

# Jenny's Story

## Unwed Mothers Find Help at CFC

Sixteen-year old Jenny didn't plan it to happen this way.

Jenny's your typical girl. As a high school sophomore, she was a varsity cheerleader. She wanted to go to college. She liked English and Geometry.

She liked Jimmy, too.

Now Jenny is pregnant.

"Jenny (not her real name) was confused, frightened, and had guilt feelings about herself when she first came to us," said Angie Boella, supervisor of the unwed parents program at the Catholic Family Center.

"She hadn't told her parents yet," Ms. Boella said. "She was afraid to tell them, and her boyfriend had told her it was her problem."

Jenny's situation is typical of the hundreds of pregnancies involving unwed parents that occur each year in Monroe County. They can happen to girls of all ages — adolescents to young adults — regardless of their race, religion, or background.

The Catholic Family Center knows the problem. For over 60 years, it has

offered professional counseling and referral services to unwed parents and their families.

"Pregnancies involving unmarried teenagers are a great emotional ordeal, in a society that pressures a young woman to terminate a pregnancy," said James M. Maloney, director of the CFC, a United Community Chest-supported agency.

"At a time when important decisions must be made about the welfare of an unborn child, support and understanding are too often lost under social pressures," Maloney said.

"The emotional, mental and physical well-being of mother and child are the primary concerns of our counselors," said Catherine Wobus, casework director for CFC. "Our overall program is designed to create an atmosphere of comfort, acceptance, and normalcy for the unwed pregnant woman."

"Since Jenny's first concern was finances — who would pay for her medical care — we discussed various alternatives with her," Ms. Boella said. "We linked her up with a local clinic, and she is now receiving prenatal medical and educational care."



Counselors also met with Jenny and her parents.

Tears were shed, threats were made, but Jenny's parents, following their initial reactions, were aware of their child's need for acceptance and support.

"When a young woman cannot remain in her own home, we can make arrangements for her to be placed with another family in a temporary foster care home," Ms. Boella said. Last year, five new foster homes were added to the existing 14 homes for adolescent unmarried mothers and/or their babies, she said.

CFC counselors also have begun to guide Jenny in the awesome task of determining what is best

for her and the welfare of her child.

"In each case, a decision regarding the future of the mother and her baby is the mother's," Ms. Boella said. "Counseling is directed toward reaching a decision that is best suited for both of them."

"We respect the decision the mother makes, and we stand by it," she said.

Aid is given in the care and nurturing of the infant if the mother decides to keep the child, Ms. Boella said. If the mother decides adoption is best, CFC case workers will find the right home for the child, and the right child for couples seeking to adopt, she said.

CFC, an authorized child placement agency, last year, legalized 82 adoptions. Roughly half of the adoptions were part of the unwed parent program, she said.

Jenny will remain in school for the next couple months. Counselors meanwhile are making arrangements to continue Jenny's education through home tutoring, once she is unable to go to her regular classes, Ms. Boella said.

CFC also offers a "group counseling" program for unwed

mothers. Weekly sessions give unwed mothers the "opportunity to interact with other girls who are facing similar problems, to share thoughts for each other's future, and to relate their own experiences," Ms. Boella said.

Counselors of the unwed parent program last year conducted 2,391 interviews involving 305 clients, of which roughly 150 were unwed mothers.

The unwed parent program has an operating budget of \$94,000, of which \$89,000 is provided by the United Community Chest.



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## The Church 1978

By Father Andrew Greeley

### Catholics The Target Of Satire

You wouldn't think the death of John Paul I was funny, would you? Indeed, most people think it was a terrible tragedy to lose that smiling holy man who, for a month, was the religious leader of the world. But some of our clever New York intellectuals thought it was very funny. Having nothing better to do with their time, they produced a satire of The New York Times to mark that good gray newspaper's silence because of a labor dispute.

The typeface and the logos were all the same, except it was called Not The New York Times. The lead story: "Pope Dies Again: Reign Is Briefest Ever!" The sub-headline informed the readers, "Cardinals Return from Airport." The story described the tragic death of Pope John Paul John Paul I, who had chosen his name from his "three beloved mentors." He had dropped dead while blessing the crowd in St. Peter's Square 19 minutes after his election.

Isn't that funny? Isn't

that marvelously hilarious, the most uproarious thing you've ever heard? So, apparently, thought some of our nation's more famous, fashionable journalists, such people as Michael Arlen, Carl Bernstein, Nora Ephron, Frances Fitzgerald, Jerzy Kozinski, George and Freddie Plimpton, Terry Southern and Christopher Cerf, who, if one can believe Time and Newsweek accounts, produced this little masterpiece. Boy, are they funny! So, too, is former National Lampoon writer Tony Hendra, who posed for the picture of John Paul John Paul I. That's really funny, a pope dying in 19 minutes!

Time and Newsweek both gave a big play to this hilarious satire and never wondered whether there might be some question of taste. Indeed, Newsweek began its description of Not The New York Times with a description of the papal death satire. The Newsweek reporter, Jerrold K. Footlick, apparently thought the satire was as funny as the people who produced it did.

Had it been a satire about the assassination of Martin Luther King or a satire about the Jewish Holocaust you can well believe that all right-thinking liberals in the country would have issued statements of outraged

protest, but if you do a satire about the death of a pope, everybody laughs. Nobody suggests it's in bad taste and the leadership of the American Catholic church remains silent.

Of course the smart New York literati were only kidding, and if you kid about something Catholic, who complains?

There was an outburst of similarly sick anti-Catholic humor in college newspapers all over the country, funded, of course, by state taxpayers' money. Not only is it all right to be viciously anti-Catholic these days, it is positively virtuous. And you don't have to worry because Catholic leaders and ordinary members alike just sit and take it.

I do not know how virulent the anti-Catholicism of our nation's literary, journalistic and intellectual elites will become before Catholics rise up in anger and demand that it ends; but the Not The New York Times caper and the virtually silent Catholic reaction to it leaves me with the melancholy thought that nothing will stir Catholics up to anger. If you can joke about Papa Luciani's death and Catholics don't mind, then what will they mind?

I don't blame so much the New York intellectuals who produced the disgusting satire on the death of the pope. They are nothing but a bunch of cheap inhorn thinkers and need not be taken seriously. It's the pathetic,

diffident silence of Catholics and particularly Catholic leaders that I find really disgusting and disgraceful. How long are we going to let this nonsense continue?

And the response comes from New York, "What are you so angry about? Some of the people who did it are Catholics."

Yeah, and there were Jewish trustees in the concentration camps too.

### Fr. McBrien Talk Slated

Father Richard P. McBrien of Boston College will lecture at St. Bernard's Seminary tomorrow and Friday at the 1978 Otto A. Shults Institute on Spirituality. The Church: Community of the Faithful is the topic of the institute, which is open to the public free of charge. At 7:30 p.m. tomorrow, Dec. 7, Father McBrien will talk about The Mission of the Church. Friday's subjects are Ministries in the Church, at 9:30 a.m., and Relationships in the Church, at 1:30 p.m.

The annual institute is a memorial to a generous benefactor of theological education, the seminary announcement noted.

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