

Support For Family Values: Some Reflections

BY FATHER ROBERT L. COLLINS, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF FAMILY LIFE

There is a variety of things a parish can do to cover this wide span of "support for family values."

1. Instruction can begin with those in their mid-to-late teens. Virginia Hef-

ernan of the Family Life Bureau of the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C. incorporated a six week course in the religious education program for high school students. It was called a course in the "Sacrament of Marriage" and used a two generational approach having parents

and teenagers together for brief presentations and small group discussions. A similar course has been developed by the Marriage Encounter Resource Community.

2. Young couples serious about the commitment aspects of a life-long relationship can be asked to attend a series of discussions on marriage and what today's marriage involves. Happily married couples, young, middle-aged and older can be invited to participate as resource discussion leaders. Local Marriage Encounter couples have unique gifts and talents in this area.

3. A parish can, with a Family Life Committee, keep in touch with the needs of its married couples and families. One parish invites groups of couples to join in a series of discussions on "how to keep a marriage growing." Included in the discussions are means of coping with the particular challenges of each stage in the Family Life Cycle.

4. One parish utilizes small gatherings of couples, no more than ten in homes where they can periodically share with each other difficulties, visions and processes for making marriage and family life more enriching, satisfying

and Christian. A more structured program is available through the Christian Family Movement.

5. A cluster of parishes can hire a marriage and family counselor to service the parishes in that area with marriage counseling and family enrichment programs. Such counselors could also train paraprofessional couple counselors to assist them in their work.

6. Every parish has a men's club and a women's club. The growing numbers and needs of divorced and separated people, especially one-parent families call for similar organizations on the parish level.

In summary, the parish of today is called to be an advocate for family values and a substitute for the extended family, people nurturing, strengthening and building other people.

After Honeymoon: Marriage Enrichment

Climbing divorce rates, continual stresses from social and economic forces of change and alternative life styles have raised questions in many circles about the viability of the family in the future of this society. Some have predicted the death of the family. But Michael Novak wrote recently, "Choosing family life today is an act of courage and intelligence marriage and family still express our highest moral ideals."

The Family Enrichment program of Catholic Family Center was established to strengthen individuals and help families make the commitment to marriage and family life. Programs have been developed to assist individuals and families cope and resolve the problems they face, and to nurture and foster communication skills.

The programs are led by family educators and marriage and family counselors from the Catholic Family Center and the Office of Family Life.

They assist parish councils or other parish leaders in the designs which are appropriate to the needs of their people.

Programs presented by the Catholic Family Center are in the area of human relations. More specifically they are Communication Workshops; Human Sexuality, Changing Roles; PreMarriage Relationships; Marriage Communication; Discovery Workshops for Young Married Couples; Separation and Divorce; Family Growth and Relationships; Parent-Child Relationships; Family Life Training for Counselors. Some programs require group participation; some develop skills for group leadership.

The sessions of these programs are held in facilities provided by the parish or sponsoring organization or they are held at the Catholic Family Center at 50 Chestnut Plaza.

There is a minimum of 12 Continued on Page 21

LaMar dress and bridal shoppe

step into the la mar fashion circle



New Spring line of Jump Suits, Party Suits, dresses and gowns in Cotton, Polyester, Moles and other fabrics.

420 LYELL AVE.
Roch, N.Y. 14606
458-6169

Mon-Fri 10am-9pm
Sat 10am-5pm

EXPERT ALTERATIONS

The Party House

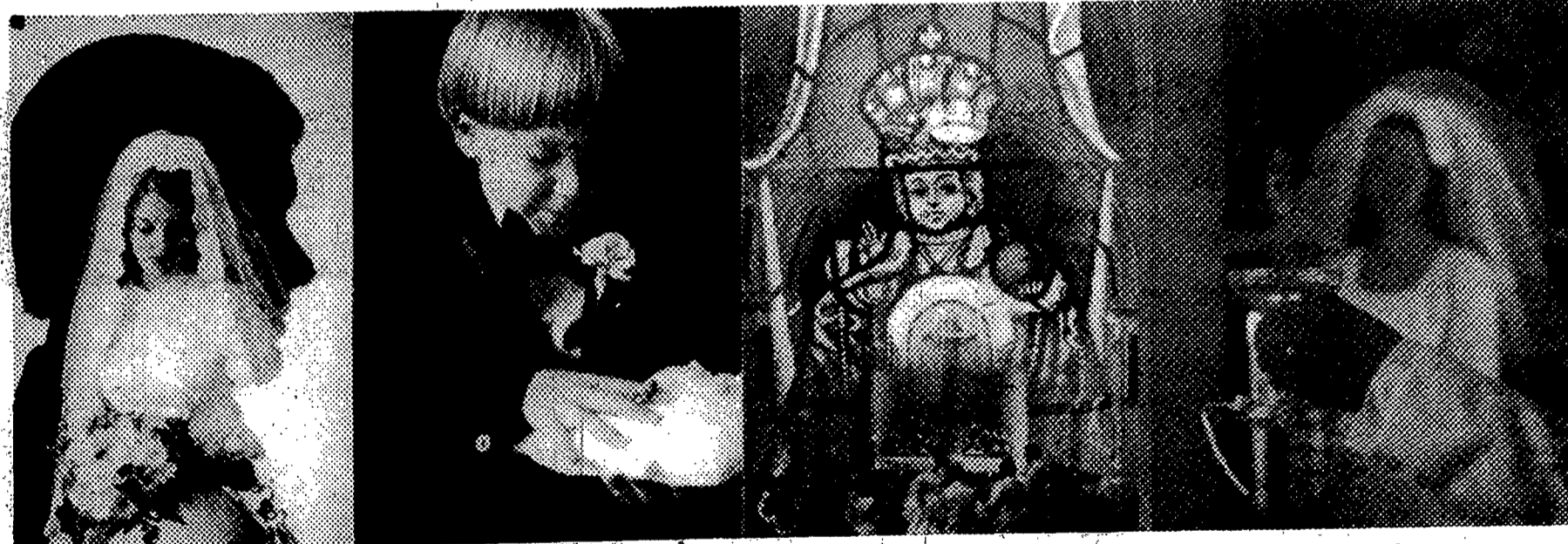


... for a beautiful wedding reception!

Reservations Call
235-5654
677 Beahan Road
Completely Air Conditioned



Wedding Candid's by Burt Shapiro PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO



8"x10" Color Photos in a Deluxe Album from \$99
Latest in Wedding Albums, Velvets, Woods and Leathers.

SPECIAL WEDDING INVITATIONS
25% off list price

Ask about misties, madcap and fantasy specialty photography

Burt Shapiro PHOTOGRAPHY

"For people who want the BEST, But don't mind paying LESS."

Call anytime (716) 244-3554