Teenager Expresses Concern **Over Parental Neglect**

By FATHER JOHN L. THOMAS, S. J.

Sociology Professor St. Louis University

tell their teenage children cultural residue or carry-over Parents have experienced about the facts of life? I'll from the last century when be 16 next week and my folks custom dictated an exaggerstill haven't told me a thing. ated avoidance of all refer-All I know is what I found ence to sex in polite conversaout for myself - that isn't tion. This is an over-simplimuch. I think if parents ex- fied conclusion, for in socieplained the facts, there wouldn't be so much filth Puritan reaction, parents are being sent through the mail, and so many bad magazines bought by teenage kids.

be zin-

ary

nor

22,

ate

ler.

nor

ore

(0's

ine

as

ch.

for

vas

at**e**

us-

St.

in

er,

his

tor

'e's

vas

ew

50.

ish

nd

ng

ed.

nk

ın.

ig-

er

You're so right, Phyllis! Many religious leaders and teachers have expressed similar views, but I feel your Letter is especially important because you speak for the victims of parental neglectthe many boys and girls who need to know, and have a basic right to know, the Christian view of sex, yet must try to find out for themselves. As you say, they don't find out very much; and I might add, what they do learn is either false, pitifully inadequate, or distorted because not presented within a larger framework of Christian values.

I used to think that modern parents were starting to do a better job in this regard. There has been so much writing on this subject, and popular opinion has become so pagan that one would think Catholic parents, in particular, simply could not continue their neglect. Wide experience in dealing with family problems has taught me that this is not the case. Why do parents, who work so hard to provide for their children's needs, fail them here?

In his excellent book, And God Made Man and Woman, anxiety, tension is released Father Lucius Cervantes, S.J., calls it "parental taboo," that is, parents seem to regard facts and feelings he does not discussion of the facts of life with their children as something forbidden or under sacred interdiction. People, or at least, good people, just don't discuss such things with their children, and this attitude is maintained in spite of the fact that the nor- negative feelings that they do mal development of boys and not even make the attempt.

Why don't more parents cal," concluding that it is a and the means of self-control. ties never affected by the equally neglectful, while American society has dropped all inhibitions about dis-

cussing sex, certainly since

riage, as well as for parentthe "roaring twenties." hood, since sexuality that is The real reason that many not subjected to reason readfathers, mothers-and others lly becomes exploitation in --- cannot teach the facts of marriage and a source of emlife to young people is that barrassment in instructing they have never faced these facts squarely in themselves and in their own lives. Owing partly to faulty training in youth, and partly to failure to think through the meaning and implications of herman sexuality as adults, must people maintain completely negative attitudes toward sex. Sex is not regarded as a positive value, a mormal impulse or drive toward the fulfillment of the highest creative act of which man is capable in the matural order. Rather, through a carefully elaborated social fiction. it is looked upon as a kind

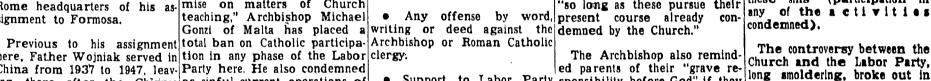
of skeleton in the closet --does not exist.

Why is this fiction maintained? St. Thomas Aquinas suggested that because sex is a powerful human drive, it their order in Paterson, N.J. frequently challenges the control of right reason and consequently humiliates us. nationalized by the Castro gov-

SVD Missioner

Girard, Pa. - (RNS) - Father Edward J. Wojniak, S.V.D., for the past 12 years Mission ing that they do not know the

appropriate terms. In reality, Rome headquarters of his as mise on matters of Church they are so inhibited by their signment to Formosa.



14 Missionary Bishops Consecrated

Vatican City — The large statues in St. Peter's Basilica dwarf 14 missionary bishops at their consecration by Pope John XXIII, who is seated on the papal throne at left. Right of him stands Msgr. Enrico Dante, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, and then

Warning Given On Malta Red Group

the 14 bishops. The third from left is American-born Bishop Thomas A. Newman, who has been serving as a missionary in Burma. Tenth from left is Irish-born Bishop Francis Carroll, who was Apostolie Vicar at Monrovia, Liberia. (RNS Photo)

prudence are duty bound to COURIERJOURNAL ask necessary questions of Friday, June 2, 1961 penitents, in view of the fact Valletta - (RNS) - Declar-declared the following activity • Reading and sale of three that many seem to go to Holy

vine Word Seminary here, has ing that "there can be no com-been notified by the Society's ing that "there can be no com-ties "condemned" as sinful: Malta Labor Party newspapers these sins" (participation in Bishop Killed "so long as these pursue their condemned).

In Car Crash

The controversy between the

mai development of boys and girls, as well as practically everything they see or hear on TV and radio, or in maga-zines and newspapers, raises questions that d e m a nd

children. If readers feel that I have exaggerated the extent of this refusal to think rationally about sex, let them explain how parents can' tolerate and even promote current dating patterns among their teenage or pre-teenage children. Surely, only parents who prtend that sex does not exist could accept such patterns.

Ferry Carries 200 Nuns

West Palm Beach, Fin. everybody knows that it's (RNS) -- One of the largest there - yet pretends that it contingents of nuns to leave Cuba arrived here aboard a ferry.

puberty, adolescence, and

marriage. What fur-

ther knowledge do they re-

The fact of the matter is

that most parents refuse to

think about or face up to the

meaning and implications of

sex in their own lives. Such

refusal has serious conse-

quences for their own mar-

quire?

The 200 Salesian nuns are en route to the mother house of-The 11 schools and an orphanage they operated have been Hence people like to act as if ernment.

sex did not exist, at least, not among "good" people, and since such pretense generates through jokes and humor-through jokes and humor-through jokes and humor-through jokes and humor-

wish to face rationally. Parents frequently try to excuse their neglect in giving Procurator stationed at the Diadequate instruction by say-

