ‘that prayer is the preferred activity,’ he added.

“There is no hindrance for any child from prayer under the moment of meditation statute,” Williams said. “There is no need for this new statute.”

Justice Lewis F. Powell questioned whether tax exemptions for churches and related activities promote religion more than “this little statute.”

Justice Lewis F. Powell questioned whether tax exemptions for churches and related activities promote religion more than “this little statute.”

Williams said he had no problem with such tax exemptions but disagrees with the Alabama law because, he said, it singles out prayer as a favored practice children should engage in at public school.

As is its typical practice, the Supreme Court took no action after hearing the oral arguments on the case. Its decision is expected by the end of its current term in July.

WASHINGTON (NC) — Lawyers supporting an Alabama law permitting time for silent prayer in public school classrooms told the U.S. Supreme Court Dec. 4 that the statute accommodates children’s desires to “dedicate their day” to God.

But an opponent, in oral arguments before the high court, criticized the law as a “backdoor” bid to force prayers into classrooms.

“The law, which sets aside a period of up to a minute for individual meditation and silent prayer in public school classrooms, ‘accommodates those who feel compelled in conscience to dedicate their day at the opening’,” said John S. Baker Jr., a lawyer arguing on behalf of the state of Alabama.


He noted that 23 states have laws similar to the Alabama statute.

The case, Wallace vs. Jaffree, arose when Ishmael Jaffree, an attorney and self-described agnostic, challenged Alabama laws permitting the period of silent prayer and meditation teacher-led prayer.

Jaffree’s suit was dismissed by U.S. District Judge W. Brvard Hand of Mobile, Ala., in 1985, but the decision was overturned by a federal appeals court.

The Supreme Court then agreed with the federal appeals court in affirming the ban on teacher-led prayer, but decided to consider the issue of silent prayer separately.

Paul M. Bator, deputy solicitor general in the Department of Justice, argued for the prayer statute as a friend-of-the-court, added that under the Alabama law “the opportunity to pray is enhanced, made easier.”

Nonetheless, he acknowledged, students already have the right to pray silently in their own minds anytime they wish.

“What this statute does is add an additional opportunity” to pray in the classroom, he said. “In this uncoerced, peaceful atmosphere it is permissible for some students to dedicate their day to God.”

But Ronnie L. Williams, Jaffree’s attorney, said the statute “is a blatant attempt to accommodate religious belief. “This is a blatant attempt to do through the back door what cannot be done through the front door,” he said.

By specifically saying that the minute of silence can be used for prayer, constitutional issues are raised and “you’re allowing the state to promote religion,” Williams told the high court.

He said that an earlier Alabama law merely calling for a moment of silence for meditation but not specifying prayer was sufficient. In contrast, the statute mentioning prayer implies “that prayer is the preferred activity,” he added.

“There is no hindrance for any child from prayer under the moment of meditation statute,” Williams said. “There is no need for this new statute.”

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Silent prayers

Moment-of-silence issue goes before Supreme Court
NOTRE DAME, Ind. (NC) — The stereotype of parish life is no longer a priest alone leading a flock of docile lay people does not exist today, according to a report released Dec. 10 by the Notre Dame Study of Catholic Parish Life.

The Catholic Church in the United States 20 years after the Second Vatican Council has become more "activistic" not only in religious, but also in lay responsibility, according to the report. It said "unpaid laypersons conduct many of the important ministries of the parish."

"The picture of a parish where Father O'Brien took care of God, Sister Cerita ran the school and the people met their needs and placed lay said 'Hail Marys' would be a woefully inadequate stereotype of U.S. Catholic parishes in the 1980s," the report said.

It was released by Msgr. Joseph Gremillion, director of Notre Dame's Institute for Pastoral and Social Ministry, and David C. Lege, director of Notre Dame Study of Contemporary Society.

Based on the analysis of 1,100 Catholic parishes in the United States, the report found that parishes are large and getting larger. Twenty percent of the parishes, those with more than 5,000 members and another 20 percent serve between 2,500 and 5,000 people.

While more than 85 percent of Catholics polled "feel their parish meets their spiritual needs well," 75 percent said they "would not feel very upset about the prospect of leaving their parish" for another.

Also, the large majority of U.S. Catholics do not shop around for parishes but attend the parish in the area in which they live, according to the report.

It found that parish governing patterns, such as parish councils, are still in the experimental stage. Direct opposition to liturgical change is not great, the study found, but "a touch of uneasiness" is registered in some areas; 20 percent felt uneasy about women Communion ministers and 17 percent about lay Communion ministers in general. Fifteen percent said they do not like the Communion cup.

While the report found that the political viewpoints of Catholics vary greatly, it said there are "signs of awakening to larger community issues of social service, justice and peace."

Those polled wanted better church understanding and staff capabilities in areas such as divorce and remarriage, alcoholism and family finances, and worried about inadequate religious education for both teenagers and adults.

Future reports will examine parish membership, participation and activities; leadership, liturgy and spirituality; the parish as community; the relationship between the parish and the wider community; religious education, formation and beliefs; and parish budgets and finances.

An examination of key findings is planned at a conference scheduled for next May 29-30 in Chicago.

WASHINGTON (NC) — A task force set up by the national organizations of the U.S. bishops and men and women religious has called for "expanded lay ministry" as a major part of Catholic personnel planning.

"The (church's) personnel crisis in the United States is serious," said Bishop Thomas Grady of Orlando, Fla., task force chairman, in an introduction to the group's final report.

Lay ministry figured in all the major personnel planning areas that the task force identified.

After analyzing recent and projected trends in the numbers of U.S. priests and religious, the task force concluded, that the nation's growing Catholic population will need "more, professional ministers," but the number of priests and religious is likely to continue declining at least until the end of the century.

This situation, it said, carries a number of implications, among them:

• A need for "new models of collaborative ministry" and a "theology of collaborative ministry among priests, religious and lay!"

• A need to develop "a theology of lay ministry," provisions for "training, funding and placing lay people in ministry positions," and guidelines for fair treatment and for equitable wages and benefits for lay ministers.

• A need "for greater emphasis on vocations and recruitment" to the priesthood and religious life without sacrificing quality "in the pursuit of quantity."

The task force was jointly established in 1982 by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men and the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. The nation's nuns, bishops make up the membership of the NCCB, while major superiors of religious orders of men and women form the CNSM and LCWR respectively.

Divine Providence Sister Lora Ann Quintone, an ex officio member of the task force as LCWR's executive director, said in an interview that she viewed the task force's most important work as focusing on "policy questions that have to be raised" because of the decline in the numbers of priests and nuns.

She called the current decline in traditional church vocations "a sign from God that a whole lot more people have to take on the responsibilities of ministry."

That also means, however, that the church must be able to develop policies and structures that will enable them to do it, she added.

WASHINGTON (NC) — Why are American Catholic seminarians and religious so frequently questioned? Questionnaires have been sent to more than 4,300 theology seminarians and religious for comparative purposes, but some new categories have been added, he said.

Researchers are wondering if there is a "common denominator" that leads Catholic men today to become priests, he said.

"Society today is far different from the society that gave us an abundance of religious vocations in the past," he commented. "Through the eyes of our seminarians we are searching for those elements which are in tune with modern society and which might lead us to a better way of encouraging vocations to the religious life."

The Center for the Study of Youth Development Of The Catholic University of America is coordinating the data-gathering, under the direction of Father Hendrick and Dean Hoge, chairman of the university's sociology department.

Father Hendrick said the last such general study of American Catholic seminarians was done in 1969 by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate.

Many of the questions in the new survey follow the CARA survey for comparative purposes, but some new categories have been added, he said.

One of these, he said, is more extensive questioning on previous educational and career background in recognition that the church is experiencing many more vocations later in life.

Another new area, he said, focuses on financial factors seminarians are facing.

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Seminarians asked why on vocations
Parents’ faith top influence on kids

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. (NC) — The family, especially parents, are the No. 1 influence on a young person’s faith, youth ministers and educators told the Inland Catholic, newspaper of the Diocese of San Bernardino.

In a report in the newspaper on values and the young, the ministers added that the church needs to help parents transfer their own faith and values to children.

“We need to enable parents to grow in their own personal and spiritual life, so that they can speak clearly in words and actions for their kids,” said Father Robert Miller, pastor of St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Rialto, Calif.

Adult leaders of the parish community must “love being there,” he added. “If parish life is an ordeal, this is going to transfer to the youth.”

Joseph Baker, director of youth ministry for the Diocese of San Bernardino, said, “Each parish has the responsibility to implement youth ministry, to make the invitation to youth to become part of the community. This is precisely what youth ministry is all about: fostering community and passing on the tradition.”

DENVER (NC) — American teenagers are less concerned with the threat of nuclear weapons than their German counterparts, according to a 16-year-old West German girl who toured the United States as part of a disarmament group.

The girl, Juliane Kerlen, said in an interview with The Denver Catholic Register, the archdiocesan newspaper, that if teens throughout the world banded together, nuclear disarmament was possible.

“I really do believe that if teenagers all over would unite in their efforts to oppose the nuclear arms race, they could be a major factor in stopping it,” she said.

Kerlen was part of the Children of War tour, which brought 24 young people from 14 countries throughout the world to 36 cities in the United States.

According to its sponsors, the Religious Task Force of the Mobilization for Survival, an interfaith coalition, the tour’s purpose was to try to give young Americans encouragement for change in the face of the threat of nuclear war.

“One reason there may be more interest in the arms race in Germany than in the United States is because Germans still remember the destruction of their country from World War II, Kerlen said.

“Many people see the parallel between World War II and a possible nuclear war. They have not forgotten the nightmare of that war,” she said.

Another reason Germans are especially concerned is because of the proximity of American and Russian bombs, she said.

“We are a very small country surrounded by superpowers who control the strings. Deploying the missiles in our country is very frightening to the people.”

“Anyone who welcomes a little child like this in My name, welcomes Me.”

Mt. 18:5

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Penance ‘crisis’

Pope speaks on confession sin, divorce

WASHINGTON (NC) — The world today has lost its “sense of sin,” and the “sacrament of penance is in crisis,” Pope John Paul II said in a major new document released Dec. 11.

In the 143-page text, “Reconciliation and Penance,” Pope John Paul also warned against the idea of “social sin” that would reduce personal freedom and responsibility.

The document was released simultaneously at the Vatican and in Washington by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The pope reaffirmed church teaching on the existence and nature of mortal sin and venial sin, and he said it was “an essential element of faith” that Christ instituted the sacrament of penance as the ordinary means of forgiveness of sins after baptism.

It would be “foolish” and “presumptuous,” the pope said, “to claim to receive forgiveness while doing without the sacrament” of penance.

He reiterated church teaching on the need to confess mortal sins

Rome (NC) — At the end of five years of talks by Pope John Paul II about married love, culminating in a strong defense of the encyclical “Humanae Vitae” (Of Human Life), several theologians have expressed differing views about the purpose and effect of the pope’s teachings.

In an interview with the National Catholic News Service, some said they saw the weekly talks as offering a new perspective on marriage and love individually and rejected use of general absolution except in extraordinary circumstances, under the strict norms spelled out in the church’s general and liturgical law.

“Reconciliation and Penance” is based on the discussions on that topic by the 1983 world Synod of Bishops. It was dated Dec. 2, the first Sunday of Advent.

Other difficult issues with which he dealt include debates over the theology of sin and penance, the decline in use of the sacrament of penance, general absolution, and the pastoral care of people who have married outside the church and are unable to receive the sacraments.

Some of his sharpest language was directed against trends of thought that would deny or play down personal sin and the need for the sacrament of penance.

The renewal of the rites of penance after the Second Vatican Council “does not sanction any illusion or alteration” in the church’s view of sacramental penance as “the ordinary way of obtaining forgiveness and the remission of serious sins committed after baptism,” the pope wrote.

“The conclusion must be that personal and not collective, just as sin is a deep personal matter,” he said.

While insisting that “sin, in the proper sense, is always a personal act,” the pope also added: “That from another point of view every sin is social, insofar as and because it also has social repercussions. There is no sin, not even the most intimate and secret one, the most strictly individual one, that does not concern the person committing it.”

The pope also rejected the idea that the only mortal sin is “an act of fundamental option” to reject God.

In reply the pope declared that “mortal sin exists also when a person knowingly and willingly, for whatever reason, chooses something gravely disordered.”

Just before the end of the document, Pope John Paul addressed the particularly delusive pastoral issue of the divorced and remarried, people who are living together without being married, and priests living “irregular situations.”

In such situations the church expresses “compassion and mercy” but “does not agree to call good evil and evil good,” the pope said.

Persons “who are not at the present moment in the objective conditions required” may not receive the sacraments of penance and the Eucharist, he said.

But the church “ever seeks to offer... reconciliation” and asks those people to “maintain contact with the Lord” through prayer, attendance at Mass, and other acts of piety, he said.

Pope’s 5-year talks end, now theologians react

ROME (NC) — At the end of five years of talks by Pope John Paul II about married love, culminating in a strong defense of the encyclical “Humanae Vitae” (Of Human Life), several theologians have expressed differing views about the purpose and effect of the pope’s teachings.

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It would be “foolish” and “presumptuous,” the pope said, “to claim to receive forgiveness while doing without the sacrament” of penance.

He reiterated church teaching on the need to confess mortal sins

No pope had ever spoken so long on a single theme.

“It isn’t a matter of theological arguments, but of assertion of authority,” said Father Sean O’Riordan, a professor at Rome’s Alphonse Academy of Moral Theology.

Father O’Riordan, 68, who has written a book on the history of the 2,000-year-old sacrament, said the pope’s words literally.

“There are many couples who love each other while practicing contraception. Their love has to be purified, that’s all.”

Fr. Pierre Primeau

ten a book on the theology of marriage, said he saw the talks in the context of an overall effort to return to a stricter discipline in the church.

Father Diarmuid Martin, an Irish priest on the Pontifical Council for the Family, agreed that Pope John Paul has, in a way, gone outside the historical debate over birth control.

“A lot of theological discussion attacks ‘Humanae Vitae’ from what some consider ‘internal weaknesses.’ The pope doesn’t attempt to reply to those theologians. Rather, he says, ‘I’m beginning from a biblical- anthropological premise, and I arrive at the same conclusions,’” Father Martin said.

Father Martin credited Pope John Paul with responding to the 1983 Synod of Bishops, which had an exploration of the roots of the birth control teaching. He suggested that the pope’s new approach began with the person and the significance of the person’s sexuality.

He would “enrich the debate” over “Humanae Vitae” and make it more positive,” Father Martin said.

Most of the theologians agreed that in his 16-week analysis of “Humanae Vitae,” the pope did not break new ground. But some saw the pope’s examination of non-marriage and deliberate areas of emphasis in church teaching on birth control.

Archbishop Edouard Gagnon, who leads the Pontifical Council for the Family, said the pope’s cautionary statements about natural family planning were one such emphasis. In his talks, the pope stressed that natural family planning methods, while allowed for in “Humanae Vitae,” should not simply be used as a technical to avoid children, but must be used for serious reasons.

Natural methods, unlike contraception, rely on sexual abstinence during the fertile times of a woman’s cycle. The increasing accuracy of such methods has made them more popular since the time of the encyclical.

The pope’s statement during one of the talks that the conjugal act “ceases to be an act of love” when contraception is used was another area that seemed to go farther than “Humanae Vitae.” Not all theologians took the pope’s words literally.

Father Pierre Primeau, who left the Pontifical Council for the Family in November after three years as undersecretary, said the statement was probably intended in a philosophical way.

“There are many couples who love each other while practicing contraception,” he said. “Their love has to be purified, that’s all.”

Father Primeau said that while the pope may feel the time for debate has ended,” Catholic couples may still have trouble with the teaching.

In divorce situations The Church shows ‘compassion and mercy but does not agree to call good evil and evil good.”

— Pope John Paul II

Should not simply be used as a technique to avoid children, but must be used for serious reasons.

Natural methods, unlike contraception, rely on sexual abstinence during the fertile times of a woman’s cycle. The increasing accuracy of such methods has made them more popular since the time of the encyclical.

The pope’s statement during one of the talks that the conjugal act “ceases to be an act of love” when contraception is used was another area that seemed to go farther than “Humanae Vitae.” Not all theologians took the pope’s words literally.

Father Pierre Primeau, who left the Pontifical Council for the Family in November after three years as undersecretary, said the statement was probably intended in a philosophical way.

“There are many couples who love each other while practicing contraception,” he said. “Their love has to be purified, that’s all.”

Father Primeau said that while the pope may feel the time for debate has ended,” Catholic couples may still have trouble with the teaching.
South Africa getting more pressure

WASHINGTON (NC) — As the world focused on the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to Anglican Bishop Desmond M. Tutu of South Africa, apartheid — the South African segregationist system — opposed — claimed the attention of U.S. politicians and Catholic bishops.

Jesuits kick out Nicaraguan priest
ROME (NC) — Father Fernando Cardenal, Nicaraguan education minister, has been expelled from the Society of Jesus, five months after Jesuit officials said his post in the Marxist-influenced government was "incompatible with his status as a Jesuit."

Jesuit headquarters in Rome announced the expulsion Dec. 10, the decision followed strong public pressure by politicians and Catholic bishops.

Father Fernando Cardenal said his conscience prevented him from stepping down as Nicaragua's education minister, although the decision resulted in his expulsion from the Jesuits.

"Sincerely, I consider before God that I would commit a grave sin if I abandoned, in the present circumstances, my priestly order for the poor," he said in a 19-page statement released Dec. 10 in Managua. "In the present circumstances, my priestly ordination must be respected and not compromised by any case of political pressure."

The Vatican and the Nicaraguan bishops have their noses rubbed in the dust.

The Pope has ruled that priests and religious must not take government positions in any country, not just in Nicaragua.

The latter included Auxiliary Bishop Emerson J. Moore of New York, who was arrested while protesting apartheid in a demonstration at the South African consulate in New York Dec. 10. It apparently was the first time in U.S. church history that a Catholic bishop had been arrested in an act of civil disobedience.

Bishop Tutu, who met with President Reagan Dec. 7, received the Nobel prize honoring his peaceful opposition to apartheid, in Oslo, Norway, Dec. 10, where the official awards ceremony was disrupted by an apparent bomb threat.

In his prepared acceptance speech, the black bishop said the prize gave hope to the "millions who are voiceless, oppressed, dispossessed, tortured by the powerful tyrants, lacking elementary human rights in Latin America, in Southeast Asia, in the Far East, in many parts of Africa and behind the Iron Curtain, who have their noses rubbed in the dust."

The Anglican cleric, who had earlier described the Reagan administration's policy of "constructive engagement" with South Africa as "immoral, evil and totally un- Christian," met with Reagan at the White House Dec. 7.

"Constructive engagement!" is the U.S. government's policy toward South Africa of friendly ties coupled with quiet admonitions against white supremacy.

During the meeting, Reagan and Bishop Tutu said later, the two agreed that apartheid is "repugnant" but disagreed on "constructive engagement."

Bishop Tutu said that "the policy has worsened the situation of blacks in South Africa."

The bishop advised Reagan to seek an end in South Africa to violence, forced removal of blacks from their communities, "banning" of political activists under a form of social ostracization, and house arrest. He also asked Reagan to urge amnesty for political prisoners and the calling of a national convention to devise a new structure for society in South Africa.

In a speech Dec. 12 marking International Human Rights Day, the president reiterated disapproval of apartheid and said that sometimes "quiet diplomacy is not enough."

Other developments involving apartheid included:

• Statements by 3 Republican conservatives in the House and two Republican senators that they reject apartheid and believe the U.S. government must do more to oppose it.

• Release of a report from the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops' Conference citing accusations that the government had committed atrocities, including rape and murder, while quelling riots in black townships.

• Criticism of apartheid by Catholic Archbishop-designate Stephen Naidoo of Cape Town, South Africa, who is of Indian descent and said that one of the members of the South African government's designated non-white ethnic categories.

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Dear Father Hueca,
The ‘Silent Scream’
Ex-abortion MD shows film of actual abortion

By Betsy Kennedy
Voice Staff Writer.

The pro-life movement has received an unprecedented boost with the creation of an ultra-sound video tape which for the first time records an abortion from the victim’s point of view and provides scientific proof that the unborn baby feels pain.

Entitled, "The Silent Scream," the film was created and produced by Dr. Bernard Nathanson, the obstetrician who once ran the largest abortion clinic in New York City, but became an eloquent crusader for the pro-life movement.

'We're getting away from moralizing and philosophizing. We now have scientific proof that human beings are killed in large numbers by abortions. I haven't in any way manipulated what you see on the TV screen.'

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Dr. Bernard Nathanson
ed as number one. "Did you get number one out yet?" the anesthesiologist often asks the doctor."

The abortionist who performed the abortion for the film vowed he would never do another one, Dr. Nathanson told his hushed audience after the screening.

Dr. Nathanson said he developed the film as a result of his own scientific inquisitiveness, but also as a means of resolving the controversy over whether or not the unborn baby feels pain when it is aborted.

President Reagan made a statement to the press in February of this year that he thought a baby felt definite pain during an abortion. Dr. Nathanson was among the members of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists who felt Reagan was scientifically wrong. The college wrote a letter refuting Reagan's claim and the issue hung in the air until Dr. Nathanson made the film.

"The ultra sound images prove the baby feels pain and panic and tries to save its own life," he concluded.

Secular ethic
Dr. Nathanson made it clear that he comes to the pro-life fight not as a religious man, but as an avowed secular ethic.

"I bring no religious conviction to this issue, but rather scientific perceptions as applied to a reasonable secular ethic."

His change in thinking evolved only after a long period of time, he explained. As an intern he had studied cardiology, amnio-chemistry and fetal electroly after a long period of time, he exclaimed.

The (mother's) white blood cells attacked the baby's and the fetus defends that attack. The white blood cells know there is somebody else there which is non-self... That slogan is sexy and attractive, but otherwise meaningless," he said.

Their youthful faces reminded guests of the sanctity of life, 100 boys from the Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church in Ft. Lauderdale, stepped off at the Broward County Right to Life Christmas Benefit Dec. 9. (Voice photo by Betsy Kennedy)

No coat hangers
He also discounted coat hanger psychology, based on the conjecture that women will go back to doing self-induced abortions or fall prey to back-room abortionist butchers if Roe v. Wade U.S. Supreme Court decision is struck down.

"There were only about 600 of these type of abortions per year in 1959, when the publicity was so widespread, and that number has been inflated over the years," he said.

"If abortion was illegal again we would have a different situation. Through medical advancements, women can obtain products like pro-steglandins, which can be used at home and are safer than surgery," he added.

Another common argument which Dr. Nathanson says can be easily dis-proven is the one stating that today's unwanted babies are tomorrow's abused children.

"There are no unwanted babies, only unplanned pregnancies. For example, in the case of Baby Doe of Indiana, the child was allowed to starve to death by its parents after they learned it had Down's Syndrome. As many as 12 to 13 couples stepped forward to offer to adopt the baby," he said.

"The quality of life can always be improved, too. For instance, there is the story of Elizabeth Bouvia, the cerebral palsied victim who made headlines when she decided she wanted to starve to death. She has now found a new will to live and has returned to her job and a productive life."

Correct action
He maintains that most women would never have abortions if they only properly educated to the fact that it is a human being, a person, who is being executed. He is hopeful his film will bring about this enlightenment and plans to distribute it nationwide to pro-life groups, schools and medical personnel.

Because there are still 1.5 million abortions a year, he feels the urgency of the pro-life issue cannot be overstated.

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Youth to counsel others in school

Teens DARE to rap about drugs, alcohol

By Prent Browning
Voice Staff Writer

The research data is clear. If a high school student has friends who use drugs there is an 80 percent chance that he or she will be using drugs also, to some extent.

By far the most important variable that contributes to drug abuse is peer pressure.

Many people involved in drug prevention are reasoning if peer pressure can be such a negative factor can't it also be used positively to keep young people off drugs.

That is the idea behind a model "Peer Power" workshop at LaSalle High School in Coral Gables organized by the Archdiocese's Drugs/Alcohol/Rehabilitation/Education (DARE) program.

Sixteen responsible, committed teens have volunteered and were accepted for the 14 week workshop which meets one hour a week.

They receive training in peer counseling so that they can talk informally to young people who are having drug or emotional problems and act as a positive force in counteracting the pressure to use drugs.

A study kit emphasizes communication skills and the value of a sympathetic and understanding attitude as well as "don'ts" such as judging people, preaching to them, or trying to counsel a seriously disturbed person.

They also speak about their own difficulties and temptations at the workshop.

"They are open, these kids, about what is really going on in their lives," says Annette Faraglia, the outgoing DARE project director who conducted the workshop.

"Kids have to be educated (about drugs), they have to have positive alternatives and kids they can talk to," she says.

Listening to a discussion at a recent workshop you become convinced that kids are experimenting with drugs and alcohol at younger and younger ages.

One teenage girl talks about her nine year old brother who is already smoking marijuana and drinking.

A young male student who admits to feeling some pressure to experiment, speaks about his little brother who gulped down a six pack at a recent party.

Others talk about discos where drug use is open.

"I live on Miami Beach where drugs are the easiest to find," relates one girl. "People drive up at a stoplight, you say I want this, I want that. They have it under their shirt."

Talking about the television shows that he and his little brother watch, the male student says, "I can name you five shows where you can see nickels bags of cocaine: Hill Street Blues, Cagney and Lacey, Mike Hammer. If you think watching those shows doesn't affect you..."

One says that parents often ignore or choose not to believe the drug abusing behavior of their children.

Faraglia adds, "sometimes your parents are really afraid... instead of confronting, they ignore it (drug abuse)."

"If you are using drugs and can't go to Mom or Dad it's good to have someone to come to," she says about the peer counseling.

Asked what they felt they got out of the workshop several teens responded by saying they like the support of the group.

"I realize that I'm not the only one to not drink or take drugs," one young girl says.

A boy mentions an incident in which he talked to a drug user whose father had died and asked if he thought his father would be proud of him if he were alive. The last time he saw the boy he wasn't taking drugs.

The success of the program is difficult to document, relying on a sincere, helpful word, a cautionary remark to a friend about drugs, or maybe just a simple statement that they themselves do not use drugs or alcohol.

Faraglia says she's heard a lot in six weeks from students who were able to help a friend over a drug-related or non drug-related problem.

But still the program has not met with general acceptance.

"A lot of schools are afraid of peer counseling, that kids won't have enough maturity, won't be committed enough, that parents might object," says Faraglia.

Principle Rosemary Kamke at LaSalle has been very helpful, DARE officials say, and in January the school will initiate "a Rap Room" where students can go and talk about their problems with kids their own age.

They hope in the future to be able to offer the program at other high schools as well.

Handicapped have their day at Mass

By Prent Browning
Voice Staff Writer

Their needs are often ignored, or depending on the federal administration, given a low priority. But Sunday was their day, a time when they could soak, in some recognition and share in a celebration, given a low priority. But Sunday was their day, a time when they could share in the meaning of their common association with the handicapped.

At a Mass for the handicapped at St. Mary Magdalen Church in Miami Beach Archbishop Edward A. McCarthy spoke of the special role the handicapped played in the New Testament, and Handicapped Ministry director Fr. James Vitucci compared their spiritual journey to that of the church in general.

The well attended Mass may partly reflect an increasing awareness of the special problems of the handicapped not only in society as a whole but also within the church.

Fr. Vitucci spoke earlier of how the Church could become more sensitive to this group of Catholics.

"When I talk the priests they tell me that there are no handicapped people in their parishes," he said. "What they don't realize is that when they don't offer anything for them the handicapped stay home."

Parishes need to reach out to homebound handicapped as part of "putting into practice the Archdiocesan plan of evangelization," he said.

Fr. Vitucci recommended more use of interpreters for the deaf, missalettes with large letters, more wheelchair ramps, and transportation programs.

"Transportation is a very important need: volunteers could bring handicapped back and forth,"

Fr. Vitucci spoke of another type of transportation — the covered wagon — as wheelchairs packed the space in front of the first pew.

Holding up a model of a covered wagon, he compared the destiny of those Christians with physical impairments, to the fate of a group of pioneers huddled in a weather beaten wagon.

"Looking at the history of these journeys, we see how often unwelcomed the wagon trains were amongst the already settled cities. They were treated harshly, prices for supplies were raised, and they were told to move on as quickly as possible for their presence was an eyesore to the beauty of the city.

"But in spite of everything, these wagons journeyed onward. The abuse they took, from nature and from man, now seems insignificant compared with their goals achieved and their dreams realized."

The Archbishop addressed Christ's association with the handicapped.

The prophecies of his coming mentioned that the Messiah would heal the blind and the deaf, the Archbishop op said.

"I don't know any group the Lord would more like to celebrate the sacraments with,"

The Archbishop also asked their help.

"We of the church come to you to say we need you, you."

"You in a special way can help us through your prayer, your example and also your communications with others who are carrying the cross, he said.

Rows of handicapped attend Mass at St. Mary Magdalen as priest signs for the deaf. (Voice photo)

Teen leaders at LaSalle High school, Miami, discuss drugs as DARE program director Hugh Clear, right, observes. (Voice photo)
Dear Friends in Christ,

As we approach the great feast of Christmas, we become more aware of our own need to share with others the many blessings that we have received. Christmas is a time of sharing.

In our Inner-City Parishes and Rural Migrant Missions, many people who share our faith also need our sincere concern and support.

Under the direction of a dedicated staff of priests, sisters, lay employees and volunteers, the Archdiocese provides pastoral ministry, day care centers, educational programs and offers food and housing assistance to needy families. I encourage your continued generosity next Sunday to this Annual Appeal for our Inner-City Parishes and Rural Migrant Missions throughout the Archdiocese.

With my personal gratitude to you for your concern and love for the poor, I am

Devotedly yours in Christ,
Edward A. McCarthy
Archbishop of Miami

Glad tidings

The good news of Christmas is the same in any language. Members of St. Mary’s Cathedral choir sang Christmas greetings in Spanish, English, Creole and French for a televised performance on WSVN, Channel 7 TV.

ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI

The Pastoral Center announces that Archbishop McCarthy has made the following appointments:

THE REVEREND MICHAEL GREER — to Director, Campus Ministry, Florida International University, Bay Vista Campus, North Miami, and Archdiocesan Assistant for Catholic Faculty/Staff Recruitment and Development, with residence at Holy Family Rectory, North Miami, effective November 7, 1984.

THE REVEREND MICHAEL HOYER — to Chaplain, Broward County Serra Club, effective November 21, 1984.

THE REVEREND JUAN LUIS SANCHEZ (newly ordained) — to Associate Pastor, Nativity Church, Hollywood, effective December 5, 1984.

THE REVEREND JOHN MERICANTANTE — to Associate Pastor, Little Flower Church, Coral Gables, effective December 5, 1984.

THE REVEREND DONALD O’BRIEN, OMI — To Associate Pastor, St. George Church, Fort Lauderdale, effective October 23, 1984, upon nomination by his Superior.

THE REVEREND CHRISTOPHER PETROSKY, TOR — to the hospital and Nursing Home Chaplaincy Apostolate in the Archdiocese of Miami, effective October 15, 1984.


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PAGE 12 / Miami, Florida / THE VOICE / Friday, December 14, 1984
By Ana Rodriguez-Soto
Voice News Editor
Four active kids, a devoted husband, a comfortable middle-class house and a charity-music ministry that spanned the state of Florida didn't satisfy Chris Dorman.

The young woman with the sweet smile thought Christianity demanded a bit more. After much prayer and meditation, she took on one more commitment.

Now she spends Saturday mornings making the dusty rounds of Pompano Beach's poorest neighborhoods with a 7-month-old nursing baby in tow, giving out a lot of food and a little Christian cheer.

While many people flit with these activities at Christmas time, Dorman's affair with the poor goes on year-round.

"I'm learning a lot," says the thoroughly suburban Dorman. "I'm beginning to be a lot less suspicious or judgmental."

The same could be said of the 20 or so fellow volunteers who spend a fourth of their weekends, at least once a month, meeting and feeding people like:

- Joanne, a 22-year-old reputed drug addict with six kids who lives in a wretchedly run-down section of the city;
- Birdie, a middle-aged woman who fixes her hair for a picture, undeterred by the fact that she's lying flat on her back, bound to a catheter, inside a darkened house that reeks of mustiness;
- An aged man with an amputated leg and infected toenails who sits in the 90-degree heat outside his government-subsidized home and apologizes for the mess, because the house is being cleaned;
- The Haitian mother of three, one of them but a week old, who shares half a barely-furnished duplex with her father;
- A Mexican family whose father was forced to choose between keeping a relatively well-paying construction job and losing their subsidized housing or taking lesser-paying domestic work and keeping the house. He chose to keep the $200 a month house, but now he barely affords to feed the children.

Heart-aid'

Those encounters are the heart and soul of the ministry, says Dorman, who recognizes that the boxes of food are only a Band-Aid, not a cure, for the complex and long-standing problems which keep these people poor.

What's important, she says, is the "heart-aid," the transmission of the Christian message of hope and love.

"We have to be willing to go to their homes and sit with them and say, "You're my brother, you're my sister,"" Dorman explains. "There are an awful lot of people out there who feel like they've been forgotten."

So she and the volunteers make a point of chatting with those they visit, finding out who is going into the hospital and who just got out, asking if next time they'll need fewer boxes of cereal and more packages of laundry detergent, playing with the kids and holding hands with the sick and elderly.

"There are times when we walk away very depressed," says Jim Kelly, a 20-year Navy veteran who with his wife Jane is one of the Saturday morning volunteers. "But it really helps those they aid. I feel awful rich and I feel like I ought to share it somehow."

Dorman says the personal contact enriches the volunteers as much as it helps those they aid.

"It's one thing to see pictures of poor people and make sure that money is being sent to them. But it's another thing to go into poor people's homes and talk to them and see how they're doing," she says.

She knows about the long-distance type of charity because she and her husband Larry are founding members of The Joyful Noise Ensemble, a group of local Catholic laity who for the past five years have spent a sizable chunk of their spare time performing "The Witness," a musical based on the life of Christ, in parishes throughout Florida.

Jealous'

Two years ago, their performances began benefiting Food for the Poor, a South Florida-based organization dedicated to making life a little more bearable for the poorest of the poor in Haiti and Jamaica.

In a word, evangelization.

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"There are times when we walk away very depressed," says Jim Kelly, a 20-year Navy veteran who with his wife Jane is one of the Saturday morning volunteers. "But it really helps those they aid. I feel awful rich and I feel like I ought to share it somehow."

Dorman says the personal contact enriches the volunteers as much as it helps those they aid.

"It's one thing to see pictures of poor people and make sure that money is being sent to them. But it's another thing to go into poor people's homes and talk to them and see how they're doing," she says.

She knows about the long-distance type of charity because she and her husband Larry are founding members of The Joyful Noise Ensemble, a group of local Catholic laity who for the past five years have spent a sizable chunk of their spare time performing "The Witness," a musical based on the life of Christ, in parishes throughout Florida.

"Jealous'"

Two years ago, their performances began benefiting Food for the Poor, a South Florida-based organization dedicated to making life a little more bearable for the poorest of the poor in Haiti and Jamaica.

It was the zealous dedication of its founder, Ferdinand Mahfood, that began tugging at Dorman's conscience.

"I almost felt jealous of 'Ferdi' sometimes," she says. "He was really doing something about world hunger. But all we were doing was coming in and singing 'The Witness.' I wanted to make a difference, not just send money."

So after much prayer and consultation, she and a few other members of The Joyful Noise decided to begin personally feeding the poor in their own backyard. Some other people, friends, relatives, friends of friends, also joined in. The Lord's Place, a shelter and soup kitchen in West Palm Beach (founded by permanent deacon Joe Kastner), contributed a van to the endeavor.

But initially, the group's good intentions almost drowned in a sea of nitty-gritty details.

First problem: "Nobody knew any poor," says Dorman. Then they met Gloria, an exhuberant Baptist woman who volunteers to help with the lunch program at San Isidro Mission on weekdays, Gloria began walking the nearby government housing projects door-to-door, inquiring if the residents needed help.

Within days, she handed a list with more than 100 names on it to Dorman. "All at once we had a million people," she remembers, and the volunteers found themselves rac- ing from house to house, delivering goodies like firemen putting out fires.

"It was a discouraging thing," Dorman says. The Christian witness was missing. So the group decided to ignore the list and simply take Gloria with them.

Luxuries

Now, happily ensconced in the van, she efficiently directs the weekly distribution. "They get some, (Continued on page 20)
Teens torn between morals,

By Ana Rodriguez-Soto
Voice News Editor

For parents and educators, the future bells both good news and bad news about Catholic teens.

This conclusion becomes evident after pouring over 181 survey responses of seniors from six local Catholic high schools.

While the exact statistics might differ somewhat if Catholic students in public high schools had been included, the survey provides a general picture of the trials and triumphs of local Catholic teenagers that is probably typical of that age group in whatever school.

One message came through overwhelmingly: The seniors polled seemed to be torn between two diametrically opposed worlds: The one — of commitment and morality — extolled by their parents and teachers, the other — of pleasure and self-fulfillment — flashing like neon from bookstores, movies, television and friends.

From the Church’s point of view, the news that these teenagers are not at all sure what their parents and teachers believe to be the moral way to go is a matter of grave concern. After all, these teenagers (79%) can be found in the “middle” group (53%), with only a small percentage (20%) or (3%) to the “extremes.”

The exact statistics might not add up to 100%, but this survey provides a clear indication of the variety of opinions of Catholic teens in the Miami area.

As mentioned in the story, 63% of the seniors said sex between two people is okay only in marriage, while 45 percent said it was okay only in marriage, while 28 percent said it was okay as long as both people agree.

Also, most of the teenagers made clear that they would attend Mass regularly in the future not because they felt an obligation to do so, but because they wanted to nourish a personal relationship with God. Some news in the area of religion reflects badly on the Church and on parishes, however. More than half of the seniors feel that they are not called enough upon to participate in parishes, and an overwhelming majority expressed desire to become more involved if only they were asked.

Their answers showed that they would appreciate more responsibility and a little more attention. Also, few teenagers were aware of current issues within the Church, such as the recent U.S. bishops’ pastoral letter on war and peace. It seems that if anybody should be aware of these developments it should be Catholic teenagers, the proto-typical captive audience in Catholic schools.

Many teens sexually

(Continued from page 1)

They have engaged in sexual intercourse, and 19 percent said they only used natural means of birth control. Among those students who are having sexual relations on a regular basis, 60 percent use artificial birth control.

Twenty-nine percent of all the seniors said sex between two people is okay “as long as both people agree.”

Birth control

A second area in which the teenagers disagree with Church teaching is birth control.

Fifty percent of those students said they do not consider artificial methods of birth control immoral. Another 37 percent said “it depends.” Only 12 percent of all the students said they agreed with the Church’s teaching that it is wrong.

Additionally, 73 percent of all those sampled, and an almost identical percentage in each ethnic and gender breakdown, said they would consider using artificial methods once they get married.

From the explanations they gave for their answers, it is evident that most teenagers don’t understand why artificial means of birth control are considered sinful. Either they’re not even aware of the Church’s reasoning has not been as adequately conveyed to them, or they do not understand the logic in it.

Twenty-five percent of the seniors said couples should have the ability to regulate the size of their families. There is nothing sinful about this, the students insisted in their answers. In fact, they said, it’s the only responsible thing to do. (They did not mention the Church’s approval of natural means.)

Another 11 percent said the Church should not be involved in couples’ decisions to have or not have children.

Sixteen percent stopped short of total disregard for the Church’s position, saying that the morality or immorality depends on the reason why artificial methods are used.

This group’s thinking seemed to such as heroin, LSD or “angel dust.”
Sexuality

More shocking news comes in the area of sexuality. This, the statistics reveal, is the main battleground for values, the area where the two worlds collide most constantly among the teenagers. Here, with only one exception, the Church is badly losing the struggle.

Almost half of these Catholic-educated teens have already engaged in intercourse, almost a quarter do so regularly, and the greatest problem of their young lives, as perceived by many, involves saying no to casual sex. Less than a third believe sex should be limited to marriage.

In addition, the majority disagree with the Church’s ban on artificial methods of birth control and a similar majority plan to use these methods when they get married. It is quite evident from their written comments that many of the teenagers only vaguely know or hardly understand the Church’s teaching on birth control. Even fewer seem to have any inkling that there are natural methods of birth control which are approved by the Church.

In fact, what emerges repeatedly from their answers in this part of the survey is confusion. The vast majority of seniors said they want the traditional things, such as two-parent families, and are worried about the high incidence of divorce and separation.

But how do we get there from here? they seem to be asking. They’ve grown up in a world of R-rated “Porky’s”-type movies and television sitcoms where casual sex is the rule. More than half of them already have seen hardcore pornography.

Oppose abortion

The issue of abortion is a different story. While 21 percent of those surveyed said abortion should never be allowed, 53 percent said the procedure should be done only to save the mother’s life. Twenty-five percent believed abortion should be left up to a woman and her doctor.

This constitutes a majority who believe abortion is a matter of serious consequence which should not be taken lightly. Indeed, 67 percent of those polled felt that abortion on demand should be outlawed.

Asked if they would ever consider having an abortion or suggesting to a friend that she have one, 53 percent said they would not, 38 percent said their actions would depend on circumstances and 9 percent said they would consider such an option.

In their explanations, 25 percent of the students said they believe abortion is the killing of another human being for which there can be no justification. Another 18 percent said they would support such an action only if the life of the mother were at stake or the pregnancy was a result of rape or incest.

Fourteen percent simply said they would decide based on the situation, and only five percent said the choice should be up to the individual alone.

Two students spoke from personal experience. “A friend of mine had an abortion,” said one senior who would decide based on the situation, “and painful — experience, but it was the right thing for me.”

The influence of culture, then, has been combatted successfully in some areas. Perhaps a cautious similarity to “Respect Life” in both scope and focus can be mounted to educate young people, beginning at an early age, about the Church’s sexual theology and about the dangers of alcohol and drug abuse.

Religion influences behavior

Computer correlations between various responses in the Voice survey confirmed expectations about religion and moral activity.

It was found that those who attend Mass less and who accept the Church’s teachings less are more likely to engage in sexual activity and are more likely to use alcohol and drugs.

Also, as expected, teens who rate their family life better also score better in religious practice and less alcohol/drugs and sex.

Those who preferred public schools (about 11 percent) scored higher in drug use.

Those who agreed with the Church’s sexuality teachings tended to be more involved in social and justice issues.

Teen regrets abortion

One student was adamant that he would never recommend an abortion to anyone he knew, no matter what the circumstances. His explanation was: “My girlfriend and I had one. We are planning to get married in two years but we knew we couldn’t have a child just yet. I didn’t want to and neither did she. It’s all of society’s pressures.”

They struggle to make sense of the Church’s teachings in the light of world, but more and more it’s a losing battle.

Over and over again, they complain of peer pressure, of the difficulty in staying afloat while a tidal wave that makes premarital sex the rule. More than half of the seniors said they would never recommend an abortion — and painful — experience, but it was the right thing for me.”

The teenagers don’t seem to be as disturbed as the Church is about the issue of abortion. Sixty-nine percent in fact, said the hardcore pornography they have seen is more realistic than the kind graphically depicts actual sexual acts. Interesting-

ly, while 90 percent of the males said they have seen it, the figure was only 39 percent for females.

Thirty-two percent of the students had seen pornography in both print and film media, 18 percent had seen it only in films, and 12 percent had seen only books and/or magazines. One percent had seen it through all of the above media as well as in live theater shows.

How did the teenagers come to see or possess this pornographic material? Thirty-seven percent cited their friends as sources, 13 percent said they had bought it and nine percent said they had received it as a gift. (Some of the answers overlapped).

Four percent specifically mentioned watching adult-oriented movies on cable television.

The teenagers don’t seem to be overwrought about the dangers of pornography, however. Sixty-nine percent, in fact, said the hardcore variety should not be outlawed, but left up to the individual to judge.

And while 61 percent of the students admitted that “softcore” pornography, the kind exhibited in “status” magazines like Playboy and R-rated films, influences the values of

active, have seen pornography

ECHO the words of one senior, who said, “Sometimes in poor countries it is needed, but the use of it just for fun is not right.”

Some of this “it depends” logic led to almost comic conclusions, however. “If you’re a prostitute it’s immoral,” one student said.

Some of this “it depends” logic led to almost comic conclusions, however. “If you’re a prostitute it’s immoral,” one student said. But if you’re married and married couples to use artificial birth control. Even few-...
Drugs and the elderly

Growing numbers of older Americans are abusing drugs meant to help them

By Betsy Kennedy
Voice Staff Writer

Mrs. O'Connor, a devout Catholic and a grandmother of four, has just finished her shopping. Only instead of packages, she has brought home several prescription bottles filled with pills. She has been to three different doctors “shopping” for medications for nervousness, pain and insomnia.

After gulping down an assortment of the pills, she takes several drinks of scotch. She feels certain she has done nothing wrong — after all she has several physical ailments. She soon passes out on the couch. The next morning she is found dead.

This true incident depicts a growing problem among older Americans. It is of special concern in South Florida, which has one of the nation’s largest concentrations of elderly.

Thousands of them are misusing and abusing the same drugs which can ease pain, cure diseases and miraculously prolong life. Often unnoticed by family or friends, these gray-haired addicts are tarnishing their golden years with chemicals, living in a falsely euphoric state brought on by prescription or over-the-counter drugs, alcohol or a combination of all three.

“We had better start bringing this out in the open and paying attention. I don’t think the problem of drug abuse by the elderly has been properly addressed,”

Fr. M. Hogan, chairman, drug task force

Although no long-term study has been done to determine the number of elderly prescription abusers nationwide, researchers are beginning to find that the problem is widespread.

The elderly, as the nation’s fastest growing minority, represent 11 percent of the population, yet they consume 30 percent of medications manufactured in the United States.

“We had better start bringing this out in the open and paying attention. I don’t think the problem of drug abuse by the elderly has been properly addressed,” said Father Michael Hogan, a drug specialist for the pastoral ministries office of the Archdiocese of Miami and chairman of the newly formed interfaith drug task force sanctioned by Governor Robert Graham of Florida.

Catholic drug experts and counselors have joined government officials in sounding an alarm.

“This is a life issue and therefore it must be a Catholic issue,” said Father Terry Attridge, director of DARE (Drug/Alcohol/Rehabilitation/Education), a prevention and education program in New York City started by the late Cardinal Terence Cooke and recently replicated in Florida.

“By the year 2030, the elderly will comprise 17 percent of the total population (an increase to 33 million) and the proportion of those over age 85 will have doubled,” said Father Attridge.

Society has tended to neglect older abusers. Many drug treatment programs are unequipped and unprepared to handle the special needs of older Americans, such as the physical illnesses which also complicate a recovery process.

The media has been equally neglectful. Flamboyant characters like the late John Belushi, who died of a narcotics overdose, make front-page news. But no one seems interested in reading about the 75-year-old man next door, the one who worked diligently for his family and church for 40 years and then succumbed to an overdose of valium and alcohol. The coroner’s report is likely to read “death by natural causes.”

“Certain drugs (when over-used) can cause discrasia, a condition which alters the components of the red or white blood cells and causes life-threatening side effects... some patients can even develop leukemia.”

William Wienstein, pharmacist

“They have time on their hands so they start going to parties early in the afternoon and drinking wine. Or they think ‘if one pill makes me feel good, why not two?’ They use these substances to anaesthetize the pain.”

Dr. Dolores Morgan, who heads the South Miami Hospital drug treatment program, said the elderly must also deal with anger and frustration, so they compensate by increasing their social habits, such as drinking, or they try to assuage what may seem...
Drug abuse among the elderly is a pressing concern in South Florida, which has one of the nation's largest concentrations of older Americans.

Ironically, doctors can also jeopardize their older patients with the same medications prescribed to fight disease.

"I do know there are serious ill¬nesses which can be caused by antibiotics," said Dr. Morgan.

A commonly prescribed drug for the elderly is cortisone, which may bring about weakened bones and cataracts, according to the physician. William Weinstein, a pharmacist for more than 40 years and an administrative assistant at Darcy Hall nursing home in West Palm Beach, has seen the tragic results of prolong¬ed drug abuse.

"Certain drugs (when over-used) can cause discrasia, a condition which alters the components of the red or white blood cells and causes life-threatening side effects... some patients can even develop leukaemia," said Weinstein.

In all fairness to the medical community, he added, doctors face a Catch-22 situation. Their choice may be between treating a patient with a medication with devastating side effects, or allowing the patient to die slowly from the progress of the disease if he goes without treatment.

In his many years behind the pharmac¬acy counter, Weinstein has con¬cluded, "Doctors really do tend to overmedicate patients."

A number of nursing homes are also guilty of this error, said Father Hogan. Some facilities even prefer to keep their patients sedated, depend¬ing upon their philosophy, agreed Weinstein, and he urges nursing home personnel "to stay on their toes" and report such abuses.

Dr. Benedict J. Duffy, a Boston physician who is widely respected in the educational field, and the founder of Physicians for Health Care of the Aged Through Social Security, is a vehement opponent of the keep¬them-calm theory of some nursing homes.

During a tour of several nursing facilities with a Department of Health, Education and Welfare ins¬pector, Dr. Duffy was disturbed to learn that the average number of drugs per patient in each facility was 10 to 12.

Catholic drug abuse authorities agree that a two-edged sword of prevention and education can defeat drug abuse by older Americans.

"We have to present specific work¬shops and bring this to the public arena. We have to contact the accessible elderly and educate them to the pitfalls which await them," said Neatherton.

Father Attridge feels colleges can play a pivotal role by providing special courses on the transitions of aging.

"It is a matter of helping a person who is growing older to understand what is happening to them. They need to re-define their 'golden' values. They need to be made aware that old age can be as fulfilling as they choose to make it, a time ripe with possibilities, when the spiritual rose is in full bloom."

If someone in your family is ex¬periencing a drug problem, Father Attridge said, denial is the worst enemy.

"Face up to the fact that there is something wrong and take action right away. Also, he warns, don't be "an enabler. There is always someone in the family who plays this role, giv¬ing sympathy and allowing the abuser to manipulate and con. For the elderly abuser there is no time to lose in getting help."

The Church must grapple with the problem "by going directly to the parishes," said Father Hogan. He suggests instituting a program similar to an employee assistance plan used by major industries, such as the airlines. Trained personnel keep track of employee absences, behavior changes and work performance levels which may signal personal problems. If divorce, drug habits or illnesses are then pinpointed as affecting their work, counseling is provided. Father Hogan feels parishes could create a similar program, using laity such as physicians or psychologists who would donate their services.

Father Attridge vies for peer ministry power in making life better for senior citizens. In his own New York City parish, senior citizens nur¬ture each other, using the phone as a lifeline. Calls are made to shut-ins on a regular basis, providing a sounding board for their needs and enabling the group to quickly extinguish emotional blazes before they start. With so much peer support, if someone was having trouble with alcohol or pills it wouldn't go unnoticed.

"The clergy can make an impact," said Father Hogan. "It is a necessity for priests to educate themselves on the subject of drug abuse."

"Drug abuse is like a thief that sneaks up on people and robs them of their good health, their self-esteem, their relationships. When the victim is an elderly person, the thief can rob him of his precious remaining years of life," Father Attridge said. "The thief is running fast. We have to stop it before it gets too far ahead of us."

Drugs and alcohol are problems facing many seniors, but the elderly are a less visible minority, their addiction problems more difficult to spot, believes Mike Neatherton, a recovering alcoholic, program manager for the executive director of Good Samaritan Hall, a drug treatment facility at Good Samaritan Hospital sponsored by the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati and located in Dayton, Ohio.

"Our mission is in identifying the older abuser. Often senior citizens remain more secluded in their homes or are reluctant to divulge their problems with prescrip¬tions to their children for fear of disappointing or angering them."

They are also more difficult to recognize as addicts because "they usually don't have jobs, so they aren't seen on the job misusing drugs. They don't have as many visible financial problems so they aren't seen in that light. And they don't come in contact with the legal system — the jails, lawyers or judges — because they are rarely using illegal drugs like marijuana or cocaine. They are also neglected at times by their compa¬nions and relatives who may live far away from their home. At the South Miami program, the elderly and other patients learn to travel confidently into their changing physical, emotional and spiritual frontiers, the threefold area where their stress too often comes.

Meetings emphasize "spiritual fellowship using the Alcoholics Anonymous prayer to open. Then we allow people to express what they feel, or read something philosophical. We have a special time for prayer."

Both drug counselors are concern¬ed that their battle may be uphill unless the medical community begins to recognize and treat its own malaise — a lack of understanding of geriatric patients.

Representative Claude Pepper, a longtime advocate for elderly, documented three areas needing reform. First, only 10 to 15 percent of the nation's 127 certified medical schools require their students to take courses in geriatric medicine. Second, he blames the FDA (Food and Drug Administration) for not taking into consideration "the unique needs of the elderly patient. For example, most "guinea pigs" used for testing new drugs are young, healthy human beings. Those bodies will ultimately be subjected to the effects of the drugs are under¬going."

The third factor, according to Pe¬pper, is a lack of communication be¬tween the doctor and his elderly pa¬tient. Often, families and doctors, barred from his overly committed schedule of patients, the doctor may neglect to explain the nature of the drug he is prescribing to the elderly patient. Also, some doctors fail to extract a detailed medical history or to take the time to discover that their patient has been seeing other doctors and is receiving several medications, which taken together can detonate like a time bomb.

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Annunciation’s 25th
‘Renaissance’ Spirit pervades parish life

By Ana Rodriguez-Soto
Voice News Editor

HOLLYWOOD — The people of Annunciation Parish had a lot more to celebrate recently than just their 25th anniversary.

Archbishop Edward McCarthy called it “a new blossoming of the faith.” Associate pastor Fr. Anthony Massi preferred to describe it as “a renaissance of what was already here.”

Whatever it was, it was obvious in material things as well as spiritual ones: the fresh coat of white paint and Virgin-Mary-blue trim on the parish buildings; the newly-paved parking lot; the refurbished wood inside the church; the more than 500 newly-planted trees and shrubs on the parish grounds; the gleaming outdoor grotto to Our Lady waiting to be surrounded by stone and painting renditions of the five Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary.

Not to mention a parish school almost filled to capacity, overflowing adult education classes and a veritable army of schoolchildren and teenage alumni involved in every facet of parish life.

“This is your day,” Fr. Michael Quilligan, pastor, told a standing-room only congregation during the anniversary Mass. “Rejoice in it, love it and celebrate it.”

Indeed, the parishioners and some friends are solely responsible for the physical renewal, having contributed both time and labor, and donated the materials, to refurbish the entire parish plant. Even more amazing, the work began only last July, when Frs. Quilligan and Massi were appointed to the parish.

The priests won’t take credit for anything, even the spiritual revival. They credit some of it to the Franciscan Order priests who administered the parish from 1973 until this year. But they say a large share of that praise should also go to the parishioners themselves.

“There was a very good spirituality here before and the 25th anniversary brought about a ... renaissance of what was already here,” Fr. Massi said. He described the parish as a very close “spiritual family.”

Those ties were evident in the number of former parishioners, many now living in other states, who returned to the parish to participate in the anniversary Mass. One special guest was Sr. Elizabeth, the school’s first principal, who came down from Philadelphia.

Also notable were the nearly 30 priests who attended, many of them associate pastors, and the many religious who filled the church’s front pews.

A family atmosphere prevailed also in the planning of the 25th anniversary festivities, according to Fr. Massi, with a team of parishioners led by Bud Calhoun taking care of most of the details. Many of the parishioners on the committee have been with the parish since its inception, the priest pointed out.

The whole affair was capped off by a picnic and bar-b-que on the parish grounds and a dinner-dance the evening before the anniversary Mass.

As the parishioners went off to enjoy “their” day, the melodies of praise and thanks sung by a 30-voice choir, including trumpeter, clarinetists, guitarists, organist and singers, echoed in the air.

So did the words of Msgr. John Donnelly, founding pastor of the parish, who took a little time off from his duties as pastor of St. Malachy in Tamarac to be with his former parishioners.

“This day really belongs to you,” he said.

Fr. Michael Quilligan, pastor, is congratulated by a parishioner (right) after the anniversary Mass. Above, school children and CCD students take up the offertory. (Voice photos/Ana Rodriguez-Soto)

‘There was a very good spirituality here before and the 25th anniversary brought about a ... renaissance of what was already here.’

Fr. Anthony Massi, associate pastor
By Betsy Kennedy
Voice Staff Writer

For the dedication of their new church Dec. 9, almost 1,000 jubilant parishioners gathered for the first time in their "living room of God" at St. Timothy's in Miami.

Dozens of priests, choir members and the Knights of Columbus led a colorful procession from the old church to the repotendent new one, where Archbishop Edward A. McCarthy conducted the dedication ceremony.

Ringed by parishioners, some of whom could remember when the late Fr. Thomas McDermott led a group of faithful to an empty field and the beginning of the parish 24 years ago, Archbishop McCarthy unlocked the door to the new church.

"We designed the church with a square roof coming down on four sides to create the look of a living room with the family of God seated before the altar table to celebrate the Eucharist," said the church's architect, Bill Brown of Brown & Brown, Inc.

In stressing that the center of the community's activities is the altar, the architects, Brown and his wife Maida, designed a natural slab of stone, "clean and simple. We get the feeling that everyone is sharing in the Eucharist together."

The family atmosphere of the new church is also heightened by the fan-shaped seating, explained Brown. The person farthest away from the altar is only 60 feet, which evokes a strong sense of participation.

The church foyer is unusually large and planned so that people will follow the priests out after Mass in order to get to the parking facilities.

In contrast to some churches where the front door faces the street, St. Timothy's is on the interior side, bordered by an airy plaza with trees, fountains and benches. This setting is conducive to unity, with people meeting each other as they enter and exit the church or linger in the plaza between services.

Even the sound system fulfills the sense of community. The elements of the sound system as well as the organ are concealed from view. The speakers are balanced in every corner of the assembly so parishioners can hear the priest as if in natural conversation. Microphones on the pulpit are also concealed.

"Everything we planned for came true. So many times in designing a building, people lose sight of their original aims. We didn't. There was a sense of joyfulness and interaction at the ceremony that was just what we had hoped for," said Brown.

With cool breezes wafting through the tall sliding glass doors of the new church, parishioners jammed the pews and spilled into the back of the church.

"The only thing that could be more exciting to me would be the arrival of the pope," said one beaming parishioner who was accompanied by his wife and three children.

As the Archbishop and the procession of priests entered the church, the Knights of Columbus lined the aisles, looking as regal as guards from Buckingham Palace. As the service got underway, four separate choirs of adults and children raised their voices in both Spanish and English. The liturgy was also bilingual.

In a prayer of dedication prepared especially for the occasion, Archbishop McCarthy reminded the throng gathered before him of the sanctity and mystery of Church.

"The Church is holy, your chosen vineyard: its branches envelop the world, its tendrils carried on the tree of the cross, reach up to the kingdom of heaven..."

"The Church is favored, the dwelling place of God on earth: a temple built of living stones, founded on the apostles with Jesus Christ its corner stone..."

"The Church is exalted, a city set on a mountain: a beacon to the whole world, bright with the glory of the Lamb and echoing the prayers of her saints..."

The Archbishop proclaimed the day as the beginning of St. Timothy's Holy Year, represented by the theme, "Here I am Lord, send me." The church's Holy Year will end with its 25th anniversary as a parish in November, 1985, said Father Gustavo Miyares, pastor.

Planning for the new church began several years ago as a result of a two-fold need. St. Timothy's original building was intended for use as a school and did not cater to the active, growing parish.

Secondly, there is a waiting list for the school. The space utilized in the school building for worship can now be converted into more classroom facilities.

St. Malachy dedicates school, parish center

The first Catholic elementary school in Tamarac will be dedicated this Saturday, Dec. 15 at 9:30 a.m. by Archbishop Edward A. McCarthy.

St. Malachy School, which began operation last September with 110 students, is part of a $1.1 million construction effort at the parish which includes a multi-purpose parish center. Open house for both structures will follow morning Masses on Dec. 16.
Local Catholicism in S. Fla.

Local priest's book says Church here is rich in missionary quality of helping the unfortunate

By Janelle Scott
Voice Correspondent

BOYNTON BEACH — Florida Catholics have had an inferiority complex for too long, says Father Michael J. McNally. Too often they believe their church experience can't compare with the rich tradition and history of the Church in the North. Father McNally believes Florida Catholics should stop looking elsewhere for their religious heritage — it's right here in Florida. What's more, it's an experience to be proud of, with a lot of the rest of the Church.

Father McNally, a professor of history at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach, has written the first history of the Church in South Florida, Catholicism in S. Fla., 1968-1968, published by the University of Florida Press in October. He hopes the book will help others better understand the tradition, heritage, character and identity of the Church in South Florida.

"We've had a different history, a different experience from the rest of the country, not any better or worse, just different. It's time to explore our distinctiveness and share the fruits of it."

Impressive record

Catholicism in South Florida reveals that the Church has an impressive record of serving its people well, from the 1860s, when there were only three priests in the entire state, to the 1960s, when waves of Catholics arrived from the Northeast and Midwest, to the 1960s, when the immigration of Catholic Cubans challenged Church resources.

"What has pulled us together as a people is not that we have the missionary quality of helping the unfortunate, but that we have received some degree of sexual education," he said. "Most of the students, it appeared, have received more education than necessities."

Cuban influx

And in 1959, the fledgling Archdiocese of Miami (created in 1958) struggled to respond to the influx of Cuban immigrants after the Castro takeover. Father McNally cites as an example of its effectiveness the fact that 14,000 unaccompanied Cuban children were cared for by the diocese and eventually placed in permanent homes.

"From our earliest times we've always had a shortage of personnel and resources, never enough to meet demands, yet we have responded well with flexibility, energy and creativity."

Father McNally believes the Church whole, he believes, is struggling to meet the challenges of a changing world.

The challenges to the Church in Florida have been many.

The first big influx of immigrants came from Cuba to Key West as early as 1868, one of the first big demands on the Church. In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, priests were recruited from France and then Ireland to serve a growing Catholic population. Clergymen sometimes took to the road, first on horseback, then in cars, to serve the far-flung, mostly rural Florida parishes.

After World War II, the Church was again challenged with a wave of immigration, when families from the predominantly Catholic Northeast and Midwest came in droves to South Florida.

"That would have been an amazing feat for any diocese, much less a brand new one," he points out. Throughout his book, McNally cites examples of creative leadership, not only by clergy, but by religious and laity, men and women, black and white in creating Florida Catholicism.

Although the book ends in 1968, Father McNally sees evidence today of the Church's "missionary" character. "What's happening in Florida is happening in few other places in the United States. We've seen six new dioceses created in the last 25 years," he states. (Two dioceses, Palm Beach and Venice, were created this year.)

Father McNally wrote Catholicism in S. Fla. in 1982 as a dissertation for his doctorate in church history from the University of Notre Dame. But the book is not just for scholars, but also for pastors and parishioners as well who want to learn what it means to be a Catholic in Florida. Nothing had ever been written on the Church's development in South Florida, and he wanted to "explore its distinctiveness" what made it different here? For five months, he traveled 5,000 miles doing research and conducting more than 70 interviews.

"Southerner"

Although born in upstate New York, Father McNally moved at age 12 to South Florida. He said the book taught him something.

"I found out that I'm a Floridian, and that I'm a Southerner."

It's that same sense of identity and pride that he hopes to convey to other Floridians through his book.

"Only now are we really beginning to develop a native Church here, with a native clergy in appreciable numbers. The people are beginning to develop a sense of the local Church that reflects our own culture, history and uniqueness of our own region."

"That's why I think the book is timely. It will help bring about an understanding of who we are as a people, of God of the local Church of Florida."

Catholicism in South Florida is available from University of Florida Press or for $13.50 from St. Vincent's bookstore, Box 460, Boynton Beach, FL 33425.

Most teens opposed to abortion

(Continued from page 15)

young people, many of those polled stopped short of calling this a problem.

Twenty-six percent said the so-called "soft porn" influences teenagers into having too casual an attitude about sex, and another 10 per cent said it gives teens the wrong view of sex. In the words of one student, "It depicts the sex as being important and not the love."

But 15 percent said the values of young people are already in place by the time they are exposed to these books and movies, so their effect is minimal. Four percent said outright that there is nothing wrong with the picture of male/female relationships presented in "soft porn."

"People do what they want to do," said another student. "If we get together and be friends, does more harm," commented another.

Sex ed

Most of the students, it appeared, have received some degree of sexual education. Almost all the seniors polled, 96 percent, said they favored having these classes in the schools.

Orientation

Asked to describe their sexual orientation, some students seemed to know more what they were than what they were not. Ninety-four percent said they were heterosexual, but some were unsure of what the word means. "Normal," one wrote in. "Straight," said another, and a third, "Whatever describes male-female relationships."

Not any of those surveyed described themselves as homosexual. Two percent saw themselves as bi-sexual, however, and another two percent were uncertain.

Of the 45 teenagers surveyed about sexual molestation, seven percent said they had been molested as small children.

Group takes "witness" door-to-door

(Continued from page 13)

they have four kids," she tells Dorman. And in the next breath, "I sell drugs. If they ask for anything don't give it to them."

"The fact that she knows these things makes us feel like we're not intruding," says Dorman. "Now, even if we don't get to everybody, at least we're getting to know the people a little."

In subtle and not so subtle ways, the experience has affected the volunteers. For some, the standards, comforts once taken for granted are beginning to resemble luxuries more than necessities. "You can't do what we do and go back to your air-conditioned house and be comfortable all the time," Dorman explains. "We haven't been able to nor change."

As for the details of distributing the food, the group is taking that one day at a time, fine-tuning as they go. Eventually, Dorman would like to distribute it more than once a week. For that she'll need more volunteers and more food donations, as well as more money to buy supplemental items at the Pompano Bread Community Food Bank.

But she doesn't want the group to become another "give-your-money-and-forget-it." Project. She says she'd prefer to see parishes in the Pompano area set up a box outside their churches where parishioners could drop canned foods and other non-perishable items every week. Maybe other parishioners could donate their time one weekday a month.

The volunteers would handle the setting up and carting away and the parishes "can have a project for the poor, but really having a project for the poor," she says.

The important thing is that the Saturday visits don't stop. "These people used to be so down and do-gooders," says Dorman. "They're used to people going in and gutting them, and then leaving and never going back."

What kind of Christian witness would that be, she wonders.
A New Look at the Christmas Story

Father Raymond E. Brown, S.S., internationally known Scripture scholar and author, was interviewed in St. Rose of Lima Parish, Miami, Catholics, Fr. Brown says, are ignorable of even the most routine Biblical scenes.

That is why when he asks if Mary was a virgin people get upset, even though he affirms that she was.

Here, he takes apart the pieces of the first Christmas story and fits them back together again. It's still the same story, but if you've been listening to the watchmaker, you'll understand why the story has stood the test of time.

The editors of U.S. Catholic magazine interviewed him.

For many people in America today, Christmas is the liturgical and emotional high point of the religious year. Is this something that should be built upon? Or should it be destroyed so that Easter is more important than Christmas?

Every Pentecost I get up and tell people Pentecost is the most important feast of the church knowing that people will never emotionally accept that. Yet I think it's important, theologically to say it.

But you are perfectly right. Emotionally, psychologically, socially, economically, Christmas is the most important feast. Now you can wait against it, you can try to downgrade it, but you're not going to get anywhere. Therefore, why not use the Christmas story to preach the Gospel?

How?

The infancy narratives are so dramatic that people remember them while they forget the rest of the Gospel story. So why not make Christmas the occasion to stress the connection between the infancy narratives and the essentials of the Gospel?

Matthew's narrative is a rather simple story: Before they have lived together Joseph is told that Mary is pregnant and he is going to divorce her. The angel says, "No, this child was conceiv ed by the Holy Spirit and he's going to save his people. This is predicted by Isaiah." Then the Magi come from afar to see the newborn king and they have to ask Herod where the child's birthplace is — even though they have the star to guide them. Herod, using the same information, tries to kill the children but the child is taken off to Egypt.

It's a very simple story but has good dramatic interest: a wise king, a persecution, a hairbreadth escape.

If you look behind the story, you see some of the essential motifs of the Gospel. First of all, the hero in the whole thing is Joseph, who silently but patiently does what God tells him. He is the instrument of saving Jesus; thus he enables Jesus ultimately to save his people. Joseph represents the Jew who is obedient to the law and yet finds in Jesus God's fulfillment of the law.

The story also has the revelation that this is God's Son, the Savior. Then there are the reactions of people: the Magi, whom Matthew describes as Gentiles, since they come from the East and they don't know the Scriptures. The strange thing is that in Matthew the Gentiles, who don't know Scriptures, somehow are more open to God's plan. Yet, Jew that he is, Matthew says the Gentiles don't care about scrupling the Scriptures. So they have to consult those who have the Scriptures: Herod and the scribes.

The tragedy is that Herod and the others who have the Scriptures reject Jesus and try to kill him.

In other words, Matthew's infancy narrative is a passion narrative: The scribes are there and Herod is there and they are plotting against Jesus. In the end, God takes Jesus away and then later brings him back to foil his enemies.

You can read the same things in the Gospel story but the infancy narrative is in succinct form. It anticipates the Gospel story. I think this is the key to the narrative. Matthew says what we say about every great figure: Look, the trails which make him significant were there even in childhood.

But won't it be baby Jesus every Christmas? If I can get people to see the mystery of the

control the Jewish population so he says, "Let's kill all the Jewish male children." But the mother and sister hide the child.

In Jesus' time this story had been built up. Moses' father Amram has a dream in which an angel says to him, "Your wife is going to have a child and that child is going to save his people."

Then the Pharaoh is advised by his wise men, "There is a marvelous child going to be born to the Jews who will save them and you had better kill him." Because he wants to kill the child, not because of the Jewish population, the Pharaoh says, "Let's kill all the children up to two years of age." So Amram says, "We had better not have this child because he'll be killed." Then Moses' sister, Miriam (which is the same name as Mary), has a dream and says, "No, Amram, because this child is going to be spared."

This Moses story was being told in Jesus' time and it is the background for the kind of story Matthew now tells about Jesus.

Then what you are saying is that Jesus' birth didn't happen exactly the way it is written?

Well, it wasn't that simple. The narratives are after all, a popular way of describing basic truth. What they try to say is that right from Our Lord's birth there were already signs of his greatness and of his identity as God's Son and Savior.

Then is it a good idea to have crib sets in the home?

Of course. Crib sets are a continuation of what the evangelists began. They began to popularize the story of Jesus' birth in a way that caught people's imagination. We've continued in that manner with our crib sets, with Amahl and the Night Visitors, and all those elaborations. They all dramatize the meaning of Christmas. To my mind, perhaps our greatest wealth is not sheer history but some of our ways of representing history.

There are animals in crib sets. Were they present when Jesus was born?

They come from Christian imagination filling in the blank spaces. For example, in Luke, the angels say, "You'll find the child in the manger." Thus is the real sign — that the child is in the manger. And people have neglected that sign, even though it is mentioned in Luke three specific times. It probably reflects the Isaiah passage which laments that even a jackass knows where to get food — in the manger — but Israel doesn't know where to find its Lord. I think the sign is to say that no matter where the manger is. The history has been reversed. God's people now know that they may find their Lord in the manger.

Actually, by putting the donkeys in the crib scene (there are no animals mentioned in the Gospels), our ancestors were playing on that Isaiah passage with the little donkey who knows where to find the manger of his Lord.

Any suggestions from the doctrine of virginal conception that Mary would have been defiled if she had natural union with her husband is bad doctrine... Their (Gospel writers') message was one of total surprise at this creative action of virginal conception.

(Continued on page 24)
Do we really know our young people?

We know our kids' personalities on the surface, but do we really know what's in their heads? And hearts? How much has our Catholic orientation at home and school influenced our young people's values?

Voice editors began discussing this question some months ago and decided the best way to find out was — ask them. So we developed a survey asking a broad array of questions about not only beliefs but experiences in order to paint a general picture of "where our youth are." We decided to survey seniors, as they have virtually completed their Catholic education and are about to take their values, whatever they may be, out into the world.

The results were computerized and printed in three parts, with the last part in today's Voice. How you react to the results will depend on your own values, experiences and expectations. Some areas will probably be comforting to most adults. Some areas, no doubt, will be disturbing. Perhaps some of the findings will prompt many of us to reconsider our priorities and approaches to dealing with our youth.

VOICE EDITORIAL

While most of the high school seniors had a generally good outlook on God and Church, there were substantial problems in the everyday areas of substance abuse and sexual activity.

It was found that 37 percent of our 17- and 18-year-olds get drunk (or high) enough to affect their behavior once a month or more. We won over one in two do it every week or more! While some of this is due to "drugs," most of it is due to alcohol (which, of course, is also a kind of drug). This is consistent with national findings which have always shown alcohol to be the drug of choice among teens with that trend increasing lately, and that there are a surprising number of teen alcoholics.

Many teenagers will try a drug at some time or another. Our survey found that 20 percent have tried cocaine. A nationwide survey of all teens recently reported a similar figure of 17 percent. Our survey found, however, that three percent use coke regularly, as compared to a whopping 78 percent regular use of booze.

Then there is the area of sex, in which we found that half our teens have had sex and about four are into it regularly — and this is before they have graduated and left home! National figures reported in Newsweek magazine are similar to ours, finding that half of American girls from 15 to 19 years of age have had sex.

What seems to emerge from all this information and comparison is the fact that our Catholic kids in Catholic schools are at about the same level of drugs and sex as the rest of the nation's youth.

One thing we must face, therefore, is the fact that, while Catholic education helps form faith, simply sending our kids to Catholic schools does not isolate them from the overwhelming influence of the rest of society, in which alcohol and sex flow as free as air and water. While it is not possible to walk through a school and find kids learning values at school, they are also picking up practices and beliefs from the outside.

Therefore, parents and educators who are not already doing so must face the challenge.

For one thing, we might go out of our way to sit down with the kids both at home and at school, and ask them (as the survey did) what they really think, and tell them of what they have been told. When worldly secular values emerge, then we can deal directly with it, discussing problem areas, not lecturing, but talking on a level of reality they can appreciate.

A story on page 11 today is a good example, in which teen leaders are taught how to "rap" with peers about drugs and alcohol, in the DARE program. Parents can also learn from this approach.

And when a young person says sex is okay "if you are in love," as many did in the survey, sensitive parents and teachers can reply, "I know that's what your hear from Playboy and movie makers who do not believe in the sanctity of marriage or the dignity of the person but only in immediate pleasure."

We can not in this space adequately cover such areas, but the point is that open discussion can lead to understanding and value formation.

There are programs in the schools and ministries trying to do just that, but often fighting an uphill battle against the onslaught of society and sometimes uninterested parents. That is why it must begin in the home with active parental involvement on a realistic level, especially when most Catholic kids do not attend Catholic high schools or CCD classes.

The Voice survey perhaps confirmed some of our hopes as well as some of our fears. But information is only a tool. We must learn from it or be doomed — to paraphrase Santayana — to suffer the consequences of inaction.

Letters

An unusual request after visit to Haiti

To The Editor:

Recently, I returned from a short trip to Haiti with my husband, Fr. Andrew Mahfood, founder, Food for the Poor. As settled down in the plane, I tried to sort out my experiences to describe Haiti in a sentence or two. It's as primitive, it is desperate; it's all these things; but there's more. There is a strong sense of God, love and community. There is sharing and caring and creativity among the poor.

While driving along in Haiti with a friend, she asked me to "look at that child on the dump." I looked and thought, so what? That's a common enough sight and she said, "He's looking for food!" As an average American, I thought he was playing.

While walking through a ghetto area, Ferdy said "look at this little shop." I turned and saw a pottery shop where they make coffins for children. I asked him why, and he said, "children die so often that they make coffins in the neighborhood ghettos."

Yes, there is the reality of the ghetto — the dirt and the shacks and the raw sewage on the streets and nakedness.

I came home with an interesting request. A missionary priest told me he has had more people getting married in his parish because he is supplying the wedding bands. The people feel very sorry about this, a wedding ring is very important. No ring — no marriage, and doubly important, a child cannot get into school if his/her parents do not have a marriage certificate. We all have a chance to help here. Please dig around and see if you can find a ring you no longer use. Send it to us it would really mean a whole lot of happiness.

In the face of such poverty, we are inclined to turn away. It's too massive, there's nothing I can do... But we can all do something and thousands of us doing something amounts to quite a lot. Father Joe Brennan, one of our friends from Jamaica told us just last night, "the only rice available in Jamaica is from Food For The Poor. It's a God's send."

You sent that rice. Perhaps you could help us with rings or other gifts now? God bless you.

Patricia Mahfood
Food for the Poor
1301 W. Copans Rd.
Pompano Beach, FL 33064

On economy, morals and teen survey

To the Editor:

In the same issue of The Voice which summarized the Bishops' pastoral letter regarding the economy and poverty, a survey of Catholic children (teens) revealed that 12 percent do not believe in life after death, and 24 percent do not believe that the Pope is God's representative.

The Bishops declared themselves "shocked and ashamed that the United States" does not donate more funds for foreign economic aid.

But let us be equally and even more "shocked and ashamed" that 12 percent of our Catholic children do not know that they have immortal souls, and 24 percent don't know that they can rely on the Pope to teach them God's honest Truth!

Douglas McCabe
Fort Lauderdale
Living together: Part II

BY FR. JOSEPH M. CHAMPLIN

AFTER SKETCHING the reasons why living togetherness before marriage is both wrong and poor preparation for the sacrament, he outlines his practical cooperation. "I think I can understand the social and economic pressures and the kind of selfishness that has led you to live together. I would like to hear your reasons, but I am convinced that another solution could have been found—and even still can be, that will permit me to witness your marriage. "I would be happy to witness your marriage in a simple, quiet ceremony with two witnesses and perhaps your immediate families. That is what I would do if you had been married in civil ceremony and now wished to have the marriage validated in the Church. "By your living together you seem to be saying, 'We want to be like married people.' I would be very happy to treat you like married people and witness your vows simply and quietly. "But I HAVE serious difficulties with treating you like any other couple wishing to be married, without their proper preparation. "Another possible solution might be for you to live together separately from now until marriage. That would be a public statement to your family, your friends and to me that you are trying to live your courtship in a Catholic way."

The art of the possible

BY DALE FRANCIS

It was Otto von Bismarck, first chancellor of the German empire, who a century ago defined politics as "the doctrine of the possible, the attainable." It is not only a definition universally used but the principle has had a general acceptance, too. If you can't get everything you want, you should try to get as much as you can, politics as the art of the possible says. It does not imply a surrender of principle; accepting what is attainable at a particular time does not compromise the ultimate goal of the fullness of the ideal.

Father Theodore Hesburgh, president of the University of Notre Dame, recalling that politics is "the doctrine of the possible, the attainable," said that "inherited wealth is a misfortune which merely serves to dull a man's faculties." Thus not wanting to burden his students with the responsibility of working for a more restrictive abortion law.

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The Machabees' martyrdom

ALFRED NOBEL, the bachelor Swedish inventor of dynamite, died on October 10, 1896. Educated in Russia and the United States where he studied engineering, Nobel believed that "inherited wealth is a misfortune which merely serves to dull a man's faculties." Thus not wanting to burden his students with the responsibility of working for a more restrictive abortion law.

Mary Martin, the former Broadway musical comedy star of "South Pacific," said, "At a wonderfully impressionable age, my schoolteacher gave me a card with this story of Alfred Nobel, the bachelor Swedish inventor of dynamite, died on October 10, 1896. Educated in Russia and the United States where he studied engineering, Nobel believed that "inherited wealth is a misfortune which merely serves to dull a man's faculties." Thus not wanting to burden his students with the responsibility of working for a more restrictive abortion law.

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Baby Doe's birthday

As the 98th Congress adjourned in October, one measure approved was the Baby Doe Bill. This bill would require states to establish procedures ensuring that severely handicapped babies receive medical attention. The bill's approval comes just one year after the Oct. 11 birth of the baby known as Baby Jane Doe. Her condition at birth was, according to those who battled that engaged the attention of the courts, the federal government and moral theologians. Her case caused people to struggle to understand the terrible dilemma her parents faced.

BY ANTOINETTE BOSCO

At issue was whether parents have the right to refuse surgery in order to extend the life of a baby born with many serious problems. The baby was born with spina bifida— a hole in the spine— as well as excess fluid on the brain. DOCTORS ADVISED the parents that an operation to close the hole possibly could prolong the baby's life. But would she be able to love and understand normal human beings? Would she be severely retarded, unable to take care of herself? Would she need full-time care for as long as she lived? There were no guarantees in this operation. So a series of court actions took place to determine whether the baby's civil rights were at stake.

Now President Reagan has signed legislation that defines withholding medical treatment from infants can be legally justified if this legislation also states that in certain cases doctors and parents may choose to withhold treatment for a severely handicapped baby if this action would merely prolong dying. What literally tugged at my heartstrings was reading on the child's birthday, Oct. 11, that she now has a real name: Keri-Lynn. She is 1 year old now and has taken "quite nicely" to her mother and father. The FAMILY, who have remained anonymous by choice, granted an interview. The New York Times reported that Keri-Lynn "enjoys being bounced on her father's knee, loves the sound of paper being crinkled and looks forward to her daily bath."

"She's lots of fun to be around. She's not in pain, is contentable and happy but can't do anything on her own," said her mother. "It's sad at times. She gets bored and frustrates her parents by not giving them what they expect. She has to put it in her hand, then she smiles." She's red-haired and blue-eyed and "is a family treasure." Her parents had opted to have the operation, to give their daughter a fighting chance. When she spoke to her, she emphasized that she believed all babies should have the best chance they could get at life. She hoped, she said, that in the future he parents would know the operation.

IRONICALLY, THE opening in Keri-Lynn's spine closed naturally. Keri-Lynn's life continues. She has had an operation to remove the excess fluid on her brain.

Keri-Lynn, paralyzed from the waist down, spends most of her days lying on her back. She brings joy as well as burdens to her family. But, more than that, she has a right to her life and life has triumphed— no matter what the length of her years will be.

Her story is another example of the higher power that gives life and commands us to cherish life and all in our power to preserve it. (NC News Service)

Christmas Story

(Continued from page 21)

Isaiah passage with the little donkey who knows where to find the manger of his Lord. That's Christian imagination but it continues the biblical story, no canvases mentioned in the Magi story, but you have a passage in the Old Testament, "People will come from East and West with jewels, dromedaries, bringing gold and frankincense." So the presence of camels is likely a correct interpretation of the Scriptures in a visual way. And it's perfectly valid.

Would the miracle of God becoming human be any less if he had two human parents instead of just one? Or should anyone even raise that question?

I think it's very important that people understand that in Catholic faith Jesus was God's Son from all eternity. In a certain sense, he is God's Son no matter where he was conceived. On the other hand, I don't underestimate the fact that the virginal conception has been a marvelous tool to get people to see that Jesus was no normal human being. It involves the question of Jesus as God incarnate. That's Christian imagination but it continues the biblical story, no canvases mentioned in the Magi story, but you have a passage in the Old Testament, "People will come from East and West with jewels, dromedaries, bringing gold and frankincense." So the presence of camels is likely a correct interpretation of the Scriptures in a visual way. And it's perfectly valid.

On the question of Jesus as God incarnate there are three general approaches. On the ultra-conservative side, that is, the literalist, you try to read the Scriptures with the evidence of the New Testament that factually Jesus really did not have a human father. He was divinely conceived. The significance of that fact is precisely that Jesus is God incarnate.

Is it possible historically that Jesus had brothers and sisters? This raises the question of whether Jesus was born of a virgin. It involves the question: did Mary remain a virgin; not, on the other hand, is it clear from the Scriptures that those who called the "brothers" and "sisters" of Jesus were children of Mary. It is from church tradition that we learn of Mary's consubstantiality, and thus the church has clarified something that was not clear from the Scriptures.

Dr. Andrea Dallas, the New Testament expert, has stated that Keri-Lynn "enjoys being bounced on her father's knee, loves the sound of paper being crinkled and looks forward to her daily bath."

"She's lots of fun to be around. She's not in pain, is contentable and happy but can't do anything on her own," said her mother. "It's sad at times. She gets bored and frustrates her parents by not giving them what they expect. She has to put it in her hand, then she smiles." She's red-haired and blue-eyed and "is a family treasure." Her parents had opted to have the operation, to give their daughter a fighting chance. When she spoke to her, she emphasized that she believed all babies should have the best chance they could get at life. She hoped, she said, that in the future he parents would know the operation.

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In the middle

Q. Why do two friends who have personal conflicts put me in the middle of the conflict? The result is putting me in danger of being hurt; otherwise I will cause to me to be torn between the two of them? (Vermont)

A. It could be that both friends like you, and that each of them views you as an ally. Also, both may think that if you can get them as an exclusiv e ally, she will have worked some sort of victory.

You are the person in the middle, however, is never in a pleasant position. As you, so say, you feel "torn between the two of them."

You must be alert not to worsen the situation yourself. Don't be the one to carry tales from one friend to another.

For example, avoid telling Sue that Carrie said she is sloppy, and telling Carrie that Sue thinks she has some awful looking clothes.

BY TOM LENNON

Why not make your discomfort known to both your friends in frank and separate talks?

Explain to these two persons that you like both of them and would like to continue the friendship with them, but not under the conditions that now exist.

Tell them that you do not intend to take sides, that the disputes must be resolved by them alone and that you want no part in their arguments.

If one or both of them are not receptive to your ideas, you may have to re-torm to ore drastic measures.

Tell them you would like temporarily to withdraw from your friendship until they can settle their disputes and you can enjoy a more peaceful relationship with them. This step has an advantage and a risk.

Good friends ... are of great worth. And getting through the rough moments in our friendships can deepen them and make them even more rewarding and pleasant...

The advantage is that it may force them to look carefully at the way they are behaving. Perhaps their own friendship needs a cooling-off period in which they do not see as much of each other and can decide whether their differences are all that important.

The risk is that one or both may decide to withdraw from your friendship temporarily but permanently. Whatever you decide to do, try to speak to both friends calmly, kindly and thoughtfully and make the same point that you want no part in their arguments.

Don't be too quick to give up on your friends. Sometimes, if you are really sure, are of great worth. And getting through the rough moments in our friendships can deepen them and make them even more rewarding and pleasant.

(Send questions and comments to Tom Lennon, 1312 Mass. Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006) (NC News Service)
How can singles find support?

Dear Dr. Kenny:

As I read your answer to a single person's request for recognition within the family of God, I became temporarily discouraged. It seems that the divorced, the separated and the widowed are thought of sooner. Most parishes have organizations for these people. Why can't we be included when couples have dinner parties, cocktail parties and weddings? I can discuss politics, sports, the arts and weather as intelligently as a married woman. It is an anachronism to believe a woman has to have a husband.

You said, "free of commitment." Untrue. When we were young we babysat, helped pregnant sisters, paid for their children's clothes and never had any savings. Today we have the sole responsibility of aged parents and handicapped siblings and need help sometimes.

You said "more time for recreation and entertainment." So untrue. The only time we had more time was when our married friends were when they had preschool children.

We have evenings and Saturdays, but entertainment costs money. Are you aware of the tremendous gap in earning power between men and women?

More time! I leave home at 6:30 a.m. On Saturdays, it's market, cleaner, department store, etc. You said, "Making friends should have a high priority." How? (Pennsylvania)

De-stimulate the holidays

It's that time of year again when we have to give ourselves permission to be impatient — in advance. We aren't going to have that Better Homes & Gardens Christmas no matter how hard we work so let's accept it right now and not feel guilty about "failing" later on.

After years of failing, I have developed some suggestions for a hassle-free holiday season.

1. Lower your expectations. Learn to live and laugh with broken cookies, lopsided trees and cards received that weren't sent.

2. Lower your housekeeping standards. Closets exist to hide clutter replaced by seasonal paraphernalia. Let's use them. Learn to live with the messier bathrooms that accompany returning college students.

3. Set up a gift-giving table with paper, tape and strings and give the children a go at wrapping packages. Live with crumpled corners and poor balance. You'll get that way by Christmas anyway.

4. Don't attend all the Christmas functions offered, Pick the few you enjoy and forget the rest. Celebrate from a "want to" rather than a "should" orientation. Go to your children's programs but skip those of your baby-sitter, friend's or employer's children.

5. Do away with money worries. Rule of thumb: eat what you cook or don't cook it. Don't fall into that trap of overspending and then resenting it.

6. Share Christmas card activity. Let the spouse and kids write some of the notes and don't nag about their spelling. Relatives don't mind. Neither do good friends. The rest don't matter. Kids are good at addressing, licking, and stamping.

7. Don't — repeat — DON'T feel guilty about not having a gift for unexpected guests. Send them a Valentine cake.

8. Laugh when the tree sinks starboard or portside. Perfect trees exist only in the forest or department stores. Let the kids decorate it and feel pleased in their achievement even if some of their decorations seem unusual. One of ours once hung its turtle collection and it got more attention than icicles.

9. De-stimulate the children by turning off TV occasionally, providing quiet time, reading Luke, and singing carols together. Give them a chance to settle down and start the meaning of Christmas instead of adding more activities.

10. Don't invite houseguests if they're going to spoil your holidays. If you keep saying, "We have to get this done before Aunt Mabel comes," everyone will hate her by the time she comes. She isn't coming for the house. She wants to spend time with you — warts, clutter, and all. We worry about our cupboards more than relationships.

11. Eat what you cook or don't cook it. Why make others feel guilty by baking rich foods and then watching them with incriminating eyes as they enjoy the seller's lair? If you're going to feel guilty because of holiday eating, go ahead and eat because you're going to feel guilty anyway.

12. Don't count down the days as parents do — Oh, Lord, only 8 days left to do everything — but as children do — are there still 8 whole days till Christmas?

13. Don't worry about spending the exact amount on every child. They only complain when you sense you're feeling guilty. If they do complain, give them The Look. If that doesn't work, give them The Talk About Giving.

14. Enjoy — don't dread — the holidays. Anything that infringes on enjoyment should be questioned. Prey, laugh, and share good times together — including memories of a pleasant hassle-free time in the family.

Openings prayer

Dearest Lord, bless us as we come together tonight as a family in joyful anticipation of your arrival. Fill us with the joy of O Lord, with the brotherhood of all people and help us to share our family's love and joy your people everywhere. Amen.

Activity time

Manger Time. Materials: one large white sheet, manger figures (if the family is large, a set, the figures can be cut out of cardboard and colored with crayons). The birth of the Baby Jesus is only a few nights away. If the tree is not up yet, now would be a good time for the family to put it up together. If it's already up, remove all the presents so its base is empty. The lights may be lit, the room darkened. Take turns sharing what the tree symbolizes to you.

(i. Germany during the 1860's people used to hang apples and white wafers on trees to symbolize the Holy Eucharist. Thus, the tree that had the fruit of sin for Adam and Eve now bears the saving fruit of the Eucharist symbolized by the wafers. Later these wafers were made into stars, hearts, flowers and bells which have evolved into our present day decorations.)

Now pass out a manger character to each family member (larger families — one figure for two people). Ask each to share what that character of the Christmas story gave because he loved (example: Joseph — a home for Jesus). Then each take a turn sharing what he or she may give our love for Jesus. Place the white sheet under the tree and place all the manger figures, except the Baby Jesus, on the sheet near the manger. Sing together, "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" Snack

Cranberry punch and homemade cookies.

Entertainment

Plan to go out around the neighborhood caroling as a family. Come home to another treat — this time, hot chocolate.

Sharing

1. Sharing a memory of a favorite Christmas tree from the past.

2. Share what each would like to do to make this Christmas Eve more enchanting.

3. Share when someone felt especially happy the past couple of days.

Closing prayer

Suggested Prayer: Oh God, thank you for this evening and the warmth and joy we feel this Christmas season. How grateful we are at Jesus' birthday soon to come. Be with us, Lord, in our final preparations for this great day. Amen.
The kingdom is coming!

By Father Owen F. Camplin

BACKGROUND

When this section of the Book of Isaiah was written, Babylon shook. The mighty Persian warrior-king, Cyrus, was on the march. For BABYLON'S Jewish hostages, such as the author of this portion of the Scriptures, it was a time both for fear and for hope. What would the future, and the rise of Cyrus, mean? With God's help, it could mean freedom to return hope to Jerusalem.

The passage blends a sense of the urgent times with a gentle perception of God, the shepherd. In the second reading, from Peter's second epistle, this latest New Testament writing repeats an Advent theme: the Lord is coming soon! But it reflects the first reading's imagery. God is good, with "generous patience."

JOHN THE BAPTIST has been a Christian figure since the earliest days. The starkness of his lifestyle, and the boldness of his message, easily applied to the thought that true belief in Christ is more than lip-service.

In this section, he identifies himself as the forerunner of Jesus, who is coming. That is the essence of Mark's gospel: God's kingdom is coming.

REFLECTION

These times are grim. Not too long ago, a teacher in a Catholic high school told me that he had asked his students to tell him how they thought their lives would end. The majority replied that they expected to die in a nuclear war. "The teacher" was not astonished. Nor was I. The threats of war are everyday. War has dealt an awful blow in human suffering in the past, and may again.

Advent's message is indeed that the kingdom is coming, not only in symbol as in the Christmas creche. It will come into our lives—and again into our world. Is that a terrifying thought? The readings suggest the answer: in the application that it need not be frightening. Remember three points from these readings:

1) The Lord is coming one day to each of us personally;
2) accept no more, and ask forgiveness; but, 3) God is the shepherd lovingly searching for the troubled, or lost, he is of "general patience," he loves us, and he will bring us a peace and joy that will not end.

IN OMINOUS times, the message is that we come to the core of Christian hope.

Q. Could you tell me how the Catholic Church stands on the teaching of ECKANKAR? My niece has started attending lectures on this and I never heard of it. (Illinois)

By Fr. John Dietzen

A. ECKANKAR is among the dozens of Eastern mystical movements which have captivated the imagination of many in the United States during the last generation. As most others, it professes to offer a science of "total awareness" of all reality and freedom.

According to its practitioners, the world itself stands for the all-embracing spiritual force of Sugmad—Gnosticism which promises mystical experiences to those who use three purple candles (or white candles tied with a purple bow). As with any similar groups, reincarnation is an essential element of ECKANKAR. One does not die; he is "translated" century after century "through myriad forms and facets of experience."

ECKANKAR is one of the many, and less Christian, oriented forms of Gnosticism which promise mystical techniques for attaining "all knowledge." It would, I think, be impossible to harmonize such a philosophy with Christian belief and practice.

Q. What is now the proper arrangement for an Advent wreath? Formerly we used three purple candles (or white candles tied with a purple bow) and one pink. In recent years I have seen other forms of the Advent wreath, sometimes with all white candles. What is proper now? (Florida)

A. There is no official form of the Advent wreath. It can be for our homes a beautiful and meaningful symbol of the spirit of Advent, but its arrangement is only a matter of custom.

The observation you make about Advent, however, is significant in light of the developing flavor of the church's observance of this significant time of the year. In times past Advent was seen as somewhat of a mini-Lent; a time of penance and self-denial but with a tinge of joy in the background—perhaps symbolized most by the rose candle lit on the Advent wreath that day.

As the church's liturgy developed over the past century or so, particularity in the last several decades, the dominant spirit of Advent is one of joyful awaiting and hope. This theme clearly appears in the scripture readings for weekday and Sunday Masses as well as in the other liturgical texts for this season.

The increase during the past few years of the use of blue (symbolizing hope) rather than purple in liturgical art for Advent reflects this same spirit.

Q. I'm attending an adult education class on church history. The other night the priest said, as near as I can recall, that we the church need to always think about what is happening in the world to know what the Gospel is telling us.

What does that mean? Isn't the Gospel always basically the same? (California)

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A. As always basically" the same, yes. Scripture, especially the New Testament, always will be the norm against which church teaching must measure its belief and its life.

However, the application of that norm is not the same. It depends on many changing circumstances of life. Furthermore, each religion has a unique historical development through history enlarges and develops our understanding of what that basic message is.

As St. Paul said, he needed to adjust his presentation and living of the Gospel of Christ to the people to whom he was ministering, making himself "all things to all men."

A few years ago the Vatican's International Theological Commission put this reality of Christianity beautifully and succinctly. We "must insert the evangelical message concerning Jesus Christ more deeply into all the languages and cultural models of different peoples."

"We can accomplish it if we can remain not only in continuous dialogue with the Holy Scripture, with the faith and with the magisterium of the church, but also with the richness of the traditions of all the particular churches and of human experience lived in every culture in which the action and the effects of the Holy Spirit can be present."

(A free brochure explaining Catholic marriage and the teaching of the church is available by sending a self-addressed envelope to Father Dietzen, Holy Trinity Parish, 704 N. Main St., Bloomington, IL 61701.)
Is an angel watching this show?

By James Breig

NBC drama series about an angel. I had mini-reviewed it a while ago and promised more in the future after

HOLIDAY CLASSIC — Jimmy Cricket, Pinocchio’s pal and conscience, urges Mr. Wooden to tell the truth as his nose grows in proportion to the lies he tells. ‘Pinocchio’ the popular Disney animated feature, is being re-issued for the holiday season. (AP photo)


This paperback series discovers God’s world through a variety of subjects: the zoo, city, everyday things, colors, shapes and designs, and the outdoors. The series is dominated by beautiful color photographs, which give detailed designs or unusual perspectives on ordinary subjects. Large print and simple texts make the books easy reading for young readers, although some of the subjects are more suitable for reading aloud to younger children. Ages 18 months-7 years.


This tale, which might seem a bit strange and silly to adults, is just the ticket to appeal to the humor of young school children. The story is about five pigs, the Pinko Juniors, and their fight to win back bathtubs stolen from Pinkoville by the Wig-Switch. The illustrations present some amusing contradictions and incidents and are an important dimension of the book. Ages 5-8.

HOLIDAY ON CH. 9

Monday, Dec. 17
5 p.m. Rediviva Abrego
7 p.m. Little Match Girl (repeated at 6 p.m. Dec. 18, and 7 and 8 p.m. Dec. 19)
7:20 p.m. Home for Christmas (repeated at 7:20 p.m. Dec. 18, & 7:20 p.m. Dec. 19.)

Tuesday, Dec. 18
5:30 p.m. News is Good (Christmas Special)
7 p.m. City that Forgot Christmas
10:30 p.m. Making of a Miracle

Wednesday, Dec. 19
6:00 p.m. Making of a Miracle
Thursday, Dec. 20
5:00 p.m. Visitation (Spanish drama)
6:30 p.m. Christopher Lab (repeated at 6 p.m. Dec. 17,
7:30 p.m. Dec. 18, & 20 6 p.m. Dec. 19,
7:00 p.m. Dec. 21)

Friday, Dec. 21
5:00 p.m. Nativity (Spanish drama)
6:00 p.m. Reel to Reel (Boston Boys Chase)
6:30 p.m. Yeshua and the First Christmas

Saturday, Dec. 22
7:20 p.m. Angel Warrior
7:30 p.m. Meeting of the Angel Warrior and Jotham
8:00 p.m. Holy Child (1951)
9:00 p.m. Jesus and the Children
10:00 p.m. Nativity

Sunday, Dec. 23
7:20 p.m. Lamp of the World
7:30 p.m. A Dream of Angels
9:00 p.m. Jotham

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**SEAL OF FRIENDSHIP—All 27 boys and girls from the Catholic Home for Children in Miami, an Archdiocesan facility, were in for a treat when members of Southern Bell’s Hispanic Community Relations Team took them on a day-long outing to Miami’s Seaworld. While making fast friends with the Southern Bell employees and their families, the Home’s children also managed to spell out “Say ‘Hello’ to Miami” (above). The Seaworld provided free admission to the group.

St. Ann’s mission gives toys to migrant toys

This year St. Ann’s Mission has started a campaign to give toys to the migrant children. Any individual, institution or business that wants to sponsor a family will be sent a note with the family’s information — name and address of family, age and sex of children in the family and any other necessary information.

**Thrift store seeks presents for the children and any other goodies may be placed in a box with the information form on top of the box. The box will be sent to the migrant children at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach. The author of 15 books presents for the children and any other goodies may be placed in a box with the information form on top of the box. The box will be sent to the migrant children at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach. The author of 15 books.

St. Ann’s mission gives toys to migrant toys

**The North Dade Catholic Support Group**

Hollywood recently disbursed its profits over the last eight months to over a dozen organizations helping adolescents and children in Dade and Broward counties.

St. Ann’s Catholic Thrift Shop was begun in August of 1983 by a group of volunteer women and men under the direction of Mary Jane Terrini, and under the auspices of the Archdiocesan Respect Life Committee. Father Daniel Kubisla is the spiritual director.

Bishop G. John Kettler of the Dade Diocese is the spiritual director of the Archdiocesan Respect Life Committee. A monthly meeting is held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Church of the Holy Spirit, 12705 N.W. 19th St., Pembroke Pines (880-0500). The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 22, at 7:30 p.m.

The South Florida Catholic Support Group was founded in 1975 by Father Richard T. Biggerstaff, pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach. The author of 15 books presents for the children and any other goodies may be placed in a box with the information form on top of the box. The box will be sent to the migrant children at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach. The author of 15 books presents for the children and any other goodies may be placed in a box with the information form on top of the box. The box will be sent to the migrant children at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach. The author of 15 books.

The Catholic Widow & Widowers Club

Membership is open to widowed women and men. The annual membership fee is $25.00. For information, call 564-1180.

**St. Henry’s Church**

Father Sheehy has been named national director of the Miami Archdiocese Ministry of Temporaries, will transfer to the new Diocese of Venice, ending 23 years in service to the Archdiocese of Miami. Father Sheehy, a native of Chicago, was ordained to the priesthood in 1961 by the late Archbishop Coleman F. Carroll at St. Mary Cathedral.

Since 1962, he has served on the Archdiocesan Reality Commission and was appointed Chairman of the Reality Commission in 1969. He has been a member of the Archdiocesan Building Commission for the past 20 years.

In 1965, he was appointed a Consultant to the late Archbishop Carroll and has also served as a Consultant to Archbishop McCarthy. Father Sheehy was Treasurer of St. John Vianney Seminary, Miami, and Director of Boystown of Florida. In 1970, he became Pastor of St. Lawrence Parish, North Miami Beach, and in 1974, he was appointed Pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, North Miami Beach. The author of 15 books presents for the children and any other goodies may be placed in a box with the information form on top of the box. The box will be sent to the migrant children at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach. The author of 15 books presents for the children and any other goodies may be placed in a box with the information form on top of the box. The box will be sent to the migrant children at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach. The author of 15 books.

Rosarian presents living tableau

A living tableau of the Christmas story will cover the campus of Rosemary Academy. The twenty-sixth annual Christmas Pageant is presented on the evenings of December 15 and 16.

The present is a Christmas gift to the community from the private girl’s school. The public is invited to attend without charge.

Nine scenes surrounding the birth of Christ unfold in striking settings under the stars and palms of Florida. Spectators are led from scene to scene by guides bearing lighted torches.

Spectators are invited to attend between 7 and 9 o’clock, Saturday or Sunday, December 15 and 16. The pageant is through Rosarian’s Eighth Street entrance only.

Seeking Pace alumni

Graduates of Mrs. Edward Pace High School, classes of ‘64, ‘65 and ‘66, are asked to contact Richard Waller, President of the Florida Catholic Academy as their twenty-sixth annual Christmas Pageant is presented on the evenings of December 15 and 16. The present is a Christmas gift to the community from the private girl’s school. The public is invited to attend without charge.

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**INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGES**

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2. **AIR CONDITIONING**

3. **HALLS FOR RENT**

4. **CLASSIFIED ADS**

5. **FALL FURNITURE**

6. **GABLES OF CALL FOR RENT**

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10. **SACRIFICE SALE—DANIA**

11. **SACRIFICE SALE**

12. **EDGECARE II**

13. **EDGECARE II**

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33. **SUNSHINE MOVERS**

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38. **COMMERCIAL-RESIDENTIAL**

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**DEADLINE**

TUESDAY 10 AM

**BUSINESS SERVICE GUIDE**

**PHONE**

758-0543
**Christmas trivia quiz**

By Theodore Hengelsbach
NC News Service

The story of Jesus' birth is well known. Many Christmas calendars probably recall it by heart. But just for fun, check your knowledge of the details of the Christmas story by taking the following test. There may be a few facts you have forgotten, so this is the appropriate season to refresh your biblical account of Jesus' birth in Matthew and Luke. So you really can lose.

1. Who sent out the decree that a census of the whole world should be taken?
   a. King Herod
   b. Pontius Pilate
   c. Caesar Augustus
   d. Quirinius of Persia

2. In which direction did Joseph and Mary go as they traveled from Nazareth to Bethlehem?
   a. North
   b. South
   c. East
   d. West

3. How many angels first appeared to the shepherds to tell them about the birth of Jesus?
   a. A multitude
   b. A host
   c. Out
   d. One

4. When they heard the news of Jesus' birth, the shepherds were filled with
   a. Joy
   b. Fear
   c. Surprise
   d. Discouragement

5. Under what name was Mary's child announced to the shepherds?
   a. Jesus
   b. Son of God
   c. Conceived of the Holy Spirit
   d. God with us

6. What were the shepherds told of Jesus' birth, what did they do?
   a. Joined in a prayer of thanks to God
   b. Went quickly to find Mary, Joseph and the child
   c. Discussed among themselves whether this could be true
   d. Went to sleep

7. What did the shepherds do after they saw Jesus?
   a. Pondered these marvels in their hearts
   b. Made known to others what they had been told and seen
   c. Visited the temple
   d. Presented Jesus with gifts

8. Who gave Jesus his name?
   a. Mary
   b. Joseph
   c. God the Father
   d. The angel

9. When was Mary's child first called Jesus?
   a. On the day of his circumcision
   b. When the shepherds visited Mary and Joseph
   c. When the Magi visited Mary and Joseph
   d. Only after he began his public life

10. The name Jesus means
    a. Son of the most high God
    b. Savior
    c. Conceived of the Holy Spirit
    d. Son of David

11. The name Emmanuel means
    a. Conceived of a virgin
    b. Savior
    c. Son of Joseph
    d. God with us

12. The Magi traveled in which direction to find Jesus?
    a. North
    b. South
    c. East
    d. West

13. The reason why the Magi came to see Jesus was to
    a. Worship him
    b. Present him with gifts
    c. Find out for themselves if Jesus was really the son of God
    d. Fulfill a vow that they had made to God

14. The Magi saw Jesus
    a. With Mary in a house
    b. Lying in a manger
    c. In a house with Mary and Joseph
    d. In a stable

15. The Magi were warned not to return to Herod by
    a. Mary
    b. Joseph
    c. A dream
    d. An angel

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**A home for... on Sheridan...**

By Father David Monahan
NC News Service

My checkbook reminds me that I wrote five checks on Christmas Eve, 1983. The last one has the simple description “Jesus House.”

Walking back along the trail of my memory I recall that day.

It is a typical day before Christmas for me — presents to be purchased, homilies not yet packaged, no gifts wrapped. Too little time for too many things. Unholy tension before a holy event.

My secretary agrees to help her panicky employer wrap some items in their proper Christmas brightness — if I can get the stuff to her home some 25 miles away.

Along the way I will deliver the check to Jesus House.

In mid-afternoon I park along Sheridan Avenue on the south side of Jesus House. It is bitter cold in Oklahoma City — below zero with the windchill factor.

There will be seasonal hymns sung. Prayers will be said and presents given — scarves, gloves, T-shirts, socks, toothpaste, maybe even swaddling clothes.

I ask the whereabouts of Sister Ruth and player wrap some items in their proper Christmas brightness — if I can get the stuff to her home some 25 miles away.

Along the way I will deliver the check to Jesus House.

In mid-afternoon I park along Sheridan Avenue on the south side of Jesus House. It is bitter cold in Oklahoma City — below zero on the thermometer with a fierce numbing wind knitting through one’s clothes. The windchill factor tonight will be 47 below zero.

At the door I pass through an aroma of the odors of unwashed bodies and the cacophony of jabbering tongues into a kingdom unfamiliar to a middle-class priest.

It is not a place of fame. Baskets of food are being toted. The oversized kitchen is bubbling with the evening meal.

By midnight 1,000 baskets of food will be given away. Several hundred more people will share in the energizing warmth of the spread right here.

I edge my way down the central hall. There is a white-bearded oldster slumped on a bench with the vacant eyes of a man pursuing dreams of Christmases past. There is a young couple, stark as the Arkansas hills from which they came, holding a baby with the softness. There is an American Indian man, face roughly chiseled by hard times, staring at the opposite wall.

The guest list includes an honor roll of street people — youngsters who threw away the good money when there was work to be had in the oil fields; a waitress who shaves too much to continue in her occupation; a grizzled man who cannot recall his own name.

This is the reverse of the original event. Here there is room in the inn. Later this day there will be a unique Christmas party — an event for the homeless. The guest list includes an honor roll of street people — youngsters who threw away the good money when there was work to be had in the oil fields; a family newly arrived from Michigan; a waitress who shaves too much to continue in her occupation; a grizzled man who cannot recall his own name; and some 300 more battered sons and daughters of God.

There will be seasonal hymns sung. Prayers will be said and presents given — scarves, gloves, T-shirts, socks, toothpaste, maybe even swaddling clothes.

I ask the whereabouts of Sister Ruth and...
now for a great Christmas

games and put them under the tree. Then set up a card table and spend time with family or friends playing games on Christmas afternoon.

- Go for a walk alone or with others on Christmas Day. Lack of fresh air and exercise can sap the spirit as the great day wears on.
- Plan ways to introduce your faith into Christmas observances at home. A measure of frustration can result for many people if Christmas at home is celebrated almost as though it were not a holy day. You may want to plan a special prayer to begin your Christmas dinner, or a special reading from a favorite book or from Scripture to precede the opening of gifts.

- Consider aspects of past Christmas Days that you found disappointing. Is cooking all the last thing you want to do on Christmas? Could you simplify Christmas dinner? Are all the gifts opened up in five minutes, leaving you feeling that all the gift preparation was much ado about nothing? Could you consider a way of opening gifts in turns, allowing time to savor each other's gifts?
- Finally, ponder some good things in your life. The birth of Jesus as one of us indicates that the world is meant to be filled up with goodness. The goodness around us is cause for celebration.

know your faith

Christmas Crossword

Across
1. Frosty the Snowman
2. Jesus' mother
3. Announced Jesus' birth to the shepherds
5. Town where Jesus was born
6. Jesus' crib
7. Tree decoration
8. Gifts
11. Evergreen
13. Jingle

Down
1. Santa's transportation
2. Jesus' mother
3. They pull Santa's sleigh
4. They pull Santa's sleigh
5. Town where Jesus was born
6. Jesus' crib
9. St. Nick
10. It shone in the East over Bethlehem
12. Santa's helpers

...nowhere who changed history

in creating us, we must love—selflessly, creatively. Not to love is to become subhuman. As Paul put it in his famous hymn to love: If I have not love, I am nothing."

Sadly, men and women chose self-love over creative love. This choice destroyed them. To regain their dignity as human beings, they would need to be shown the way.

To this end, God "sent forth his son," who was perfectly in God's image. "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creatures" (Col. 1:15).

People could see in Jesus what it was like to be really, gloriously human. For they had as a model not some mythical, unreal ideal, but a flesh-and-blood man. A nobody from nowhere, born and raised in humble circumstances, Jesus changed the course of human history, pointing humanity toward its original dignity. Jesus did this by loving creatively and selflessly. Even Jesus' love-inspired death was creative. And he did this as one of us. That is the whole point of the incarnation—of Christmas when the word became flesh.

Christmas is a celebration of humanity. Christmas is a ringing proclamation that human life is precious, destined for glory. Christmas says once more that the secret of human fulfillment and happiness is love, human love—the love of flesh-and-blood men and women created to share the creative love of their maker.
CINCINNATI (NC) — Sickness and fear, death and sorrow are the dark side of the "season to be jolly," author Carol Leubering realized after a friend's illness and death during the holidays.

In an article for the December St. Anthony Messenger, published in Cincinnati by the Franciscan Fathers Leubering offered suggestions on how to lessen the pain of grief for those separated from a loved one at Christmas time.

"Be aware of the needs around you," she advised. Although the first Christmas after a death or divorce is the hardest for most people, it isn't necessarily the only difficult one. "Years of sharing Christmas with someone dear is a hard habit to break; some widowed people will never quite get used to a holiday season without their spouse," Leubering wrote.

"Sickness, both serious illness and lesser maladies, also casts a shadow over the season, she said. Hospital visits only add to the seasonal rush, and caring for a recuperating patient or an invalid drains a family's physical and emotional energy.

"Be sensitive to the particularly hard moments," such as birthdays and anniversaries of surgery and death which bring up a flood of memories, Leubering urged. She also advised sharing special Christmas traditions with someone grieving during the holidays. For example, invite the lonely neighbor to Christmas dinner or share some seasonal good tidings with the family whose father is in the hospital.

"You can share the feel of your own Christmas; you can let your own uniqueness brighten the holidays for someone else," Leubering said.

"And be prepared for a surprise," she added. "The rewards outweigh the effort."

She recalled the story of a mother of several teenagers who invited a young widow and her pre-schoolers to Christmas breakfast. The woman thought she was doing a great favor, but found that the youngsters actually brightened up the day. "What I'd forgotten is what fun is to have little folks around on Christmas. We all had a wonderful time!"

By Hiltia Young
NC News Service

I confess I don't usually look for Jesus in shopping malls or department stores, but I did today when I went Christmas shopping. I thought maybe it would help me keep my cool when people step on my ankles in the elevator and store clerks make the phrase "May I help you?" sound like threat.

Well, Jesus fooled me. He took my corny approach to self-control and made it what I think is called "an authentic prayer experience."

And he showed up in the crowds.

I FOUND him in the guise of a very old woman ringing the bell at a Salvation Army donation stand, despite the cold and wet.

He was carrying a sleeping 4-year-old and turned up in a Woolworth's clerk who made up the difference from his own pocket when a 10-year-old was 50 cents short of being able to pay for a little vase for his mother for Christmas.

Jesus was all over.

He became 16 and opened the window nativity scene; laughing and making it what I think is called "an authentic prayer experience."

And he showed up in the crowds.

I FOUND him in the guise of a very old woman ringing the bell at the Salvation Army donation stand, despite the cold and wet.

He became 16 and opened the store door for me with a big smile when my arms were full of packages.

I saw him in a tattered old man sitting on the pavement outside Sears playing his harmonica and nodding at passersby.

And then Jesus turned into a young woman who, instead of dropping a quarter into the man's upturned hat, sat down next to him to visit a while and share a laugh and a hug.

Jesus turned up in a Woolworth's clerk who made up the difference from his own pocket when a 10-year-old was 50 cents short of being able to pay for a little vase for his mother for Christmas.

Jesus was all over.

He was carrying a sleeping 4-year-old on his shoulders; making the sign of the cross in front of a store window nativity scene; laughing and kidding as he helped a group of blind students through Penney's.

Jesus kept saying "Merry Christmas" to me in the most wonderful ways all day.

MERRY CHRISTMAS to you too, Jesus.

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