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Roberto Burgos outside of Project Poder's center.

## Project Poder 3 Years Old

Come June 1 a unique organization in the diocese will open its doors for an open house to note its third anniversary.

The organization is Project Poder, the only ongoing program for Hispanic youth in the area, funded through the Catholic Youth Organization.

According to Roberto Burgos, the 25-year-old chief architect and head of Poder, the major work of the program is "to help Hispanic youth attain its greatest potential."

This is done, he says, in a variety of ways, through education, counselling and leadership training.

Poder really started up, he noted recently, when, several years ago, a shooting occurred in a neighborhood churchyard. The assailant's bullet left Roberto Cruz paralyzed. The incident mobilized the Hispanic community, the city and the

community services agencies in the area, Burgos recalled. The aim was to develop something for Hispanic youth to prevent such incidents from ever happening again.

Burgos said that area residents gathered together and developed what has today become the CYO's Project Poder.

Main offices for the organization are in the Roberto Cruz building, a renovated city recreational facility located near Edison Technical High School.

The project's open house will be held from 1 to 5 p.m. Visitors there will quickly note the bi-lingual, bi-cultural character of the program, perhaps its most important feature, Burgos noted.

The CYO's chief, Thomas Cotterill, last week remarked, "Poder is something we're really very proud of — and Roberto."

## K of C Leaders Give 'Family' Top Priority

Kiamesha Lake — Leaders of the Knights of Columbus foresee a shift of focus to family concerns in the development of council programs.

State Deputy William J. Van Tassel of Beacon, elected at the recent state convention here, promised delegates that he would set up a committee "charged with developing the methods of opening our council activities to the total family."

"We must become more and more a family-centered organization," he said, "to instill in our young the values which lead to a successful community structure."

Van Tassel also pledged expanded efforts on behalf of senior citizens, "the self directed who have leisure time and need adjustment to retirement; the frail and homebound who need our physical help; the institutionalized who need us to bring meaning into their lives."

Supreme Knight Virgil C. Dechant, recently elected to head the 1,250,000-member fraternal organization, called on local councils to sponsor social and spiritual programs, apostolic and athletic activities open to families. He emphasized the special concern that he said Father Michael McGivney, K of C founder, had for widows and orphans.

"His dream of support for the fatherless family must go beyond the death benefit check," Dechant said. "We must keep the widow and the children within the bonds of our extended family affection, our functions and our activities."

New state officers whose terms begin July 1 include William A. Speta of Manhattan, secretary; Martin J. Ballistieri of Oceanside, treasurer; Harold Granger Jr. of Flushing, advocate, and Peter T. Leone of Yonkers, warden.



Sarah Child

Some 12 years ago, upon quitting my job to take up full-time housewifery and enter the state of motherhood, I discovered a fact about television that hitherto had eluded me! The world was full of soap opera addicts.

Absolutely repelled by the knowledge so many soap opera fans were floating about I vowed never to join their ranks. I would, I vowed, read, write and ponder the great philosophical questions while others were imprisoned by the petty happenings of the daytime tube.

The vow lasted for five

years. I read (second rate novels) and wrote (letters to my grandmother) but somehow diapers and feeding schedules did not prove fertile ground for the likes of Kirkegaard or even Ortega y Gasset.

Then as we were preparing for the arrival of our third child and I realized just how housebound I would be, I succumbed one afternoon to the temptations of the tube and discovered the wonderful world of woe.

I found that it was therapeutic. I was troubled. They had bigger troubles. I was sad. They were overcome with grief.

Still I was able to take it or leave it. There was no real allegiance so I was not hooked. Right?

Then a couple of years ago I tried "As the World Turns," mostly on the recommendation of a former neighbor. I tuned in and all was lost. No matter that I scoffed at the lack of subtlety in plotting, the rigid characterization, the illogical motivation. I just

kept watching, despite the fact that the kids were now in school and I was no longer housebound.

I was about to give it up entirely when the writers had a villainous father kidnap his own baby from the divorced saintly wife.

Now what red-blooded American mother could give up on a storyline like that? Each day I watched faithfully to see if Kim was about to learn the awful truth and get her baby back. No luck. So I accepted an invitation to have lunch with some friends one day.

You guessed it. That day the baby was returned. Sinking to a new low I called the former neighbor to see what had transpired. She, too, had been out that day.

Oh well, there was always the postmortem. (A rehash always follows a crisis on any soap, usually involving all 96 characters.) Then I remembered I had scheduled a hair appointment. Hitting an even greater low, I canceled the appointment.

When the program was over for the day and sanity

re-descended, I was mortified. Thus this public pledge: I am finished with soap operas, forever. Finished. Finished. Finished.

I think.

### FOCUS

Focus on the Eucharist, a First Friday vigil service, will be held June 2 in the chapel at St. Mary's Hospital. The service begins with evening prayer at 7:30, followed by Mass at 8:15 and exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until 11:15. Everyone is invited. Persons interested in having the Focus program at their own parishes may call Mrs. Jose Echaniz at 244-1244.

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