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# COURIER-JOURNAL

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## ME Founder Asks Couples: 'Where Are Your Children?'

By Martin Toombs  
Southern Tier Editor

Ithaca — "Marriage Encounter is only the beginning" of the effort "to renew the family," couples are "the heart of the family but not the whole family."

That is how the founder of Marriage Encounter, the program which has involved millions of persons worldwide, prefaced his remarks on his current work.

Father Gabriel Calvo, the Spanish priest who offered the first Marriage Encounter program in Spain in 1962, attended the Area 2 convention of National Marriage Encounter July 18-20 at Ithaca College.

Although no longer directly involved with Marriage Encounter (ME), Father Calvo travels to ME conventions and asks the participants: "Where are your children?"

Renewing the entire family

is the goal of the various programs offered by Father Calvo's new agency, FIRES, which is based in a house in Washington, D.C. The project began, he related, after a visit to the United States during which he visited many ME functions without seeing any children.

He reported that he would ask the participants if they were engaged couples, as that could be the only explanation for the lack of children.

What he observed, he said, was that Marriage Encounter was widening the gap between parents and children. As the parents developed their relationship at ME programs, their children were left with babysitters, resenting the fact they were left behind, and also not receiving any renewal themselves.

In Spain, he noted, families make a Family Encounter. But here, he said, where parents may have attended

many programs and the children none, it is necessary for the children to "catch up" with their parents before they can participate in a Family Encounter.

FIRES, not a movement or an organization but a service office, Father Calvo explained, offers programs designed to bridge the gap. The first is "Sons and Daughters Encounter," for those 14 years of age or older. The weekends, modeled after ME weekends, are conducted by other teenagers. Father Calvo noted that he prefers the "Sons and Daughters" title because of its emphasis on relationships rather than age.

Jose Hernandez, Father Calvo's assistant who heads up the Sons and Daughters program, noted that the first one was given in Houston in 1977.

At present, FIRES offers 16 programs based on the ME model, but not ME itself. The name FIRES, which stands

for Family Intercommunication, Relationships, Experiences, Services, also has another meaning for Father Calvo. The programs it offers, he commented, are designed to help families "discover the fire inside their homes," and "when they discover this fire, communicate it to other people."

Rather than a nuclear family, he likes to refer to a "thermonuclear family," he said, noting that a thermonuclear reaction involves a fusing of atoms (family members), which gives off energy.

God didn't create or plan couples for themselves, Father Calvo said, but to grow into a family. He explained the concept by comparing it to the change of a caterpillar into a butterfly. For the metamorphosis to occur, he said, parents "must die as a selfish couple," and with their children, "be reborn as a family."



Father Gabriel Calvo, right, and his assistant Jose Hernandez at the Marriage Encounter Convention in Ithaca.

Father Calvo noted that he was glad to see as many "sons and daughters" as there were at the convention, and added that the program he and Hernandez had conducted Saturday morning for families had gone well.

## Cuban/Haitian Group Approves 'Service Plan'

An ecumenical "service plan" which will provide better coordination and better utilization of the existing resources for the Cuban and Haitian refugees here was approved last week by the committee for the Cuban/Haitian Refugee Emergency Appeal.

According to Maurice Tierney, head of diocesan Catholic Charities, the plan will mean "an elimination of the duplication and overlapping of services," provided the refugees by Catholic Family Center, Church World Service, Genesee Ecumenical Ministries and Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services.

Those agencies are all part of the current appeal.

Such an ecumenical approach to a problem is not new to the Rochester area, Tierney said. He explained that a service plan was also devised to aid the refugees from Southeast Asia.

Fund Total:  
\$30,204

Contributions to the Cuban-Haitian Emergency Relief Appeal increased dramatically during the past week, according to Father Joseph Reinhart in charge of the committee office at 123 East Ave.

"We are now at \$30,204," Father Reinhart reported last Friday. "Most of that total, almost \$27,024, has come from the parishes," he added.

Father Reinhart said that some 67 parishes have sent in their collections. "We have a good chance of hitting our \$35,000 goal when the other parishes send in their collections," he said.

In addition to the parish total, more than \$3,000 has been received through individual gifts, Father Reinhart reported. Donations should go to the Cuban-Haitian Emergency Relief Fund, 123 East Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14604.

## Sheed to Keynote Washington Meet

Washington (RNS) — Frank Sheed, one of the major figures in Catholic literature for the past half century, will be the keynote speaker at the Second National Catholic Lay Celebration of Evangelization here Aug. 21-23.

Sheed, author of numerous books and the founder of the publishing firm of Sheed and

Ward, was the recipient of the Paulist Fathers' First National Award for Catholic Lay Evangelization at last year's celebration, but was unable to be present due to illness.

"Frank Sheed in a unique way symbolizes what the

Continued on page 2

## 2 Rochester Parishes Get New Pastors

The Pastoral Office announced last week two pastoral assignments effective August 1.

Father John O'Connor, associate pastor of Holy Trinity Parish in

Webster, will become pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Brighton. Father Anthony Valente, temporary administrator of Auburn's St. Aloysius Church, will become pastor of Blessed Sacrament in Rochester.

This is the first pastorate for Father O'Connor who has served in four parishes since his 1963 ordination. Those parishes are St. Charles Borromeo, Elmira Heights; St. Michael's, Newark; St. Pius Tenth, Chili; and Holy Trinity.

He has also served as a chaplain in the U.S. Army Reserve, has served as chairman of the clergy conference committee since 1968, and has been on the priests' personnel board.

Father Valente, who was ordained in 1959, has served associate pastorates at St. Francis DeSales, Geneva, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Ambrose, Rochester. In addition he has served eight years as chaplain of Our Lady of Mercy High School. In 1975 he was named co-pastor of St. Michael's Church,

## Father Hoffman To Pursue Studies

Father Douglas Hoffman will be leaving his post as director of Pastoral Ministry to attend Catholic University, Washington, D.C. for courses in General Studies and Ecclesiology. He was appointed to the then newly created diocesan post of director of Pastoral Ministry in 1973 by Bishop Joseph L. Hogan.

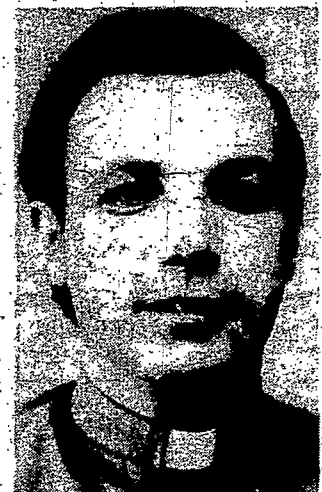


FATHER HOFFMAN

Father Hoffman, a native of Rochester, attended St. Andrew's Seminary, 1956-62, and St. Bernard's Seminary, 1962-1964. He attended the North American College in Rome, graduated with a degree in Sacred Theology from Gregorian University, and was ordained in St. Peter's Basilica, Dec. 20, 1967.

His first assignment took him to St. Margaret Mary's parish in Apalachin as associate pastor, 1968-71. Then he was assigned to St. Thomas the Apostle as

associate pastor in 1971. He also served as regional coordinator, North Region and as chairman, Board of Diocesan Directors. According to diocesan sources, Father Hoffman's duties will be assumed by members of the present Pastoral Office staff.



FATHER VALENTE



FATHER O'CONNOR

Rochester, a post he left to take the administration of St. Aloysius, several weeks ago.