



Bob Kambic at NFP instructors' class.

14 Attend Classes On NFP

The first training weekend for 14 couples from around the diocese who will become instructors in Natural Family Planning took place the weekend of Oct. 29-30 at the Kearney Auditorium at St. Mary's Hospital.

Bob and Mary Kambic, who work fulltime in NFP at St. Joseph's Hospital in Lancaster, Pa., led the training for the potential instructors, according to Terri Petracca, NFP director.

The first weekend of training included classes on the scientific basis of NFP, presentation of the methods, aspects of abstinence, and counseling techniques.

The 14 couples will receive a second weekend of training Dec. 10-11, at which time they will offer a practice NFP teaching presentation, to be reviewed by the Kambics.

Between the two weekend sessions, the potential instructors will meet twice to discuss attitudes towards sexuality and towards teaching NFP. They also will practice their teaching presentations.

According to Mrs. Petracca, the Kambics were among the first people in the United States to be trained in the ovulation method by Dr. John Billings of Australia. They have worked with more than 40 agencies and institutions around the U.S. and have trained more than 85 NFP instructors and more than 1,000 couples in the method. They are consultants to the Human Life Foundation and the NFP Federation of America.

Parish Celebration

Marion—The people of St. Gregory's gathered Sunday afternoon, Oct. 31, to celebrate completion of major renovations of parish buildings. Father Richard Nagle, pastor, dedicated the church hall and annex, with the assistance of Bishop Dennis W. Hickey. A reception followed.

Guests included Father Edward Lintz, first resident pastor, the Rev. David Van Arsdale, pastor of the United Church of Marion, and the Rev. Robert Willett, acting pastor of First Reformed Church of Marion. Albert De Pape of Williamson and Mrs. June Hall of Marion were given citations for their special contributions to the renovation project.



Some of the diocesan couples training to be NFP instructors.

The Church 1977



Fr. Andrew Greeley

One of the reasons that the seminaries and novitiates are almost empty is that they don't challenge young people any more.

They don't challenge them intellectually and hence students drift through their years of preparation for ministry with such mushy things as "Clinical Pastoral Experience," "Field Training," and "Deacon Years." Such junk may appeal to those who are not bright enough to think, but it turns off those who are.

Worse still, they don't challenge them religiously. Instead they offer young people motivation and goals no different from those provided in the secular universities by agnostic secular humanists — save that the universities do a better job at being secular humanizers than we do.

Thus a certain seminary recently began its orientation week around the twin themes of "gift of self" and "gift of community" deftly mixing intellectual slush with secular humanist pop psychology. God, sin, life, death, Jesus, Mary, redemption — these apparently are symbols which are no longer important as we turn to the most bankrupt of the psychological clichés to tell what we're about.

Who needs it?

Not many young men and women, it would appear.

And the religious orders of women offer a public image, in great part, not much different from Bella Abzug and Gloria Steinem — not noting what happened to Bella in the New York election or to the New York State equal rights amendment (if you can't get majority support there, you can't get it anywhere). Ideological "feminism"

turns off most women, even most young women. Anyhow, why go to the convent for it when it fills the pages of the magazines and the newspapers every day?

Who needs it?

I am not suggesting that seminarians and whatever in the world they call novices these days should be uninterested in the intellectual and social issue in the world in which they will work. I am rather arguing a) they should have a better description of these issues than slogans and clichés, and b) there should be a specifically and explicitly religious dimension to their lives. Their commitment to the ideas and the issues of their era should flow from their religious commitment and not be a substitute for it.

So seminaries should be seminaries and not "ministry training centers" at which the faculty pretends to be indifferent to whether you become a priest or not. If the faculty doesn't care, why should the students?

How did we get into this mess? First of all, a lot of folks panicked when they saw enrollment declining in the 60's. They said in effect, "Maybe we're too religious, so let's stop being religious, and we'll get more students." They were not smart enough to see a third possibility: being religious in a different way. They were not intellectually mature enough to realize that there were other ways of being religious besides getting up at 5:20 am and wearing medieval dresses. It was either the old honorarium and the old rules or the watered down secular humanism of pop psychology.

The other reason is that many of those responsible for the training of future priests and religious lost their own religious convictions. They turned to muck because they no longer knew who they were or what they believed. They passed nothing on to their students because they had nothing left themselves. So they turned to the "gift of community."

And, as the Lord says, when the blind follow the blind everyone ends up in the pit.

ON THE RIGHT SIDE



Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

From an aggrieved Jesuit: Reacting to a recent OTRSide article which described an encounter with a 20-year-old graduate of the Jesuit high school. The youth had said to me, at the Rochester Airport, "I don't think the Church has any right to tell me that I have to go to Mass. I don't think anyone has a right to command me to do anything. And the Church does." The article said, "Such is an example of the problems I frequently find in graduates from Catholic schools — high, colleges, universities. I should hesitate to fault the Jesuits for the lacunas and twists in my friend's understanding, or lack of it. I wonder if in the religion courses of the past decade, the emphasis on the senses, emotions and experiential knowledge, and the de-emphasis on intellectual apprehension, with a clear-cut definition of revealed truths have not severely hurt our young Catholics. . . . The object of the eye is the visible thing. The object of the ear is the audible thing. The object of the intellect is the truth."

In a hasty umbrageousness, my Jesuit critic wrote in part:

"...Most of the students I teach are even without realizing it cryptopagans. The things that are really important are not the enlivening presence of the Spirit within them but far more pragmatic and ultimately trivial things: cars, wall-to-wall carpets, complexions, bodies, acceptance by the crowd, being macho. These attitudes are not fostered or even tolerated by the Catholic schools. They are fostered by the omnipresence of the voices of materialism. How can the Church sound appealing when the media offer pleasure and the Church calls for self sacrifice? . . . If only you and Nancy Murphy could realize what the true battle is: not over niceties of doctrine or morality, but the very acceptability of the Christian Message at its most fundamental. What goes on in a kid's mind when I point to the crucifix and say, 'That's what a Winner looks like!' Not Elvis Presley and Joe Namath or Robert Redford or Steve Wonder . . ."

Comment: It has always struck me as wonderful that the author of the most inspiring biography of the life of the founder of the Jesuit order was the poet who wrote the beautiful "Hound of Heaven" — Francis Thompson. It is a coincidence that I was reading his "St. Ignatius Loyola" for the fourth time when the above letter came. I first read that biography when a student at Old St. Bernard's Seminary over 45 years ago. The history of St.

Ignatius and the early Jesuits has been a daily influence in my life for nearly half a century. Now that I have read it again for the fourth time I am still thrilled by St. Ignatius, by the history of the Jesuits, and by many Jesuits today, with a special affection for the English Jesuit, Father Bernard Basset.

I find no disagreement with my pained Jesuit objector in his analysis of the woes of the times. But I would rather give a little more time to prayer before responding. Such would Ignatius do before venturing on a serious decision. And discussion of the Catholic Faith is a serious discussion. I would want to ponder carefully on the reasons for the tragedy which has befallen the Church this past decade in catechetics and the teaching of the Catholic Religion. This heartwarming and hurt letter deserves an adequate reply. Certainly there will be areas of agreement, and areas of sharp disagreement. One of the nine rules distributed among the professed members of the Society of Jesus read, "There is but one rational end to be proposed in discussion, the establishment of truth; the spirit as well as the words must be guided by this only." (St. Ignatius Loyola-Thompson, p. 93)

To an Elmiran: "You will find Abp. Whealon's book, Living the Catholic Faith Today, a gem. It is concise. It is uncomplicated. It treats of

many things which are little discussed today. It speaks with authority.

"As you know, I am greatly concerned that our people know so little. I had that same concern 40 years ago as a young priest. The difference is that in those days people did not know enough, but they accepted what the Church presented. Now they do not know enough but are obsessed to contest anything they might not fancy. And despite agitating theologians, I believe this is not from God. . . . Did you know that I have sold, and given away, over 500 of the Sheen tapes alone? God be blessed forever for this wonderful opportunity."

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