

Coalition Seeks Funds for Pregnancy Program

The Coalition on Teen Pregnancy, through the Monroe County Health Department, is seeking funds for a program to deal with the problems of teen pregnancies in this area.

The proposed plan, with a \$95,074 price tag for the first year's operation, is the end result of hearings conducted in December and January which elicited testimony from a wide range of groups in the county.

The coalition includes such diverse groups as Catholic agencies, social service organizations, educational groups and civic associations.

Of the 26 separate groups in

the coalition, five are directly in the organization of the Diocese of Rochester.

According to Dr. Joel Nitzkin, head of the county health department, the proposal stands an excellent chance of funding because of the wide range of community agencies which developed it.

What is unique to the proposal is that it recognizes parents as the primary educators and aims to involve both parents and teenagers in solving the problems of teen pregnancies, according to William Privett, assistant director of Catholic Charities.

In addition, the proposal calls for respecting the

cultural and religious values of the families in question, Privett said.

On that point the testimony was so overwhelming that the resultant proposal was unanimously approved by the 26 agencies involved, and at least as far as the Catholic groups were concerned, "we don't feel we compromised our own values," he said.

The abstract of the proposal states:

"The heart of this proposal is the community education program. It develops and implements a comprehensive sex education curriculum intended for parents and

adolescents including values clarification, biology and physiology of sex, fertility awareness, parent-adolescent communications and other topics pertaining to mature responsible adolescent sexuality. Implementation will be achieved by training school staff, clergy and community agency staff who will, in turn, present this educational program to parents, adolescents and family groupings."

Privett also lauded what he called two imaginative parts to the proposal.

They are described in the abstract as "designed to help religious institutions and community agencies more effectively participate in sex education and counseling and the provision of a variety of support services."

"The first of these components," the abstract states, "is the development of a series of support groups, directed at pregnant adolescents, adolescent parents, non-sexually active adolescents, sexually active adolescents and their respective families. These groups, assisted by trained facilitators, will provide understanding and support in coping with problems, such as pressures on adolescents which might lead to premature or personally damaging sexual behavior, pregnancy, parenting, etc...."

"The second of these components is the development of community service opportunities for adolescents to relieve boredom and frustration and to improve their self-image and self-esteem."

In the matter of sex education, Privett said the coalition was concerned with protecting parental rights, especially in the matter of

imparting religious or non-religious values. To that end, he said, parents of children enrolled in the program will have their choice of which agency they desire to teach

the child. "That's outstanding," he said.

"I feel good about what's in here," Privett said, thumping the 42-plus-page proposal.

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

Bread And Wine

Sunday's readings: (R3) Mk. 14:1-15:47. (R1) Is. 50:4-7. (R2) Phil. 2:5-11.

Lafadio Hearn tells the story of a hero of the Chinese rice fields during an earthquake. From his hilltop farm he saw the ocean swiftly withdrawn, like some prodigious animal crouching for the leap. He knew the leap would be a tidal wave. He also saw his neighbors working in the low fields below his farm, and he also knew that unless they reached the high ground of his farm, they would be swept away by the tidal wave and be drowned. Without a second thought, he set fire to his rice-ricks and furiously rang the temple-bells.

His neighbors thought his farm was on fire and so rushed to help him. When they reached the hilltop, they saw the swirl of waters over the fields they had just left — and they knew their salvation and its cost.

Had the hilltop farmer not sacrificed his rice, his neighbors would never have had a chance to be saved.

Had his neighbors not had the charity to want to help a friend in need, they too would not have been saved.

The farmer sacrificed his rice field; Jesus sacrificed His life. The farmer gave only of his possessions; Jesus gave of Himself.

Yet, like the farmer's neighbors, to avail ourselves of the opportunity to be saved, we must have charity in our hearts, especially toward our neighbor.

When our gifts of bread and wine are presented at the altar, the Church reminds us that our salvation is the work not just of God or of man, but of both God and man. Bread, which is the symbol of the labors of man, is something "which earth has given (God's part) and human hands have made (man's part)." And wine, crushed from grapes and symbol of man's sorrows, is "the fruit

of the vine (God's work) and the work of human hands (man's work)." Thus Augustine used to say that God who created us without our consent, won't save us without our consent.

Our part, our willingness to be saved, ought to have some of the determination Jesus showed in winning our salvation. "Your attitude must be that of Christ" (R2).

Morning after morning, as Jesus prayed to His Father, it became clearer and clearer to Him that He must suffer: be beaten, be buffeted, slapped, spit upon (R1).

"Many dogs surround me" (Response). But day after day His determination to do His Father's will became firmer and hardened, so that "I have set my face like flint." Why? Because He knew the Father would help Him and He would not be put to shame. "The Lord God is my help... I have set my face like flint, knowing that I shall not be put to shame."

Nor shall we, if we set our face like flint to do God's will. Christ entered in triumph, like a King, into His own city to complete the work of our salvation by His passion, death and resurrection.

Let us this Holy Week remember with devotion this saving work and follow Him with a lively and firm faith and an ardent love!



Cardinal Dies

Cardinal Pericle Felici, a Vatican expert on canon law, died March 21, 1982, in Foggia, Italy, after a religious ceremony. A leading figure in the Vatican Curia, Cardinal Felici was 70. He may be best remembered for his two historic appearances on the balcony of St. Peter's Basilica in 1978, when he announced the conclaves of cardinals had chosen Pope John Paul I and later Pope John Paul II. (RNS).

Camp Sets Open House

An open house has been scheduled from 1 to 5 p.m., Sunday, June 13, at Camp Stella Maris as it begins its 56th year of summer resident camping for children 7 to 14 years of age.

The program will run for three weeks for boys beginning July 4, two co-ed weeks beginning July 25 and then three weeks for girls, beginning Aug. 8.

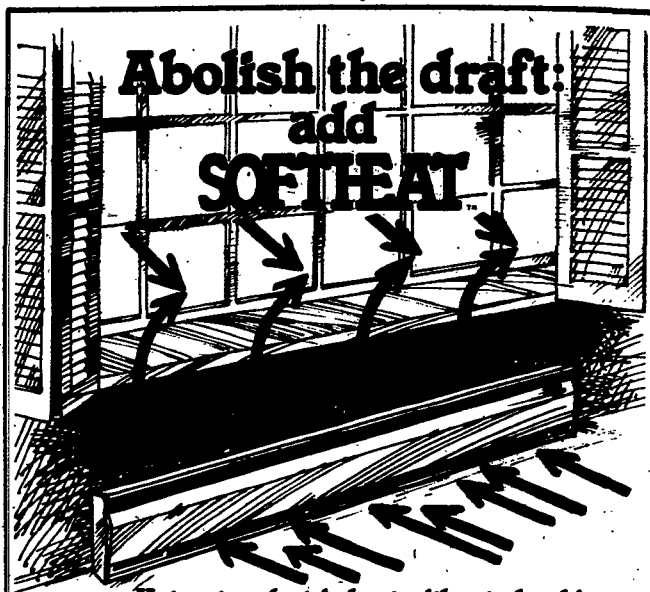
On open house day, parents may tour the facilities and meet the staff.

Further information is available from Camp Stella Maris, 3052 East Lake Road, Livonia, N.Y. 14487, telephone (716) 346-2243.

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