

# FORUM

Diocesan Activity Report

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## THE TRUTH AND MEANING OF HUMAN SEXUALITY: Guidelines for Education Within the Family

### *Pontifical Council for the Family*

The following are highlights of the above document. This new document should be read as a companion to the earlier document from the Congregation for Catholic Education entitled, *Educational Guidance in Human Love* (Origins, Vol. 13, No. 27, Dec. 15, 1983). Both documents can be obtained from: Origins, 3211 Fourth St., N.E., W.D.C. 20017; 202-541-3290; FAX 202-541-3255.

### *On the situation and problem in current society*

Among the many difficulties parents encounter today despite different social contexts, one certainly stands out: giving children an adequate preparation for adult life, particularly with regard to education in the true meaning of sexuality. There are many reasons for this difficulty, and not all of them are new. (#1)

This new context is made worse by what we observe: an eclipse of the truth about man which, among other things, exerts pressure to reduce sex to something commonplace. In this area society and the mass media most of the time provide depersonalized, recreational and often pessimistic information. Moreover, this information does not take into account the different stages of formation and development of children and young people, and it is influenced by a distorted individualistic concept of freedom in an ambience lacking the basic values of life, human love and the family. (#1)

### *On the importance of chastity*

In the light of the redemption and how adolescents and young people are formed, the virtue of chastity is found within temperance—a cardinal virtue elevated and enriched by grace in baptism. So chastity is not to be understood as a repressive attitude. On the contrary, chastity should be understood rather

*Chastity should be understood as . . . stewardship of a precious & rich gift of love. . .*

as the purity and temporary stewardship of a precious and rich gift of love, in view of the self-giving realized in each person's specific vocation. Chastity is thus that "spiritual energy capable of defending love from the perils of selfishness and aggressiveness, and able to advance it toward its full realization" (*Familiaris consortio*, #33). (#4)

### *On love and human sexuality*

Humanity is called to love and to self-giving in the unity of body and spirit.

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### In this issue. . .

we feature the Pontifical Council for the Family's new document on education in human sexuality. Entitled *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, Bishop James T. McHugh, provides us with commentary on the document (p. 3). Highlighting the theme of education in authentic human sexuality, Rose Fuller tells us something of a new curriculum written by Catholic chastity educators (p. 4), and DDP new staff assistant, Thérèse Bempohl interviews the new generation of chastity educators in the Church. Along with the summary of our annual report and an article on NFP in the diocese of Phoenix, we hope the introspection of Winter will lead to a fresh approach to your ministry on behalf of life and love in the Spring.

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Femininity and masculinity are complementary gifts through which human sexuality is an integrating part of the concrete capacity for love which God has inscribed in man and woman. "Sexuality is a fundamental component of personality, one of its modes of being, of manifestation, of communicating with others, of feeling, of expressing and of living human love." (*Educational Guidance in Human Love*, 1983, #4) This capacity for love as self-giving is thus "incarnated" in the nuptial meaning of the body, which bears the imprint of the person's masculinity and femininity. (#10)

.... when the sense and meaning of gift is lacking in sexuality, a "civilization of things and not of persons" takes over, "a civilization in which persons are used in the same way as things are used." (*Gratissimum sane*, #13). (#11)

### ***On marriage and openness to life***

When love is lived out in marriage, it includes and surpasses friendship. Love between a man and woman is achieved when they give themselves totally, each in turn according to their own masculinity and femininity, founding on the marriage covenant that communion of persons where God has willed that human life be conceived, grow and develop. To this married love and to this love alone belongs sexual giving, "realized in a truly human way only if it is an integral part of the love by which a man and a woman commit themselves to-

tally to one another until death" (FC, #11). ... "In marriage the physical intimacy of the spouses becomes a sign and pledge of spiritual communion. Marriage bonds between baptized persons are sanctified by the sacrament." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2360). (#14) The revealing sign of authentic married love is openness to life: "In its most profound reality, love is essentially a gift; and conjugal love, while leading the spouses to the reciprocal 'knowledge' ... does not end with the couple, because it makes them capable of the greatest possible gift, the gift by which they become cooperators with God for giving life to a new human person (FC, #14). (#15)

### ***On parents as the primary educators of their children***

In granting married persons the privilege and great responsibility of becoming parents, God gives them the grace to carry out their mission adequately. As husband and wife who have become "one flesh" through the bond of marriage, they share the duty to educate their children through willing collaboration nourished by vigorous mutual dialogue that "has a new specific source in the sacrament of marriage, which consecrates them for the strictly Christian education of their children: that is to say, it calls upon them to share in the very authority and love of God the father and Christ the shepherd, and in the motherly love of the Church, and it enriches them with wisdom, counsel,

fortitude, and all the other gifts of the Holy Spirit in order to help the children in their growth as human beings and as Christians" (FC, #38). (#37)

The "religious formation of the parents themselves," in particular solid catechetical preparation of adults in the truth of love, builds the foundations of a mature faith that can guide them in the formation of their own children (*Educational Guidance in Human Love*, #76). This adult catechesis enables them not only to deepen their understanding of the community of life and love in marriage, but also helps them learn how to communicate better with their own children. (#134)

### ***On education in human sexuality by adults other than parents***

As couples or as individuals, parents can "meet with others who are prepared for education for love" to draw on their experience and competence. These people can offer explanations and provide parents with books and other resources approved by the ecclesiastical authorities. (#130)

Parents who are not always prepared to face up to the problematic side of education for love can take part in meetings with their children, guided by expert persons who are worthy of trust, for example, doctors, priests, educators. In some cases, in the interest of greater freedom of expression, meetings where only daughters or sons are present seem preferable. (#131)

In certain situations parents can "entrust part of education for love to another trustworthy person," if there are matters which require a specific competence or pastoral care in particular cases. (#132)

"Catechesis on morality" may be provided by other trustworthy persons, with particular emphasis on sexual ethics at puberty and adolescence. Parents should take an interest in the moral catechesis which is given to their own children outside the home and use it as a support for their own educational work. (#133) ■

## **Human Sexuality Symposium**

The John Paul II Consortium of Family Ministers, a think tank forum for the philosophical and theological underpinnings of Catholic marriage and family life, will hold a symposium at the Holiday Inn at Cherry Hill, NJ, on May 30-31st. The symposium will be a gathering of experts to discuss various ways to implement the recommendations set forth in *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*.

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# The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality— History, Context, & Content

Most Rev. James T. McHugh

**O**n January 18-20, 1996, the Pontifical Council for the Family sponsored a special meeting in Rome to publicize and discuss *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, its recently released document on the role of parents in sex education.

Cardinal Lopez-Trujillo opened the meeting and explained the purpose of the document and its history and context. The Cardinal emphasized that this document is intended to assert the rights and responsibilities of parents and it is complementary to the earlier document of the Congregation for Catholic Education, *Educational Guidance in Human Love* (1983). Cardinal Lopez-Trujillo noted that some people have interpreted the document as opposed to education in sexuality in schools. But that is nowhere stated in the document; it was not intended because that would be contrary to Church policy, a policy which has given birth to many good programs in the schools. At the same time there are some deficiencies and mistakes that can be corrected, and the school alone cannot accomplish the task. There should be a cooperative effort that respects the primary role of parents and the supportive role of the schools.

Cardinal Lopez-Trujillo said that the family, however, is not an isolated, closed unit; it exists in society. Parents need help in dealing with attitudes and trends in society that are contrary to a Christian view of sexuality—one that focuses on the dignity of the human person and his or her efforts to live a virtuous and holy life. Thus, the document, especially in chapters 7 and 8, tries to present basic criteria and guidelines to help form morally positive understandings and attitudes in children and youth. For parents, moral values are paramount.

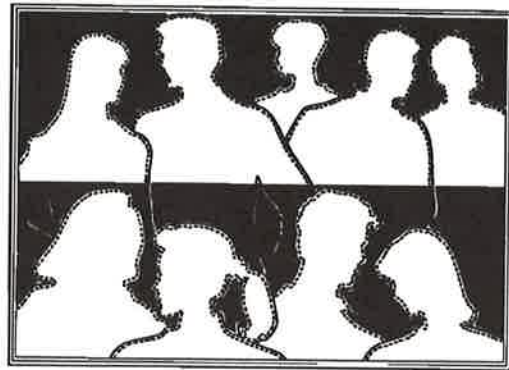
The basic concepts of this document are based on the Christian anthropology

of John Paul II, the truth and dignity of human sexuality, the recognition that marriage is the natural place in which love is expressed by the spouses, including sexual love. The document also reflects a confidence in youth who are open to good advice and counsel despite the dangers and pitfalls of modern living.

From the papers and the discussions the following general points of agreement emerged:

1. Parents have a natural right and responsibility to provide information and guide their children to a mature and morally correct understanding of human sexuality. To do this, parents must understand and accept the Church's teaching on marriage, sexuality, parenthood, and Christian vocation.
2. Parents should give individualized instruction to each child. They should take a more personal approach, gradually giving more detailed information, presenting intimate matters in the context of faith, Christian values and growth in holiness. The school should create an environment of respect for sexuality, for other persons, and for human values, as opposed to the secularism and hedonism of modern society.
3. Parents must take an active interest in schools and teachers, exercising "attentive guidance" of the school. The school must make room for the active participation of parents in regard to education in sexuality.

The conference participants recognized the problems; i.e., parents often leave too much to the school and do not follow the material given to children. Sometimes they feel unprepared or are practically excluded.



Also, in many schools a hedonistic viewpoint predominates and it is very difficult to correct this both in regard to teachers and other parents.

4. There is a role for the Church community to support parents and assist them. This would extend to religious education programs, youth groups, and Catholic schools.
5. *The Truth and Meaning of Sexuality* provides the information that parents need, but it must be transmitted and explained at the parish level. *Educational Guidance in Human Love* gives direction to schools and teachers. But both parents and teachers should know both documents and use them as complementary aids.
6. Efforts should be made not simply to give information about sexuality but to help young people integrate that information into their formation as Christians. They need an understanding of virtue, self-discipline, the importance of the Eucharist, and the sacramental life and the meaning of Christian vocation.

Again, this document complements *Educational Guidance in Human Love* and both enable pastors, family life educators, schools and teachers to work cooperatively with parents in imparting a true Christian view of human sexuality to young people. It is hoped that further materials will be developed to give parents the practical advice they need. ■

Most Rev. James T. McHugh is the bishop of the diocese of Camden, N.J., and a member of the NCCB Committee for Pro-Life Activities.

# Project Genesis

Rose Fuller

The sky poured forth thunder, lightning, and torrential rain and flooding was especially bad the summer of 1993 in Midwest America. It was the twenty-fifth anniversary celebration of the papal encyclical, *Humanae vitae* in Omaha, Nebraska. The elements seemed to symbolically represent the battle we face when teaching and promoting Christian marriage and family life.

A small group of us gathered in a side room during one of the interludes in the conference to talk about strategies to promote and teach chastity. As the stories emerged around the table it became clear that change was in order. Horror stories of bad sex education were plentiful. What was even more hurtful were those stories of problems in our Catholic schools and religious education programs. Some curricula used in Catholic schools were too explicit in reproductive anatomy and weak in telling the truth about the human person. Often, lip service was paid to issues like NFP and even abortion. Some Catholic school staff had learned the mantra that parents are "uninterested"—too busy. Or, if parents showed interest, inquired, or questioned the accepted family life or sex education program, the label "repressed" was often given and they were told they were the only ones who had complained. Despite the "war stories," signs of hope also surfaced during our meeting. We also discovered that many of us were working on "alternative" programs. It seemed clear that we would be more effective by unifying our efforts. The idea was christened with the name *Project Genesis*.

Our first resolve was a need for "family friendly" curriculum, confident in its Catholicism, and steeped in the virtues. We wanted to offer parents some real

*The focus is not simply on imparting knowledge, but rather on changing and reinforcing positive behaviors.*

help in conveying matters of sexuality. After the Omaha meeting, various developmental meetings took place and funding was pursued. In the end, funds from Cardinal Bevilacqua, Archbishops Curtiss and Levada, and Bishops Bruskewitz, Burke, Myers, and Schweitz, the Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities, an anonymous donor, and a great deal of volunteer time enabled this project to be completed.

How is *Project Genesis* different from other Catholic "sex ed" programs? It integrates the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the Holy Father's theology of the body, and his many writings on marriage and the family. The basic principles are that we are all created in the image and likeness of God. Our bodies are the expressions or outward manifestations of our own persons. We are meant to do god-like actions. The theology of the body has a richness and depth which cannot be fully explored here, but it is a new and exciting way to understand the full meaning of being a man and a woman. It is clear that many want to deny that our bodily acts, especially sexual acts, reflect our spiritual life. Imagine trying to tell the world that lightning can occur without thunder. Denying the truth does not remove its reality.

A proper understanding of love is central in the *Project Genesis* curriculum and is taken from John Paul II's definition. Isn't a major goal to teach children to love? Often the understanding of love is reduced to a feeling or intuition. The meaning of love is taken from the example of Christ who loved us on the cross. In his agony, Christ made a choice, a will-act, to give himself for us on the cross. This choice was based on his knowledge of the dignity and value of each and every one of us—that God had

made us to be with him someday in heaven. His act of love on the cross is permanent—He is always the Lamb of God—and life-giving—his cross merited the life of grace for us. The definition of love in *Project Genesis* is a choice based on knowledge which is a self-gift that is permanent and life-giving. This definition follows the Holy Father's idea that as images of God, we should act as God acts, i.e., love as God loves. This, of course, is possible only with his grace.

The entire program is organized around three topics: Theology, Health, and Relationships. It is absolutely crucial to note that *Project Genesis* is not intended as a second religion curriculum. It is a supplement to religion, health, and science texts. Stories of saints and "real life" people along with problem-solving activities and lovely artwork are typical vehicles teaching the truth. Family activities are an integral part of the program, they begin and end the lessons for grades K-4 and are an important supplement to grades 5 to 8. These high-powered ideas are presented in fun and age-appropriate ways. In addition, the authors attempted to incorporate strategies known to be effective in reducing poor choices and reinforcing good choices. The focus is not simply on imparting knowledge, but rather on changing and reinforcing positive behaviors. Virtues are not mere words to memorize, but the lived response.

The public sector is recognizing the need to teach good character. Catholics use the term virtue or good habit and *Project Genesis* settled on the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance to accent behavioral issues. These four virtues are found not only in the theology sections, but also in the health and relationship sections. Clearly, we need to be prudent, just, courageous, and temperate in taking care of ourselves (health) and in our relationships with others (relationships). For this reason, *Project Genesis* has a number of lessons regarding alcohol, drugs, and smoking. Clearly, these topics relate to health. However, all risky behaviors are related to one another. It is not enough simply to talk about the dangers of early sexual experience without teaching



students about other risky behaviors which can harm them and which often lead up to or are related to sexual behavior.

*Project Genesis* is also unique in its flexibility of use. A conscious decision was made by the authors not to include any reproductive anatomy or physiology in the student texts. We believe that this information is best communicated by the parents to their children or in parent-child workshops. We do believe that most children should receive this information somewhere in the 5th or 6th grade. Therefore, the "child's" book, *Growing Up: The Wonder of My Changing Body*, is intended to be used by parents together with their children at some time between the fifth and sixth grades. The parent book, *Teaching Catholic Family Values: A Parent Handbook*, will give the parents any help and information they need to convey the wondrous truth about human sexuality to their children. In addition, *Project Genesis* suggests that a parish using the program should assist parents by presenting the workshop, *Fertility Appreciation: Family Workshop*, together with the slides that accompany it, to the parents and children. In the home, with parents and children in a workshop format, or in a school setting (with parental permission) the necessary information regarding human procreation will be given.

*Project Genesis* can be used in a number of different settings and in different ways. For a parish with a school, the complete *Project Genesis* program would include all twenty-two books and the slides. The school would purchase the K-8 student texts and teacher manuals. In addition, parents will have the parent book, "child's" book, and the family projects as a resource. The parish may purchase the workshop books and present the two workshops between the 5th and 8th grades for parents and children to further encourage family involvement.

A parish religious education program would make available the parent book and the "child's" book. Lacking sufficient time, almost all religious education programs would not be able to use the



K-8 student texts and teacher manuals. However, the workshops are designed for religious education use and so should be used by a parish to assist the parents in teaching their children.

For parents who do not wish to be involved in any parish program at all, authors suggest that they work with their children using the parent book and the child's book. *Project Genesis* believes that this is not the most advantageous use of the materials because the interaction in the workshops can assist in learning. However, parents are always the final judge of what is best for their children. Therefore, *Project Genesis* wants to provide materials which can be used in the home independent of any parish or community program.

New and better approaches to help families directly or indirectly through family friendly religious education and school instruction are needed to heal the wounds of the sexual revolution. *Project Genesis* is but one of others yet to come. It will be available in Spring of 1996 through Leaflet Missal, 976 West Minnehaha Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104, 1-800-328-9582. ■

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Rose Fuller, wife, mother, and educator is the executive director of Northwest Family Services, Portland, OR. Rose served on the NCCB's NFP National Advisory Board from 1989-1996. Because of her expertise, Rose continues to advise the DDP/NFP on NFP, chastity education, and related issues.

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## The Next Generation of Chastity Providers

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Thérèse Bermpohl

*We asked two young leaders ministering in the field of chastity education to give us their thoughts on its future. Mary Beth Bonacci, already a well known chastity educator, has recently formed a new organization called **Original Innocence, Inc.**, in order to "develop and promote good, positive, attractive materials on real love and chastity." Thomas Blau, OP, is a Dominican brother who received his M.A. in theology from the University of Steubenville and is presently studying for the priesthood at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C. Br. Tom began speaking on chastity education after taking a course offered through **The Future Project**. Here is what Mary Beth and Br. Tom had to say:*

**TB: How did you become interested in chastity education?**

**Mary Beth:**

When I was a senior in college, I worked with pregnant teenage girls. I kept thinking, "I wish I'd talked to you two months ago." I realized that while we are offering a lot of programs for pregnant teens, we were doing very little to encourage respect for sexuality in the first place.

At the same time, my school sponsored a speakers' series on chastity. Now, I had always been a "nice Catholic girl." And I had always abstained from sex—largely because I feared pregnancy and hell—I'm not knocking my motivation, but it wasn't particularly positive. These speakers, however, introduced chastity to me in a whole new way. Chastity is positive. It's about understanding and living love. It's good news. It's what we want — even more than sex.

I realized several things that night. First, that the lack of understanding about chastity is at the root of the abortion problem. Second, that people of my generation hadn't heard this message, and they were clearly paying the price. And third, that no one was giving this message to teenagers, although I was certain they would respond.

So I graduated and started giving talks. It was supposed to be my "good deed" I did once a week as I climbed the corporate ladder. Guess again. God had bigger plans. Ten years later that "good deed" is a full-time ministry and my life's work.

**TB: Br. Tom, what about you, why did you get involved?**

**Br. Tom:**

I began to take an interest in chastity education in college. Many of the men and women there were experiencing incredible suffering because of buying into "the big lie" of the sexual revolution; broken hearts, promising relationships ruined, and all the diseases. Also, my background in biology led me to read the terrible statistics (untimely pregnancy, and STD's). In contrast to this, was the Church's position. It had practical wisdom and, I believe, the solution to these problems.

As far as actually speaking on the topic, I didn't get started until I met Mary Beth Bonacci. The occasion was while attending a course that she directed on how to speak to teens. I saw that it was possible to convincingly speak to teens on chastity and to be effective. From that time I have grown in my desire to get the message of chastity out to students.

**TB: Why do you think leaders in the Church should speak or teach on this issue?**

**Mary Beth:**

Because no one else is! So many of our problems today — disintegrating families, teen pregnancy, AIDS, even gangs — are directly related to the lack of respect for the power and beauty of human sexuality. People are lonely, they're looking for love in sex, and it's not working. People are hungry, they're looking for a better way, and we have it. If, as Catholic leaders, we fail to give that truth to them, we will have to explain ourselves to God. And it won't be pretty.

It's not enough to just try to "scare" people out of sex, and it's not enough to say "just don't do it." We need to give them the positive, beautiful truth about sexuality, and we need to give it to them often. How often do teenagers hear about condoms in the average day? How many acts of extramarital sex do they see on TV? We need the truth about sex to be just as pervasive — just as much a part of their every day lives.

Pope John Paul II has done his part. He spent the first five years of his pontificate speaking on his "Theology of the Body." He went far past the "just don't do it" we had previously heard and developed an entire, beautiful, positive treatment on the incredible dignity of human sexuality. But Catholics in the pews will never hear that message unless we give it to them.

I have recently launched a new organization called **Original Innocence, Inc.** Our goal is to develop and promote good, positive, attractive materials on real love and chastity; to help "Generation X" to understand and respect the incredible gift of human sexuality.



**Br. Tom:**

For me, there are three reasons why I believe it is crucial for Church leaders to get involved. First is the "deafening silence." There are so few voices speaking this truth. Yet the opposite, decidedly un-Christian message is all-pervasive in our society. By our silence are we condoning evil? Someone needs to be the "dissenting" voice of Truth to this disastrous error. To remain silent in the face of such blatant falsehood is to abandon our youth to the wolves. In this sense, speaking out is only justice and charity.

Second, in CCD I was only told "don't break the 6th commandment—its a sin!" While true, I don't believe we can expect our youth to follow such a legalistic mind set. The pressure is too great. The reasons behind the moral law need to be brought out. Chastity is really good for the human person. We need this virtue! God did not declare that unchastity is wrong in an arbitrary manner. Rather not choosing to lead chaste lives is against our true good. Here I'm following the lead of the Holy Father and his analysis of the virtue of chastity and its intrinsic relationship with authentic love. Our message is founded on sound reason and truth not in mere legalism.

Third, because all Catholics living chastity have very good news/great news, for our society. Whether in the married, celibate, or single state, chastity is part of the freedom of the Christian. We should therefore be glad to speak out about it.

**TB: Ok, it makes sense that Church leaders get involved, but what about the parents? Are they in need of help?**

**Mary Beth:**

Most definitely! Parents need help. So many of them grew up during the sexual revolution never really learning in a positive way about the Church's teaching on sexuality. Now, as parents, they

don't know what to do. They don't want their children to be sexually active, but they don't know how to approach the subject. They don't know how to get beyond scare tactics to really inspire their children to understand and to embrace chastity.

Many parents think that they can't influence their child's sexual decisions. Nothing could be further from the truth. Parents have an intense influence on the formation of their children, if only they would exercise it.

What the Church has been saying is so true—parents are the primary educators of their children, especially in sensitive areas such as that of human sexuality. Given that fact, I believe that parent education and support programs are actually more important than classroom-based programming. Schools and churches should have regular workshops for parents in which they refresh their understanding of church teachings, discuss their children's sexual development, and give support for teaching and encouraging chastity to their children. There is also a need for more literature helping parents in this area, and for organized support networks to assist parents.

Parents are the primary educators of their children. We need to do everything we can to help them succeed.

**Br. Tom:**

I see myself helping parents in two ways. First, by being an occasion whereby they can discuss chastity with their children. After a teen has heard a presentation the parents are able to begin a discussion on sexuality with a simple, "so what did you think of that guy?" I provide an opportunity for the parents to witness to their own experience of living chastity. This living witness is much more powerful and formative of a teenager's attitude than I could ever be.

The second way I see myself as assisting parents is by reinforcing what Catholic parents are teaching their children. The students hear from me an affirmation of the way of Christian living that they have already received—whether verbally or through Christian witness—from their parents. In this sense I am merely a "booster shot" for what the parents are already teaching—and possibly giving reasons that they have not thought out. This is brought out every time I review the evaluations that the teens give. A response of "I have already decided to live chastity until marriage" is a victory—the parents have instilled the virtue, I have been able to reinforce it. It's a team effort for the sake of God's children.

**TB: After you give one of your presentations, what kind of feedback do you get from teens?**

**Mary Beth:**

Unspeakably positive. I get standing ovations, requests for autographs, even letters and phone calls at home (from the more persistent ones). As much as I'd like to take credit for all of this, the credit actually goes to the message.

The kids are starved for this information. For so long we have copped out on them, believing that they'd never accept it, that they didn't have self control, that they were "going to do it anyway." Wrong! Chastity education hadn't been tried and found wanting. Chastity education just hadn't been tried.

For me, this has been the case from the start. Teens have always been open to the message. The difference is, adults are not open to teens being open to the message. They are finally becoming convinced that our youth have the brains and self-control necessary to respect the dignity of their own creation as sexual beings. They're finally realizing that teens are not animals.

It's about time.

*(Continued on p. 8)*

(Continued from p. 7)

**Br. Tom:**

For me it's the feedback that keeps me going— it's incredibly positive. Even from the boys—who on account of peer pressure often can't look enthusiastic during the talks—I have received words of gratitude in the evaluations! The pressures to get sexually involved are much greater than even a few years ago, and teens get worn down in their resolve. The multiple reasons for living chastity serve to strengthen that resolve, and this helps to lessen the force of the pressures. It's a relief to teens to hear that they don't have to be sexually active to be happy. They really appreciate hearing the truth explained to them, not as children, but as young adults who alone can make this decision.

Question-wise, they always want to know more about STDs and are often surprised to hear that there are more diseases than just HIV/AIDS. They also want to know more about strategies for living chastity during the dating years. Society has failed to guide them in these matters, or worse it sets "TV land" as the standard. It's up to the Church to address this area with a Christian understanding. Overall I find the "work" very exciting, always new, and quite challenging—the phrase; "kids ask the damndest questions" is so true! ■

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Information about Mary Beth Bonacci's new program *Original Innocence, Inc.*, can be obtained from:

1520 W. Warner Road,  
Ste. 106-138,  
Gilbert, AZ 85233;  
602-812-1194.

Br. Tom Blau, O.P., can be reached at:  
Dominican House of Studies,  
487 Michigan Ave., N.E.,  
Washington, D.C. 20017.

## The Government's Solution to Teen Pregnancy

Susan Wills, Esq.

What next? Beavis and Butthead as co-chair of a National Literacy Campaign? How about putting Howard Stern in charge of a crusade to curb broadcast smut? Perhaps Smith & Wesson might fund a national drive to ban handguns, with Sylvester Stallone as a celebrity spokesperson? Preposterous, but no more so than putting folks like Dr. Henry Foster, Jr., Whoopi Goldberg, and MTV's president, Judy McGrath, in the frontlines of President Clinton's National Campaign to Reduce Teen Pregnancy.

On January 29, 1996, President Clinton announced the appointment of failed surgeon general nominee Henry W. Foster, Jr. as Senior Advisor to the President on Teen Pregnancy and Youth Issues and liaison to the privately-funded National Campaign to Reduce Teen Pregnancy. The Campaign is supported by initial contributions totaling \$75 million from, among others, the Carnegie Corporation (a Planned Parenthood donor) and the [Ted] Turner Foundation. Mrs. Turner Foundation is the redoubtable Jane Fonda, sometime member of Planned Parenthood's Board of Advocates and National Leadership Committee to Keep Abortion Safe and Legal. Among other advocates listed alongside Jane Fonda in Planned Parenthood's 1992 Annual Report are Whoopi Goldberg and Dr. Foster. Small world!

In principle, it is not a bad thing for the government to evaluate approaches to curbing teen pregnancy. If such review were conducted intelligently and impartially, it would not take long to

determine that abstinence-based programs work and that programs teaching how to have "responsible" sex with condoms fail. The government might then swiftly choose to defund Planned Parenthood which, despite revenues of

over \$315,000,000 for FYE June 1995, picked up an additional \$163,100,000 in government grants and contracts during that period. The government might then encourage abstinence-based, character-laden curricula that stress, for example, prudence, respect for self and others, and the meaning of com-

mitment in love and in friendship. Is this likely to occur? You be the judge. This is the Administration that gave us Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders who thought masturbation should be taught as "safe sex" in the schools, who distributed defective condoms to school clinics in rural Arkansas—knowing they were defective—because she thought kids should get used to using them, who claimed that because we have drivers ed. courses to teach kids what to do in the front seat of the car, we should have courses to teach kids what to do in the back seat as well. This is the Administration that gave us Kristine Gebbie who produced ads featuring dancing condoms and at least one celebrity who had been arrested for indecent assault of a sexual nature.

Let's examine the qualifications of two prominent members of the Campaign team. Whoopi Goldberg, according to her autobiography, admits to five or six abortions before age 25. One

*In principle,  
it is not a bad  
thing for the  
government  
to evaluate  
approaches to  
curbing teen  
pregnancy.*



source puts her total number of abortions at eleven. Whoopi defends her "choices." We know nothing of Judy McGrath's personal life. We've occasionally, briefly, monitored MTV as part of "opposition watch." Much of the programming, and even advertising, could reasonably be categorized as "soft porn," occasionally punctuated with responsible PSA's in the nature of celebrity testimonials recommending condom use. Chastity to the MTV crowd likely means only one thing ... Cher Bono's daughter.

An interview with Teen Pregnancy Campaign Board Member Sarah Brown, a Senior Study Director at the Institute of Medicine, indicated that she is not a committed ideologue. Brown would welcome scientifically conducted investigative reports of abstinence-based

programs which have verifiable results that could be replicated. She claims never to have seen such evidence. In the course of conversation, she confided that she has a "family planning background" and "used to work for Planned Parenthood," while hastening to assure me that today's Planned

Parenthood is not hostile to abstinence as in its early days. She dismissed my concern that Planned Parenthood might stand to lose about \$478,100,000 annually if chastity ever caught on.

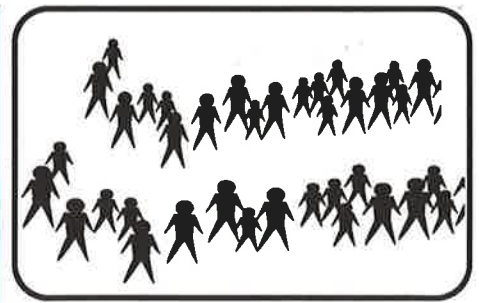
Which brings us to Henry W. Foster, M.D., selected by the president to replace Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders. Foster was touted mainly for his work in addressing teen pregnancy through the "I Have a Future" (IHAF) program operating in two housing projects in Nashville. He and the President were quick to trumpet the abstinence component of the IHAF program, providing members of Congress with literature to evidence the fact. Dr. Foster admitted under questioning, however, that this litera-

ture was prepared only after the announcement of his nomination. Neither the program manual, nor an 8-page descriptive brochure (which discusses contraceptives on three of these pages), nor any other documentation on the program presented, showed even a nod to abstinence. IHAF turned out to be just another sex ed/condom handout program with predictable results: "participants in the program actually showed *higher* rates of sexual activity than those outside the program according to a Carnegie Corporation evaluation" (Family Research Council News Release, 2/1/96). The program orientation was consistent with Dr. Foster's past associations. He was on the Board of Directors of PPFA for several years, beginning in 1975, and on PPFA's National Leadership Committee in 1989. The

main purpose of that committee was to fight against parental consent laws, waiting periods, and other moderate regulations on abortion. Planned Parenthood has also filed lawsuits to block abstinence-based programs. Family Research Council reports, for example,

that PPFA sued the school district in Hemet, California, to remove three successful abstinence programs (Teen-Aid, Sex Respect, and Choosing the Best) from the district despite independent evaluations showing all three programs reduced teen sexual activity and teen pregnancy rates. Similarly, PPFA filed a lawsuit in Jacksonville, Florida against Teen-Aid, although that program had reduced the teen pregnancy rate by 35% just three years after implementation. Dr. Foster was also a member of PPFA's National Leadership Committee to Keep Abortion Safe and Legal in (at minimum) 1989 and 1992.

Teen pregnancy (especially in the absence of paternal responsibility) and related pathologies—domestic violence,



low birthweight babies, crime, child abuse, drug and alcohol abuse, entrenched poverty—threatens American society. The president erred in asserting that rates here, of course, are mirrored in many other countries of the world. Birthrates per 1,000 female teens for other developed countries are: Japan (4); France and Denmark (9); Germany (10); Canada (26); and the United Kingdom (33). The U.S. rate is 60 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19 in 1993. Could our high teen birthrate be due to higher rates of abortion in these countries? No. The U.S. teen abortion rate is 44 per 1,000 teen females. Contrast this with Japan's 6, Denmark and Canada's 16, and England and Wales's 19 per 1,000 teen females.

The forecast is even more bleak when we examine trends in out-of-wedlock teen childbearing. The percentage of teen births outside of marriage has grown as follows: 1960 (15%); 1970 (30%); 1980 (48%); 1985 (59%); and 1993 (72%). Social deterioration of this magnitude demands a committed effort by parents, churches, schools, and communities to restore moral values to sex education. Lest the work of the National Campaign to Reduce Teenage Pregnancy be worse than nothing (journalist Mona Charen's assessment), we invite readers to send board member Sarah Brown reports of successful abstinence programs at: National Campaign to Reduce Teenage Pregnancy, 2100 M Street, N.W., Suite 500, Washington, DC 20037. ■

*Susan Wills, Esq., is the Assistant Director for Programming of the NCCB's Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities.*

**Grateful appreciation  
is extended to the  
dioceses participating  
in the  
1995 Profile survey**

Alexandria, Allentown, Arlington, Baker, Baltimore, Beaumont, Biloxi, Boston, Bridgeport, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Burlington, Charleston, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Colorado Springs, Columbus, Corpus Christi, Crookston, Davenport, Dodge City, El Paso, Erie, Evansville, Fargo, Forth Worth, Galveston-Houston, Gary, Gaylord, Greenburg, Harrisburg, Hartford, Houma-Thibadoux, Indianapolis, Jackson, Jefferson City, Kalamazoo, Kansas City/ St. Joseph, La Crosse, Lafayette, Lansing, Little Rock, Louisville, Los Angeles, Lubbock, Tyler, Madison, Manchester, Marquette, Memphis, New Orleans, New Ulm, Nashville, Newark, Ogdensburg, Orange, Pensacola-Tallahassee, Peoria, Philadelphia, Portland, Raleigh, Richmond, Saginaw, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Antonio, Santa Rosa, Sioux City, Sioux Falls, St. Petersburg, St. Cloud, St. Augustine, Scranton, Springfield, Steubenville, Trenton, Tulsa, Wichita, Wheeling-Charleston.

## **Annual Diocesan NFP Activity Report—Summary**

*Rev. Robert Cannon, MA, JCL*

*In the Fall of 1990, the Diocesan Development Program (DDP) initiated an annual national survey. Diocesan NFP coordinators or contact persons were asked to complete a Profile questionnaire that would:*

- 1) provide the DDP with a clearer understanding of diocesan NFP efforts, by focusing on the unique needs of individual dioceses, and*
- 2) enable the DDP to provide the bishops and NFP coordinators with a national picture of diocesan NFP program activity.*

*The following information is based on responses to the 1995 Diocesan NFP program Profile survey.*

### **OVERVIEW OF THE 1995 PROFILE RESULTS**

In November of 1995, 187 Profile questionnaires were mailed to dioceses. At the time of this report, eighty or 43% had completed and returned their survey questionnaires. Five years have now past since the DDP/NFP began surveying diocesan NFP efforts. Some critical trends have held constant when the 1991 Profile survey and the 1995 Profile survey are compared. These critical trends include:

- A) Where the diocesan bishop and clergy publicly encourage and support NFP efforts, NFP programs are strong and effective, even with limited funding.
- B) Most NFP programs receive some financial support from their dioceses. A common financial arrangement is for an NFP program to share the funding, material, and staff support of an umbrella department, e.g., Family Life Office, Catholic Charities, or the facilities of a Catholic hospital. Typically, dioceses provide funding of less than \$5,000 per year toward NFP programs. There is a handful of dioceses who fully fund their NFP programs.
- C) Almost every diocese has a person designated as the Diocesan NFP Coordinator. Often, the responsibility for NFP activities is one hat of many. For example, the Family Life Director will be tasked with the responsibility for NFP development and implementation in his or her diocese.
- D) Almost all diocesan marriage preparation programs include a brief overview of NFP methods. The time allotted for NFP in marriage preparation programs on the average is forty-five minutes or less.
- E) The Ovulation Method and the Sympto-Thermal Method are the most preferred methods of NFP. Various NFP national provider groups are used by dioceses.
- F) The majority of the diocesan NFP teachers are volunteers. A few dioceses provide teachers with stipends to cover personal costs, e.g., gas, a baby sitter, materials, etc.
- G) There are, at a minimum, more than 1,000+ NFP teachers scattered through dioceses across the nation. They contribute over \$1,000,000 in donated time and energy toward NFP efforts.

In conclusion, the 1991-1995 time span reveals that the efforts of the NFP programs in the dioceses, when viewed as a whole, remain varied and uneven. Some dioceses have made tremendous strides in improving their NFP programs, e.g., receiving Endorsement through the *National Standards of the NCCB*. A few dioceses have reduced their commitment to NFP programs either through budget cuts and/or diocesan restructuring. But the compelling question for each diocese is whether couples, who wish to be faithful to Church teaching on responsible parenthood, can find the resources they need to do so. ■



## COORDINATOR'S CORNER

# Phoenix Natural Family Planning Center— Twenty-Two Years of Service

*Janet Kistler*

In 1995 it was the NBA, with Phoenix, Arizona hosting the All-Star Game. In 1996, it was the NFL with the Dallas Cowboys and Pittsburgh Steelers playing in Super Bowl XXX in Phoenix. Everybody seems to know of these sporting events in our country, but did you know that, since 1974, NFP has been playing an active role in the Diocese of Phoenix?

In response to inquiries from some of his patients, a Catholic obstetrician/gynecologist, Dr. S.J. DeFrancesco, began a monthly lecture series on the natural methods of fertility regulation. While this was originally designed only for his patients, word began to spread and Dr. DeFrancesco recruited the assistance of Maria Fitzpatrick Campion, a registered nurse, and the rest is history! Of course, Rev. Marc Calegari, S.J., a longtime friend of NFP (and who is dearly missed since his death) contributed greatly to the growth and development of Natural Family Planning in Phoenix. Fr. Calegari was already teaching a semester class to students at Brophy High School and Xavier High School as an elective in senior theology. Certainly, he was well ahead of his time.

St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center offered office space to the program in the latter part of 1975 along with some services. While the program never became a department of the hospital, the services provided over the years proved invaluable to the growth of the Center. We were able to offer class series at the hospital, provide brochures to the maternity patients and offer informational sessions to the in-

terns, residents, and nurses.

Reflection on where we were those many years ago certainly encourages appreciation for where we are today. Our initial offerings were very primitive ... no organized materials for clients save various hand-outs from Fr. Calegari; no slides (for those of us who were not artists (our chalk board renderings were comical!); and not much at all in the way of organization. But, one thing those original teaching pioneers did have was a great desire to share the good news of NFP with others and to develop a program that would meet current and future needs.

In 1977, we restructured our client instructional approach, offering Dr. Josef Roetzer's Symptothermal Method instead of the Billings Method with which we had originally begun the program. Eventually we were able to assemble a slide program, a client manual, teaching script, and an organized set of classes for the clients. During this same period of time, we had initiated dialogue with our Bishop with regard to marriage preparation and an NFP introduction which was met with a very positive response. The demand for an introduction throughout the diocese was great but the supply of instructors was very limited. In order to meet the demand, instructors were recruited from among the first clients, a teacher training

program was developed, new teaching locations outside the hospital were sought, and a full year's class schedule was organized.

Through the auspices of the Priest's Education Office of the Diocese of Phoenix, our Center traveled to the vicariates throughout the diocese offering an introduction to NFP to all the priests. This was mandated by the Bishop as a way to both educate priests on the modern methods of fertility regulation and also to provide them with a forum through which they could ask questions freely and hear the witness of a married couple who were living NFP. This was a very successful endeavor for the Center and within the first six months after completing this education experience, we saw a 40% increase in refer-

als from priests. Throughout the years we have continued to offer a luncheon and introduction to the newly ordained or newly incardinated priest, in our diocese.

In the early to mid-eighties, we saw a need to again remodel our teaching materials. Our program had grown considerably and our class structure as well as our materials had not kept pace with our growth. Again, through the influence of Fr. Calegari who was a great one for not reinventing the wheel, we approached Rose Fuller of Northwest Family Services, to begin discussion on

*Reflection on  
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are today.*

*(Continued on p. 12)*

(Continued from p. 11)

adopting their curriculum in Phoenix. Both Fr. Hunegar and Rose were very generous with their time in coming to Phoenix, putting on an in-service for our existing instructors and working out an arrangement that suited both programs. Through the ensuing years, we have adapted the Northwest Family Services program to our local needs and have also translated the materials into Spanish.

Attending conferences, even in the early years of our program was always something we looked forward to with great enthusiasm. The conferences in Collegeville, MN were invaluable as a learning experience for meeting others of the same mind and heart and for developing a global NFP community. We have also been fortunate to have attended all of the DDP conferences from Seton Hall to the present. In 1991, with the development of the *National Standards*, our Bishop, Thomas J. O'Brien, adopted those standards for the Dio-

cese of Phoenix. He also appointed a Diocesan Coordinator for NFP Services and further institutionalized NFP in the marriage preparation process.

In 1992, the Phoenix Natural Family Planning Center left St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center and is now housed on the campus of a large parish. While it was a move made with some trepidation, it has developed into a very positive effort. For 1996, we are offering thirty-five series of classes in English and five in Spanish. We teach not only in the greater metropolitan area but also in the more remote areas of our diocese, offering NFP in a weekend seminar format. We also have instructors in Las Vegas, NV, Columbia, MO, and Kirksville, MO. Currently, we are discussing ways to develop a program for the Apache Indian people on the White Mountain Reservation in northern Arizona. As the old advertisement used to say, "we've come a long way baby!"

As we have grown, we have also re-

alized that we have a long way to go. In order to plan for the next century, we began a strategic planning process that took the better part of one year to complete. Our Board of Directors (we are a non-profit corporation) which also serves as the NFP Diocesan Advisory Board, were able to secure the volunteer services of an individual who took us through the planning process. We asked ourselves who we were, what we wanted to accomplish, how we were going to accomplish our goals, who would be accountable, what is our mission, and perhaps most importantly, what was our vision, our global view of the Center and its services. For example, over the years, we became very involved in chastity education, not only in parochial schools but in the public sector as well. How did that interface with NFP instruction? We also were offering chastity education sessions to the RCIA and to students in Confirmation programs as well as being invited to speak in colleges

# WE NEED YOUR HELP!

*Due to ever increasing cost of producing our newsletter and supplement, and to our ever expanding mailing list, we are finding it more difficult to maintain this cost free service to you.*

## PLEASE HELP US!

Rather than establish a policy of subscription fees, we would like to solicit your voluntary support of the newsletter and supplement.

Please consider making a donation today!

\$5      \$10      \$15      \$20      \$25      \$30      \$35      \$40      other

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING US AS WE SUPPORT YOU!**



and universities. We knew that to be effective, we had to have a strategic plan, one that would provide structure and most importantly, accountability.

To that end, we developed a vision that is broad based and global in its scope, which defines our organization and propels us forward. Our Mission Statement flows from the vision of wanting to be a widely recognized center and resource for proclaiming, witnessing, and supporting authentic human sexuality.

We have developed goals to accomplish our mission, specific tasks which have been assigned to various board members for which they have accountability. Certainly, that spreads the tasks and makes the Board of Directors more proactive. There are specific accomplishments in several areas until the end of the century. Some of those target areas are increasing teaching locations, recruitment of new instructors, fund raising, participation in research projects, coordinating the Center's programs with those of the Diocese of Phoenix, promoting the services of the Center through personal contacts, speaking engagements and so on, to mention only a few.

Because we have become active participants in sexual morality education, we are also considering a name change for our Center that would more accurately reflect the nature of the work we do. The instruction of Natural Family Planning and ongoing support for our clients will always be our primary focus but we long ago realized that enabling adolescents to embrace the virtue of chastity can only bode well for the future of Natural Family Planning and we actively pursue those opportunities, both in English and Spanish.

We have faced tremendous growth since 1974 and we know that equally great challenges await us in the future. Our core group of instructors in the greater Phoenix area numbers twenty, with an average instructional service of twelve years. They are the backbone of the program, volunteers who understand that they are privileged to share in the most intimate area of couple's life. Most teach two class series per year, some three and there are others who are

always willing to "pitch in" at the last moment in the case of an emergency. This particular area, instructor recruitment and training, remains one of our greatest challenges if we are going to be effective and continue to make an impact in the future.

Obtaining adequate funds to support the program always has been and continues to be a very difficult area.

Fifty percent of our budget comes from the annual Bishop's Charity and Development Appeal, a smaller portion from client tuition, supplies, and donations. We have searched out creative methods to raise funds for the program, including direct appeals to parishes and individual priests, Catholic physicians, and Catholic attorneys. We of course also seek out foundations and corporations for purposes of grant writing.

The demand for our services in Spanish continues to accelerate as does the need to train additional instructors who are bilingual. There is a fairly large Vietnamese community in Phoenix and we have begun to dialogue with them about the possibilities of translation services and training instructors who would eventually teach in Vietnamese.

Because we are an independent program, not an office of the diocese of Phoenix, yet existing to serve the Church, we are always striving to find ways to connect with the various programs and movements of the Church. We provide informational materials to Marriage and Engaged Encounter, Cursillo, and Encuentro. At the beginning of a new year, we send schedules to every parish and marriage preparation team couples, along with brochures. Establishing and maintaining good communication, particularly in a diocese covering an area as large as Phoenix is essential. Our quarterly newsletter is sent to over three thousand homes and is included with each client manual. An attractive folder of materials is given to each engaged couple at an introduction along with a Certificate of Attendance that they are advised to take to the parish that is

preparing them for marriage, thereby assuring their priest that they have met this portion of the requirements for marriage in the Church.

There is a Couple to Couple League program based in a parish and Billings

Ovulation Method instructors in the diocese as well. Since the adoption of the *National Standards*, we have all



come together at least annually for an in-service, to share community and to encourage each other. Certainly, all the instructors have a common sense of purpose and communal desire to teach NFP to as many couples as possible and to better enable them to understand the freedom that comes with living the teachings of the Church.

Having established ourselves in 1974 probably makes the Phoenix NFP program one of the "grand-mamas" in the country! We've grown at times by leaps and bounds, at others by baby-steps. Without the support of our Bishop, Thomas J. O'Brien, our progress would have been greatly diminished and for his support, our entire teaching community as well as the clients we serve, are extremely grateful.

Do we have a primer for success? Perhaps, but it's very basic—a deep and abiding love and respect for marriage, for our Church's teaching on responsible and generous parenthood, for the value of living a chaste life, and underpinning everything, prayer, prayer, prayer. We know that through the power of prayer, we have been able to overcome obstacles, touch our clients, be effective, make a difference, and persevere. We look forward with great joy to the next century! ■

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*Janet Kistler is the director of the Phoenix Natural Family Planning Center and also the coordinator of NFP Services for the diocese of Phoenix. Janet has recently been appointed to the NCCB's NFP National Advisory Board.*

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## *Farewell to a Good and Faithful Servant*

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**W**ith much sadness the NFP community bids farewell to Mary Ann Heinz, NFP coordinator for the diocese of Peoria. Mary Ann has been involved with the NFP movement since 1976 and due to failing health, is retiring.

Mary Ann and her husband first embraced NFP at a seminar given in the Diocese of Belleville, IL. Overjoyed to find a family planning method in keeping with Church teaching, they were eager to spread the "good news" to other married couples. Mary Ann taught the Ovulation Method for two years then attended a CCL workshop where she applied for and received teacher certification. She was then asked to join Catholic Social Services as an NFP coordinator in the Diocese of Peoria where she labored tirelessly for the "cause."

As for her hopes for the NFP movement—Mary Ann prays that "the Holy Spirit will guide and strengthen the NFP movement in this Diocese and throughout the world and that God will continue to shower His many blessings on all those in NFP Ministry and their Families."

All who know Mary Ann have been inspired by her dedication and generosity. She has exemplified the beauty of the Church's teaching.

*We thank the Lord for the years of service and wish her many blessings!*

Congratulations are extended to the following NFP teacher education programs which have completed the implementation process of the *National Standards* and have been awarded Approval:

**Diocese of Harrisburg  
(STM)**

and

**Family of the Americas  
(OM).**

## **STOP—LOOK—CALL!**

*As you can see, we have updated the look of our newsletter.  
This is only the beginning—we would like you to take  
part in our "Spring Cleaning."*

*Please let us know what you think of the content of the newsletter.*

*Do you like what we have been featuring?*

*What type of additional articles would you like to see featured?*

*Do you know of local NFP leaders who should be showcased?*

*Please feel free to give us a call at 202-541-3240,  
or write to us at 3211 4th St., N.E., W.D.C. 20017*

*We look forward to hearing from you!*



# NEWS

# BRIEFS



## DDP ANNOUNCEMENTS

We wish to thank for their generous service the following members of the NFP National Advisory Board (NAB) who have rotated off of the NAB: Rose Fuller, Walter Sweeney, Mary Ann Stanton, and Terri Maes. At the same time, we welcome and look forward to working with the newly appointed NAB members: Stella Kitchen, Diocese of Harrisburg, Janet Kistler, Diocese of Phoenix, and Dr. Paul Spencer.

The DDP/NFP has had a change in staff. Marshall Bickell, RN, has returned to nursing. Thérèse Bermpohl is our new Administrative Aide. Thérèse is currently completing an MA in theology from the Dominican House of Studies here in Washington, D.C.



## NFP EVENTS

The Diocese of Corpus Christi BOMA will offer Ovulation Method Teacher Training in Corpus Christi, TX on January 26-28, 1996 at the Ramada Hotel Bay Front. Contact: NFP Center of Corpus Christi, 512-852-0222; FAX: 512-851-2067.

The Diocese of Memphis is sponsoring a Pot Luck Dinner and evening of Spiritual Enrichment on Spousal Prayer at St. Ann Parish Family Life Center with guest speaker Fr. Robert Cannon Contact: the NFP Center, 901-765-1757.

Natural Family Planning of Greater Kansas City will present a Creighton Model NFP Teacher Education Program beginning on March 2, 1996 at the Franciscan Prayer Center, Independence, MO. The one year program consists of 2 Education Phases and

2 Supervised Pratica. Contact: Phyllis White, CNFPE, 1312 Fairway Circle, Blue Springs, MO 64014; 816-229-1473.

The Diocese of Atlanta is hosting a Natural Family Planning Update "Abstinence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder" on March 13 and 14, 1996 at the Radisson Hotel, Macon GA. Speakers include Sara Gresko, Ann Lanctot, James Routon, Arminda Hicks, Sally Kennedy, and Becky Hucks. They also have an essay contest on the impact of NFP case-management. Contact: Arminda Hicks, 404-657-3139 or Gist: 294-3139.

The American Academy of NFP is sponsoring National Natural Family Planning Week (March 24-30, 1996). Beginning with the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25) parishes are encouraged to commemorate this week through providing information about NFP during and after the Sundays Masses. Contact: The American Academy of NFP, 615 South New Ballas Road, St. Louis, MO 63141.

The Health Education Department of St. Agnes Hospital (Baltimore, MD), is sponsoring a seminar designed specially for priests entitled: "Natural Family Planning—How and Why it Works." The event to be held on Tuesday, April 16, 1996, from 10:30am-2:00pm, will be conducted by Gynecologist, Dr. John Bruchalski and a team of laity. Contact: Sally Schwerdt, 410-368-2810.

The Illinois Natural Family Planning Association is holding its 1996 Annual Conference on April 19-20 at Divine Word International, Techny, IL. Entitled, NFP: A Healthy Choice, speakers include, Dr. Richard Fehring and Marilyn Shannon. Contact: Susan Amann, 17026 Judy Court, Oak Forest, IL 60452.

Women Affirming Life and the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops are hold-

ing a conference, entitled, *Women and the Culture of Life* on May 3-4, 1996 in Washington, DC. Speakers include: Mary Ann Glendon and Helen Alvaré. Contact: Helen Alvaré, NCCB, 202-541-3070 or Barbara Thorp, WAL, 617-783-5410.

St. Matthew's NFP Center, Diocese of El Paso, is sponsoring a Teacher Training Program in NFP Ovulation Method—Franciscan Model from May 6-11, 1996 at St. Matthew's Church in El Paso. Contact: St. Matthew's NFP Center, 400 West Sunset Road, El Paso, TX 79922-1714.

Northwest Family Services is having a Teacher Education and Certification Program in the Sympto-Thermal Method of Natural Family Planning on June 20 to June 24, 1996 at the Loyola Retreat Center in Portland, OR. Contact: Rose Fuller, Northwest Family Services, Providence Medical Center, 4805 N.E. Glisan Street, Portland, OR 97213; 503-215-6377.

American Academy of NFP is holding its fifteenth Annual Meeting from July 17-20, 1996 at the Red Lion Hotel in Denver, CO. Speakers include: William May, Ph.D., Judith Brown, Thomas Hilgers, M.D. and Joseph B. Stanford, M.D. Contact: American Academy of NFP, 615 South Ballas Road, St. Louis, MO 63141.

Bi-Annual BOMA Conference will be held at the St. Cloud Civic Center from September 6-8, 1996, entitled, *NFP: The Future is Now*. Speakers include Janet Smith and Joy

Congratulations to the following dioceses which have completed the implementation process of the National Standards and have been awarded Endorsement: Corpus Christi, TX; Jackson, MS; Joliet, IL; & Wichita, KS,

DeFelice. Also, a Billings Ovulation Method Teacher Training Session will be given by Marjorie Harrigan, R.N. from September 5-8. Contact: the Office of NFP, 316 North 7th Ave., St. Cloud, MN 56303; 612-252-2100 or 800-864-6225.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**The French Bishops' statement on AIDS and condoms.** Catholic News Service (CNS) reports that a section in the 235 page document states that "using condoms may be a necessary but insufficient means for battling AIDS" among sexually active people. CNS

said that this statement appears in a section of the document concerning the position of doctors and public health officials. Bishop Albert Rouet of Poitiers, Social Commission president, told Vatican Radio on February 13, 1996, that the statement "does not necessarily commit the bishops to that view." Throughout the document the French bishops state that the "greater stress" in AIDS education must be "placed on abstinence from sexual relations" and "fidelity in marriage." At the time of publishing this newsletter, we have not yet obtained the original document. No official commentary was released by the Holy See.

**The Handmaids of the Blessed Trinity**, an order founded to foster NFP in India, is starting a new NFP Center to work with the "fisher-folk" in a parish South of Bombay and would be grateful for your prayers and support. Contact: Sr. Paulette, Handmaids of the Blessed Trinity, Prem Kutir, Church Pakadi Road No. 2, House No. 2 KAA/-1/168, Sahar Village, Bombay 400099, INDIA.

**International Federation for Family Life Promotion's (IFFLP) Board** met in November 1995 to consider the future of NFP internationally and IFFLP's role in promoting further development. The Board conceded to voluntary dissolution due to the combined lack of funding from the governments of Canada and the United States. This does not mean, however, that IFFLP no longer exists. A small renewal committee was named at the November meeting to restructure IFFLP on a voluntary basis. Contact: Dr. Suzanne Parenteau, President, IFFLP, 6646 St. Denis, Montreal, Quebec H2S 2R9, Canada.

**Kids For Life**, a pro-life singing children's group recently performed on January 21, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception (prior to the National Prayer Vigil for Life). They were so wonderful we couldn't resist plugging them in our newsletter. Not only are they available for concerts, conventions, etc. but also on CD's and cassettes. Contact: Kids for Life, P.O. Box 157, Glassboro, NJ 08028; 609-232-1613.

**The Pope Paul VI Institute** is pleased to announce the consultation services of its newly established Ethics Center. The Center for NaProEthics includes in its goals the de-

velopment of a moral position faithful to the Catholic tradition on ethical issues surrounding family planning and reproductive medicine, marriage and family, and human sexuality. Contact: Sr. Renee Mirkes, OSF, Ph.D., 6901 Mercy Road, Omaha, NE; 402-390-6600.

**What Every Woman Should Know Outreach Program - USA** is providing teacher training, client training, faculty education, and teacher recertification in Northeastern California in the Diocese of Sacramento. Contact: Roy & June Frakes, RN, P.O. Box 41, Wofford Heights, CA 93285-0041; 916-246-9195.

## NFP MATERIALS

**Thomas W. Hilgers, MD**, Pope Paul VI Institute for the Study of Human Reproduction, has written a book, entitled, *The Scientific Foundations of the Ovulation Method* which gives a comprehensive account of scientific research compiled on the principles of the Ovulation Method. Contact: Pope Paul VI Institute, 6901 Mercy Road, Omaha, NE 68106.

**The California Association of Natural Family Planning** has available audiotapes from previous conferences. Contact: CANFP, 1217 Tyler Street, Salinas, CA 93906; 408-443-3743.

**Institute for Reproductive Health, Georgetown University** has a new periodical available. Entitled *MIS Bulletin*, this resource is about management information systems as they are applied to NFP programming. The bulletin seeks to promote the exchange of practical information among NFP programs. Contact: Jeannette Cachan, IRH, Georgetown University, 2115 Wisconsin Ave., N.W., Suite 602, Washington, D.C. 20007; FAX 202-687-6846.

**DEPPA Publications** is pleased to announce the publication of its newest book, *La Marivilla de Mi* by Ruth S. Taylor, MD, MPH and Ann Nerbun, RN, MSN. This is the Spanish version of the book entitled, *The Wonder of Me*. The book is a useful tool for teaching fertility appreciation to adolescents. Contact: DEPPA Publications, c/o Family Honor, Inc., 2801 Devine St., Ste. 100, Columbia, SC 29205; 803-929-0858; FAX: 803-771-2379.

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The NFP Forum is published quarterly. Its purpose is to serve the Roman Catholic diocesan NFP programs of the United States through offering: national and international news of NFP activity; articles on significant Church teachings, NFP methodology and related topics; and by providing a forum for sharing strategies in program development. Contributions are welcomed. All articles may be reproduced unless otherwise noted. For more information contact the editor.

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