

**Do You or Some You Know
Need Help to Pick up the Pieces
Of Your Life after an Abortion?**

The Puzzle Project

By Joan M. Smith

"Do you or someone you know need help to pick up the pieces of your life after an abortion?" It's a question that no one would dare ask, say, five years ago. But now because of an organization, The Puzzle Project, under the coordination of Fathers Dave Mura and Robert Winterkorn, the question is not only being asked but help is being offered.

According to Father Winterkorn, The Puzzle Project is a pastoral care support group which offers post-abortion counseling. It has been two months in the planning and, in conjunction with Respect for Life Sunday, Jan. 31, is going into full swing with its services.

A key member of the project is Linda, a young woman who has experienced the physical and emotional traumas of an abortion. For the past two years she has been relating her experience to health classes at Monroe

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Community College, at the Melita House, and for Sacred Heart parish adult education classes.

In fighting her way back from an emotional crisis following the abortion, Linda realized her experiences didn't make sense unless she could use them to help people. "If my discussing the abortion will help one woman choose against an abortion, then I'm happy to open myself to strangers," she said.

In referring to her speaking engagements Linda said, "It never gets easy. I feel vulnerable," but she added that the students are responsive. There are times her audience is guarded and

uncomfortable, but for the most part people are open and have no barriers. She said she hasn't run into any problems with anyone opposing what she is doing and said the reason was that her presentations aren't preachy.

What does Linda talk about during her presentations? She relates what happened in her teenage years, and if in reading her audiences she senses they are not uncomfortable or withdrawn she will proceed with the physical aspects of the abortion. She emphasizes counseling before a life and death decision is made, and informs her listeners of the alternatives to abortion: adoption, which she opted for in another situation

and was detailed in a Democrat and Chronicle article "She loves her son enough to let him go," and temporary foster homes.

She tells her listeners that before an abortion the person can't think of anything. There's intense pressures on the person to act. In her case, she said, she was referred by a doctor to a counselor who was at a hospital abortion clinic, and who, according to Linda, told her to take the abortion and run with it. "Words," she said, "I'll never forget."

There are many things about the abortion that Linda won't forget, but she has made a comeback through people who cared enough to put judgment aside and help. With this help and her self-determination, Linda said she began to realize the Lord's forgiveness but "it was a long time before I could forgive myself."

Anyone in need of help may write to Father Dave Mura, 80 Prince St., Rochester, 14605, or call Father Robert Winterkorn at 352-5481, or Linda at 352-1765, and remain anonymous if preferred.



Louise Creatura

Furnish the House With Old Elegance

The fourth annual Antique Show and Sale, sponsored by the Alumnae Association of Our Lady of Mercy High School, will be held on from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 30-31. This year the sale will be on three levels. The gym will be the main center with other dealers on the gym balcony and the music alcove.

1890 to 1940. Margot Gram, local antique expert, will be available from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. to give appraisals.

More than 30 dealers will be represented from Rochester and surrounding areas. A donation of \$1 per person will be good for the two-day sale. A special senior citizen rate of \$.75 will be offered.

According to Louise Creatura of Upstate Western Sales, promotional manager of the sale, there will be a very good display of glass and china, many furniture items of oak and pine, a general line of primitives, jewelry, oriental rugs and dolls dating from

Refreshments prepared by the Alumnae Association featuring homemade soups and chili will be available. Co-chairing the sale are Terry Schmidt Deckman and Margee Delaney Dever, both of Rochester.



SR. KATHLEEN

First Profession

Sister Kathleen Anne Wayne, religious education coordinator at St. Salome's Parish, will make her first profession in the Sisters of Mercy at 2 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 24, during a Mass in the motherhouse chapel. Sister Kathleen Anne entered the congregation in 1979. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William A. Wayne of Elmira.

St. Cecilia Set to Open Pre-kindergarten

St. Cecilia's School will open a pre-kindergarten for three- and four-year-olds in September, an announcement from Sister Kathleen Ward, principal, said last week.

The program will include two- and three-day sessions. Registration will be held 9-11 a.m. and 1-3 p.m., Monday, March 1, and 9-11 a.m., Tuesday, March 2, at the school office.

Further information is available during business hours at 467-4120.

Deadline

The deadline for submitting news to the Courier-Journal is noon on Thursday preceding the following Wednesday's publication.

Sister Helen Harber



Viewpoint: Sisters Reflect

The Source Of All Holiness

God alone is holy, in the absolute sense. We proclaim this in our worship of Him, "Holy, holy, holy Lord," and, "You alone are holy." But we also proclaim "You are holy indeed — and the source of all holiness." So this reality can be communicated and it is God's desire that it be communicated. Even to the chosen people of old the vocation was given: "Speak to the whole assembly, 'Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy.'"

This human destiny was fulfilled very imperfectly for centuries, until Mary said her "Yes" to God's invitation to be the mother of the Son. Then the Holy Spirit came upon her, the offspring born of her will be the Holy One, the Son of God. Mary understood perfectly that the beautiful work accomplished in her was the work of God. Her spirit expanded in joy and she praised God for His goodness to her. She is the model for all generations to come in her recognition that God is the source of her goodness.

This is something that I learned slowly — to know that growth in holiness is not something that I accomplish, that it is totally God's doing. St. Paul underlines this: "It is owing to God's favor that salvation is yours through faith. I repeat, it is owing to his favor that salvation is yours. This is not your own doing, it is God's gift; neither is it a reward for anything

you have accomplished." (Eph. 2:8, 9)

How to explain then the effort and striving to grow in holiness which can sometimes be very painful? We strive for liberty of spirit; to be, like Mary, unencumbered by "worldly" values in order to be totally responsive to God's invitations. The world invites me to be selfish, to seek for myself power, prestige, wealth, to seek my security in possessions. Jesus says, "whoever seeks only himself brings himself to ruin." A Christian believes that all of his or her riches rest in Christ, and endeavors to give himself or herself in love continually to God. Secure in God's love, trusting God to look after his or her interests, he or she is able to respond to whatever God asks. This effort is our life process, fraught with life-death tension. Because our values are counter-culture, there is constant temptation to conform to the world around us. It makes its claims loudly, insistently. We are to love this world which the Father loved enough to send into it his only-begotten Son.

Just as the sacrifice of Christ was needed for the salvation of the world, our world today needs the witness of Christians strong in love. Baptism plunged me into the holiness of God, empowered me to witness to his holiness, to make his holiness visible, to "be" a holy person. St. Paul put it: "We are truly his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to lead the life of good deeds which God prepared for us in advance." (Eph.

2:10) First I experience a reverential awe of my God; then with Christ I can be drawn into intimacy with him and the Father. Through their indwelling Spirit, I am taught day by day how I am to respond, how to let God lead me, and how to follow. "Follow Me" requires me to keep my mind and my heart focused on Him.

It may be in prayer or strenuous action, in patient waiting or prophetic confrontation, in obscurity or as public spectacle — but always in love. "God chose us in Christ . . . to be holy and blameless in his sight, to be full of love." (Eph. 1:4)

A-men! and the glory, be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Sister Helen Harber, RC, ministers at Cenacle Center for Spiritual Renewal.

Irish Children Program to Meet

The Irish Children's Program, the local ecumenical non-profit organization which plans to sponsor 20 children from Belfast, Ireland, for a five-week vacation here next summer, will meet at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 21, at 29 Kittyhawk Drive in Pittsford.

Information on the program is available by calling Brendan Pressimone, director, at 223-8699.

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Decorator cakes, whipped cream & strawberry, lemon, pineapple, custard filling: 1/4 sheet, \$7.00; 1/2 sheet, \$10.00; full sheet, \$16.00. Decorator cakes butter cream frostings, half sheet, \$9.00, full sheet \$16.00.

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