

Sex Education Primarily Job of Parents

This statement was issued last month by the Interfaith Commission on Marriage and Family Life, composed of representatives of Protestant, Catholic and Jewish organizations. Catholic members of the commission include Father James McHugh, director, Family Life Bureau, U.S. Catholic Conference; Msgr. William McManus, New York archdiocesan Family Life Bureau; and Dr. Margaret Bedard, Dr. Ann Lucas and William Maughan.

Human sexuality is a gift of God, to be accepted with thanksgiving and used with reverence and joy. It is more than a mechanical instinct. Its many dimensions are intertwined with the total personality and character of the individual. Sex is a dynamic urge and power, arising from one's basic maleness or femaleness, and having complex physical, psychological and social dimensions. These dimensions, we affirm, must be shaped and guided by spiritual and moral considerations which derive from our Judeo-Christian heritage.

This heritage teaches us that the source of values to guide human behavior is in God.

The sexual attitudes of children develop as part of their

general social attitudes. Furthermore, respectful and considerate sexual attitudes help create healthy social attitudes. When the family and society view sex as loving and fulfilling, rather than prurient and exploitative, then both the social and sexual attitudes of children benefit.

A healthful approach to sexual relations, willingness and ability to impart sexual information in a manner proportionate to the child's stage of development—these are among the elements which foster healthy sexual attitudes and behavior in the young. So, also, is resistance to social pressures which in some instances lead to premature sophistication or unhealthy attitudes in young people.

Responsibility for sex education belongs primarily to the child's parents or guardians. A home permeated by justice and love is the seed-bed of sound sexual development among all family members. Both the attitudes and the activities of the parents—toward each other and toward each child as an individual—affect this development. Healthy attitudes toward sex begin in the child's earliest years; they can best develop in an atmosphere that fosters in him a deep sense of his own self-worth, bolstered by love and understanding.

Sex education is not, however, only for the young; it is a life-long task whose aim is to help individuals develop their sexuality in a manner suited to their stage of life.

We recognize that some parents desire supplementary assistance from church or synagogue and from other agencies. Each community of faith should provide resources, leadership and opportunities as appropriate for its young people to learn about their development into manhood and womanhood, and for adults to grow in understanding of their roles as men and women in family and society in the light of their religious heritage.

In addition to parents and the religious community, the school and other community agencies can have a vital role in sex education in two particular ways:

- They can integrate sound sexual information and attitudes with the total education which the child receives in social studies, civics, literature, history, home economics and the biological and behavioral sciences.

- They can reach the large numbers of young people whose families have no religious identification but who need to un-

derstand their own sexuality and their role in society.

For those who would introduce sex education into the schools, however, the question of values and norms for sexual behavior is a problem. It is important that sex education not be reduced to the mere communication of information. Rather, this significant area of experience should be placed in a setting where rich human personal and spiritual values can illuminate it and give it meaning.

In such a setting we are convinced it is not only possible but necessary to recognize certain basic moral principles, not as sectarian religious doctrine but as the moral heritage of Western civilization.

The challenge of resolving this problem of values in a pluralistic society makes it all the more imperative that communities planning to introduce sex education into the schools not only call upon educators to become involved in decisions about goals and techniques, but also invite parents and professionals in the community to take part in shaping such a curriculum.

To those groups responsible for developing school and community programs in sex education we suggest the following guidelines:

- Such education should strive to create understanding and conviction that decisions about sexual behavior must be based on moral and ethical values, as well as on considerations of physical and emotional health, fear, pleasure, practical consequences, or concepts of personality development.

- Such education must respect the cultural, familial and religious backgrounds and beliefs of individuals and must teach that the sexual development and behavior of each individual cannot take place in a vacuum but are instead related to the other aspects of his life and to his moral, ethical and religious codes.

- It should point out how sex is distorted and exploited in our society and how this places heavy responsibility upon the individual, the family and institutions to cope in a constructive manner with the problem thus created.

- It must recognize that in school sex education, insofar as it relates to moral and religious beliefs and values, complements the education conveyed through the family, the church or the synagogue. Sex education in the schools must proceed constructively, with understanding, tol-

erance and acceptance of difference.

• It must stress the many points of harmony between moral values and beliefs about what is right and wrong that are held in common by the major religions on the one hand and generally accepted legal, social, psychological, medical and other values held in common by service professions and society generally.

• Where strong differences of opinion exist on what is right and wrong sexual behavior, objective, informed and dignified discussion of both sides of such questions should be encouraged. However, in such cases, neither should attempt to give definite answers or to represent their personal moral and religious beliefs as the consensus of the major religions or of society generally.

• Throughout such education human values and human dignity must be stressed as major bases for decisions of right and wrong; attitudes that build such respect should be encouraged which would enter a world where men as right and those that tear down such respect should be condemned as wrong.

'Folkshop' to Offer New Liturgy Music

A "folkshop" for young singers and guitarists will be a feature of the diocesan music commission's fall conference.

All parishes and Catholic high schools have been invited to send their folk musicians for an afternoon of instruction and demonstrations Friday, Sept. 6, at Catherine McAuley College, 1438 Blossom Road. The session will begin at 2 p.m.

Sister Josephine Morgan, R.S.C.J., of Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart, will present the conference theme, "New Music for the New Liturgy," in an address at 8 p.m. Friday.

Sister Morgan has been director since 1952 of Manhattanville's Pius X School of Music. She helped launch the Liturgical Conference National Choir and has served several terms on its board of directors. She has served also on the board of the Church Music Association.

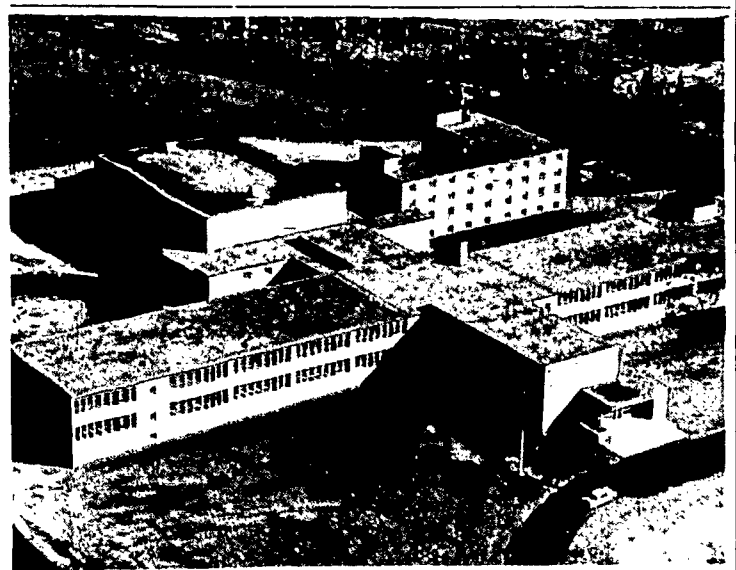
Saturday's program, for organists, choir directors and singers, will deal with wedding and



SISTER JOSEPHINE MORGAN

funeral music and new hymns and Masses.

Anyone interested may register through his parish office or Catholic high school.



McQuaid High School Constantly Expanding

This September, McQuaid Jesuit High School will open wide its doors once again to young men who seek more in an education than a diploma. From the outside, McQuaid might resemble any high school, but it is the superior quality and spirit of the personalities found within the walls of McQuaid that have made it the unique and respected institution it is today.

"Every young man has dreams of greatness," states Rev. Albert P. Bartlett, S.J., "and it is the goal of McQuaid to encourage each student's aspirations and to aid in making his dreams realities."

The close relationship between faculty and students at McQuaid ensures that the potential of each young man is tapped and that his interests are developed. With the ever present concern of McQuaid teachers for current situations as well as for modern educational techniques, the McQuaid student is constantly exposed to vast, diversified knowledge.

Emerson once stated that "the test of a civilization is not the size of its cities nor in the wealth of its corporations, but in the kind of men it turns out." Such is the belief of McQuaid.

Thus, the McQuaid student learns to explore life as well as himself—scientifically, spiritually, and esthetically—and to define his interests and his needs. He learns to adapt himself to his surroundings and he is motivated and compelled to seek knowledge through comparison, criticism, and free thinking.

Guided by faculty who are always striving to advance themselves academically, (this summer some McQuaid teachers are studying in England, India and Spain) the McQuaid student soon realizes that education is not just instruction, but discovery.

Education at McQuaid is progress. Constant expansion is taking place, with the guidance of McQuaid's board of lay trustees, composed of many prominent Rochesterians. It is the conviction of this board and of the faculty of McQuaid, that the most vital education a man can receive is on the secondary school level.

With this belief in mind, McQuaid has made in-depth studies of many Jesuit high schools in the nation in an effort to see exactly where students' needs lie. McQuaid now conducts Odenbach Seismographic Station to give its students first hand scientific data on earth tremblings.

Religious Orders Advocated For Protestants

Little Rock — (RNS) — United Methodist Bishop Paul V. Galloway of Little Rock said here he thinks Protestantism would be wise to develop religious orders similar to those in the Roman Catholic Church.

The development by non-Catholics of religious orders, he said, would allow all Christians to move more in the common direction of taking the Gospel where the people are.

He made the observation in the course of explaining why he feels the church must employ small units in accomplishing its work rather than relying entirely on large organizational units, either denominational or ecumenical.

It is on the personal level that unity can be fostered by the ecumenical movement, he stated, adding that he preferred to see ecumenicity grow up from the small groups rather than imposed by councils or denominations.

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Such education should teach that sexuality is a part of the whole person and an aspect of his dignity as a human being.

It should teach that people who love each other try not to do anything that will harm each other.

It should teach that sexual intercourse within marriage offers the greatest possibility for personal fulfillment and social growth.

Finally, such a program of education must be based on sound content and must employ sound methods. It must be conducted by teachers and leaders qualified to do so by training and temperament.

The increased concern and interest in this vital area of human experience now manifested by parents, educators and religious leaders are cause for gratitude. We urge all to take a more active role—each in his own area of responsibility and competence—in promoting sound leadership and programs in sex education. We believe it possible to help our sons and daughters achieve a richer, fuller understanding of their sexuality, so that their children will enter a world where men and women live and work together in understanding, cooperation and love.

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