

The Church recognizes that the family unit is one of the cornerstones of a healthy society. To lend support to that idea, it has established organizations such as Catholic Family Center and the Family Life Office. This series of articles, prepared by the two offices, will explain their programs directed at family enrichment. Each article will explore one segment of the program.

Last in Series Parenting

Today the need for education in the field of parenting is recognized for a number of reasons, most or all of them related to social change. Our society's general shift from an autocratic attitude to a democratic one and towards social equality has presented challenges which most people, especially parents, are not well prepared to meet.

However, by equality we do not mean that children are the same as adults, only that they are equal to adults in terms of human worth and dignity. Democracy means choice. The democratic parent provides opportunities for children to make decisions within limits and most important to be accountable for these decisions thus helping to develop a creative, independent and responsible adult.

The older more traditional method of rewards and punishment as a technique for winning obedience from children is no longer as effective as it once was. Today's children tend to see

rewards as their right. Parents who rely on rewards often find that a child only performs when rewarded and only then if he sees payment rewards as being worth the effort. A candy bar for a five-year-old may become an automobile in adolescence.

In response to numerous requests, the Marriage and Family Life Enrichment Department of the Catholic Family Center has developed a parenting program entitled "Effective Parenting." This is a six-session program which deals with many pertinent questions and problems in parenting of concern to today's families. The agency's goal is to assist parents in achieving a more fulfilling relationship with their children. The program includes such topics as: "The Family Today," "Developing An Encouraged Child," "Understanding a Child's 'Mis' Behavior," "Alternative Methods of Discipline," "Communication and Developing Cooperation" and "Mutual Responsibility."

For information concerning this program Mrs. JoAnn Lytle should be contacted at 716/546-7220.



Photos by Susan McKinney

A Day in the Country

Members of Mrs. James Heagerty's fourth grade class enjoyed a visit to a Spencerport farm on Saturday, May 15. In the photos above starting top left and proceeding clockwise, James Heagerty is busy at the hot dog grill, serving Nyla Saunders, Christine Freeman, Stacy Williams and Danny Gramke; Cindy Hall has her own method of mounting a pony; she waits patiently as class mates boost Jerry Williams aboard; Ronnie Miller enjoys a hot dog and soda pop; Ronnie has a wave for the camera and friends as he rides with Mike McKnight; Nancy Ott feeds a pet goat.

Nazareth College Lists Summer Courses

Money and banking, the urban situation in America, and computer programming are some of the topics that will be offered by Nazareth College's Summer Session '76.

The six-week program will offer a total of 91 courses from June 28 to Aug. 6.

Eight new courses are planned for the undergraduate: two in music, "Psychology of Music" and "Music Theatre Workshop"; two interdisciplinary courses, "The American Presidency" and "Development of Renaissance Thought"; two English courses, "Romance" and "Critical Reading and Writing"; one religious studies course dealing with "Thomas Merton: Mystic and Prophet"; and one philosophy course, "Current Issues: Life Meaning."

In addition, undergraduate courses are scheduled in art, biology, education, economics, foreign languages, history, management science, mathematics, theatre, social sciences and speech pathology.

At the graduate level, 51 courses will be offered through the summer program with two new courses — "Math for Elementary School Teachers" and "Supervision of Student Teachers." Graduate-level courses apply toward the master of science in education degree or toward permanent certification. Areas of concentration include reading, learning disabilities, speech pathology and liberal arts.

Nazareth College also will offer five graduate courses in education at Keuka College this summer.

Course schedules and registration forms for the summer

session may be obtained through the college's Office of Continuing Education, (716) 586-2525.

Child care will be available in the mornings throughout the six-week summer session.

Life, Liberty and Law



Nancy Murphy

(Ninth in a series)

Should Catholic schools teach sex in the classroom before the seventh grade? There is no mandate from the Vatican that sex must be taught in the schools. Vatican II says simply that as they advance in years, children should receive a positive and prudent education in matters relating to sex. And we must assume that they refer to a Vatican-centered and Vatican-directed sex education, not a program based in whole or in part on SIECUS sex films and/or Planned Parenthood recommendations. (SIECUS is a humanist-inspired professional sex education organization spun off from Planned Parenthood in the mid sixties. Planned Parenthood recommends Sol Gordon's Facts About Sex — complete with all the slang terms — for fourth-sixth grade children.)

According to child psychiatrists, the latency period covers approximately the years 9, 10, 11, and 12. It is characterized by a fairly stable equilibrium of personality, and learning is both rapid and deeply held. During the latency period the child's sexuality is dormant or latent; it is considered the ideal time to teach religion and morality. The Group for the Advancement of Psychiatry reports that it is dangerous to teach sex facts at this stage. Dr. Vann Spruill noted: "During latency, adult communication with the child about sex is an intrusion of the child's important and necessary privacy. No classroom sex instruction should be given."

Also from the GAP report: "Parents should realize and act on these truths so that the traditional group culture (Judeo-Christian heritage) may come to bear

formal sex education courses at the latency period are virtually guaranteed to lead to premature sexual activity. (Even SIECUS) admits that learning about sex at an early age indicates an increased probability that sexual activities will be engaged in earlier. Let us therefore, as Catholic parents, bend our energies and our prayers to the task (mandated by the Vatican) of giving our children during the latency period the solid religious and moral formation they will need to 'grow in wisdom and in grace before God and man.' (Sean O'Reilly, M.D. Notre Dame Institute, Middleburg, Virginia)

"Most opposition to classroom sex education" is aimed at the recently intensified sex teaching in place of traditional sex education courses. Typically the protesting parents stress that they are not seeking a complete ban on sex education. Rather they want to curb what they view as an excessive emphasis on the subject particularly in the lower grades, as well as the modern trend toward encouraging youngsters to make up their own minds." (Christian Science Monitor)

The weight of clinical, anthropological, and historical evidence substantiates the protesting parents' claim that these new family life and sex education programs are detrimental both to the child and to society. I agree with the protesting parents that no one is or can be qualified to do what everyone is trying to do in these programs — which deny parents the right to be their children's authority on all matters, not only sexual — while at the same time invading the privacy of the home with indiscreet questions (about intra-family relationships). (Rhoda L. Lorand, PhD, Child Psychoanalyst.)

Most of the Catholic sex education programs I've seen, in my considered judgment, push too much too far too soon. Not one of them (except my own lecture series) ventures into the vitally important area of anthropology; and only one (Wichita Diocese) is based firmly on the Vatican.

NEXT WEEK: The Vatican Declaration on Sexual Ethics

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