

Pre-Cana Improves Communications

By BARBARA MOYNEHAN

Pre-Cana, the program of marriage preparation for engaged couples that has been in existence for 20 years, is changing. Traditionally it has been four, 90-minute lecture sessions, with two sessions run by married couples, one by a priest and one by a doctor.

There has always been a large, diverse group attending, with no opportunity for active participation, and this has proven unsatisfactory, according to Father Robert Collins, director of the Family Life Office. Accordingly, a new format is being introduced this year in 14 locations throughout the diocese.

Father John Fournier of Providence, R.I., developed the new program. Twenty-five couples take part, in groups of five couples which meet for four two-hour sessions in one week under the direction of one married couple.

This program is unique in two ways: pre-registration is required in the hopes of getting a homogeneous group for each session; and each session is different since the program depends completely on maximum involvement of the engaged couples attending.

The same topics of discussion are touched upon: spirituality of the sacrament of marriage, sexuality, communication, budgeting, and in-laws, but not just as items in a lecture.

The married couples who conduct the Fournier program take part in an eight-week training program. They work up a 10-minute presentation and a minute by minute timetable for the four meetings.

A session begins with questions the married couples came up with from their own experiences. The engaged couples reflect on what they would do in the same situations, they take part in role-playing, and they discuss their own goals and thoughts on marriage.

As a result of this format, Father Collins reported: "I know from the Providence office that couples have decided of themselves that they are not mature enough to be married."

The Fournier program is primarily for those between 21 and 24 years old. There is an intensive pre-Cana program for couples under legal age and another new program is being tried for couples 25 and older.

The latter consists of several books and programs they can use to give themselves their own pre-Cana preparation.

Father Collins feels that a mature couple using the materials that go along with this program can learn as much by themselves as in the group programs.

Pre-Cana conferences are not required by the Church. They are intended to supplement the parish priest's instruction to an engaged couple. But since preparation varies between parishes, and some priests don't instruct couples at all, some pastors don't allow marriage in their parishes without Pre-Cana.

CITY CLUB TALK

Robert L. Bennett, director of the Indian Law Center of the University of New Mexico, will address the City Club of Rochester on "The American Indian and Civil Rights" at noon today, Jan. 12, at the Chamber of Commerce.

NEWS DEADLINE

A reminder that Courier-Journal news deadline is noon Thursday for the following Wednesday's newspaper.

Diocese, Bosco House Start Handicapped Survey

The Diocese of Rochester, and Bosco House, a Catholic agency serving the handicapped, begin this week a survey of all handicapped persons in the diocese.

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, in a letter read at all Masses last

weekend, said that in addition to providing information on the needs of the handicapped to the diocese, the basic objective of Bosco House is to minister to the spiritual and emotional needs of the handicapped and their families.

DIocese OF ROCHESTER Survey of the Handicapped

Bosco House, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, New York 14624

PLEASE FILL OUT ONLY ONE FORM FOR EACH HANDICAPPED PERSON

If you have a handicapped person in your family or in your household please state that person's:

LAST NAME _____ FIRST _____ INITIAL _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE _____

TELEPHONE _____ PARISH _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

TYPE OF DISABILITY _____

WHAT IS THE SEVERITY OF THE HANDICAP? _____

PLEASE ADD ANY INFORMATION THAT YOU THINK WILL BE HELPFUL _____

YOUR NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE _____

TELEPHONE _____ PARISH _____

WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE HANDICAPPED PERSON? _____

If your address is not the same as his, what kind of place does he live in (foster home, institution, etc.)? _____

Kindly return this form to your parish church, the school or directly to Bosco House.

Courier-Journal

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