

Childraising a Concern of 'Parents of Teens'

Many parents who are coping with the difficult challenges of the teenage years have noticed newspaper articles on Toughlove during the past year, but few parents realize that the Rochester Diocese has its own alternative to the Toughlove approach with the national Parenthood series of parenting programs begun here in 1979. The first program offered to parents that year was the "Seminar for Parents of Teens and Pre-teens," now offered as a complete weekend package.

Supported by Frank and

Sue Staropoli, directors of the diocesan Office of Family Life, the seminar has been conducted in 17 parishes so far, to more than 550 parents. The seminar was written by Judy and Ron Platten, who received a year's paid Social Service leave from Xerox Corporation to do the research required to develop the program.

Many parents who have attended the seminar have evaluated it as "outstanding," and they especially like the positive thrust of a Christian approach to

parenting based on unconditional love and discipline. While the seminar is designed to improve relationships and communication skills among members in families, it also has sections that deal with problems caused by today's culture, such as drug abuse and how to cope with a child who may be tearing the family apart. Because it is comprehensive, the seminar gives parents hope and encouragement in many practical ways, while it lifts the burden of guilt that almost always accompanies

the situation where a child is "acting out."

Some parents of younger children see benefits in the preventive aspects of the program, while some parents who have been experiencing serious problems have found practical solutions within a reasonable period of time. The Plattens, who have conducted workshops at area high schools and colleges, have been able to weave stories and viewpoints from the young adults into their sessions, and that is one way that practical ideas that are relevant in real family situations can be included.

The seminar begins with a look at cultural and other outside factors at work to destroy family life. And it gets into areas of parent-teen conflict such as getting good grades in school, or even staying in school, fighting with brothers and sisters, and how to deal with rock concerts, as well as why

some types of compliments are rejected by the teens, why some compliments are actually harmful, and why some kinds of love are not really love at all.

Ron Platten says that some parents struggle with a poor or a "tolerable" relationship for years, just hoping to "get through" and hoping that their next crisis will be their last. These parents are amazed to learn how to have a really close relationship with their children instead. As one mother said, she almost fainted the day her son came home from school and asked her if there was anything he could do for her that day. "That was quite a switch from the old days," she said, "when we had a constant power struggle and arguments just to get him to clean up his room or carry the garbage outside."

Another mother said, "The seminar that you gave was fantastic. I wish that I could climb to the rooftops and shout what I heard to all parents. As a grandparent, I look back and wish that I had had this opportunity while my six were young. Some of the suggestions that I heard sounded like ideas of my own that were never carried out, perhaps for lack of courage, time, or whatever. I guess what you

really did was show us that by using the gifts of the Holy Spirit we would receive the fruits of the Holy Spirit."

One parent wrote afterwards, "The program was timely for us as it helped us to get through a very difficult time in our lives. The Lord must have known what He was doing, because there has been growth in our lives. It's tough to grow!"

Another father said, "Our family will always be grateful for the seminar. We see positive responses and you have helped us to find a person, our child."

After each seminar is conducted, a followup support group of parents is offered in the parish. One group has been meeting for more than two years at Sacred Heart Cathedral, and recent groups were formed at St. Joseph's in Penfield and Nativity in Brockport. Parents who wish to find out more about the Parenting programs for parents or for teenagers can call "Parents of Teens," 223-3639, or look in the yellow pages under "Marriage and Family Counseling." The next seminar will be at the Victor Youth Services in Victor on Saturday and Sunday, May 15-16. More information is available from Ron or Judy Platten, 223-3639.

People and Events Of the World and Nation

Graham Clarifies Position on Nuclear Arms

Providence, R.I. (RNS) — Evangelist Billy Graham said here that he believes President Reagan is "devoted to peace" although he isn't sure whether the president's method of achieving it is correct.

The preacher spoke of his position supporting the destruction of all nuclear weapons at a press conference during his stop in Providence as part of his New England crusade.

"I support a freeze if it is a step toward the destruction of all weapons of mass destruction," he said. "But to spend years and years trying to negotiate a verifiable freeze seems to me almost misusing our time. Our time ought to be spent on how we can eliminate these weapons entirely."

"But let me make this clear. I do not believe in unilateral disarmament. I am not a pacifist. I believe we have a right to defend ourselves and I think every true American should feel that way."

U.S. Pro-Lifers See Abortion Irish Political Issue

Chicago (RNS) — Anti-abortion and abortion rights advocates are vying for power in Ireland, where abortion is illegal, says an American anti-abortion leader.

"A pro-abortion movement is well under way in Ireland, and all of the signs indicate that, unless the Irish people take swift action, Ireland could go the way of the United States on abortion, says Patrick Trueman, executive director of Americans for Life and a member of a lecture group that recently toured Ireland.

Irish pro-lifers also have been active, he said. "Because of the work of the Irish pro-life movement, the new leader of the Irish government recently announced that he would seek an amendment to the constitution this year to protect unborn life from conception-fertilization."

Papal Appointee Meets with Jesuits On Latin Tour

Washington (RNS) — Father Giuseppe Pittau, deputy to the priest the pope put in charge of the Jesuits, is now traveling in Brazil and Central America to meet with Jesuit leaders.

Father Donald Campion, director of the Jesuit Conference here, said Latin American Jesuit officials invited Father Pittau to take a firsthand look at Jesuit activities in the area.

In recent years, Latin American Jesuits have been criticized by the Vatican for allowing members to "sympathize" openly with or "participate" in "leftist movements."

Father Campion said that Father Pittau was asked to come to Latin America to meet with Jesuits and learn at first hand about the scope and thrust of Jesuit activity, particularly as it related to social justice.

Hairdressing's Art Promoting Human Values — Pope

Vatican City (RNS) — Hairdressing is an art that can contribute to the promotion of genuine human values, Pope John Paul II told an international group of hairdressers.

Speaking at a special audience with some 500 participants of an international hairdressers festival in Rome, the pope said, "Hairdressing is an art and, like all the arts which concern the expression or the representation of the human body, it has ethical aspects which depend on the idea it creates of the human person and of interpersonal relations."

The pontiff asserted that hairdressers could sometimes "distract" men and women from what is "essential" or "authentic, sane and pure in human relations." But, he added, "it can also serve to expand human values and contribute to one's respect for oneself and for others."

FCC Swamped Anew By Protests of Nonexistent Petition

Washington (RNS) — The Federal Communication Commission says it is swamped with a new surge of protests about a nonexistent petition by Madalyn Murray O'Hair to remove all religious broadcasting from the airwaves.

The rumor which started in the mid-1970s has never been completely squelched but FCC officials said they thought it was fading. However, this Spring, letters and petitions suddenly started to pour in again urging that efforts of the atheist be stopped.

FCC public affairs director Delores Browder said letters have jumped from 56,000 in February to 300,000 in March and "phone calls have tripled."

Names Make News

Father William J. Byron, president of Jesuit University of Scranton, has been appointed president of Catholic University. An economist who has taught and studied at a half dozen major educational institutions, Father Byron is the first Jesuit to become president of the 95-year-old university. Pope John Paul II met in Vatican City with Archbishop Helder Pessoa-Camara, a longtime social justice and human rights critic of the military rulers in Brazil. Often called a "Red bishop" by the Brazilian military, the archbishop presented a \$40,000 check to the pontiff for papal charities. The check was the stipend attached to an "Artisan of Peace" award the archbishop received from the Missionary Youth Service of Turin, Italy.



PLANTING TIPS — Doc and Katy Abraham will lead discussion and demonstration of planting garden seeds and transplanting tree seedlings, 2-4 p.m., Sunday, May 16, at the Family Discovery Days at Cumming Nature Center. Free with Nature Center admission.

NFP SESSIONS — Sponsored by Natural Family Planning Education of Rochester, 7:30-9 p.m., Friday, May 14, in the main conference room of Rochester General Hospital. Free and open to the public.

SENIOR MATINEES — "Pursuit of Happiness" starring Michael Sarrazin and Barbara Hershey, 1:30 p.m., Thursday, May 6, George Eastman House.

DOWNTOWNERS LUNCHEON — Sponsored by the St. John Fischer Cardinal Club, 11:30 a.m., Thursday, May 6, Rochester Chamber of Commerce. Featured speaker will be Jim Boehm, head basketball coach at Syracuse University. Open to the public with tickets available for \$10 through St. John Fisher's Alumni Office.

DISCUSSION — "The High Cost of Doctoring — Why?" will be the topic of a panel discussion sponsored by the Scoliosis Association, at 7:30 p.m., Thursday, May 6, Helenwood Hall, 255 Crittenden Blvd. Free and open to the public.

MUSICAL — "My Fair Lady" presented by Brighton Theatre Guild at 8 p.m., on May 7, 8, 14, and 15 with a 2 p.m. matinee on Sunday, May 9, at the L.C. Obourn East Rochester High School auditorium, 200 Woodbine Ave., East Rochester. For further information call box office at 473-3220.

SPRING SALE — 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Friday, May 7, and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, May 8, at The Harley School, 1981 Clover St.

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