

Canada Bishops' Survey: We're Driving Women Out

Ottawa (NC) -- Catholic women in Canada -- dissatisfied with the church's ban on women priests, its prohibition of contraception, and its stance on other issues affecting women -- are leaving the church, according to a study by the Canadian bishops' Committee on the Role of Women in the Church.

A report released by the committee after it surveyed women's attitudes stated women's rights in the church continue "to be treated as a marginal concern by the leadership of the Catholic Church."

Initiation of the study prompted an "overwhelming response," including the comments of numerous women, many of whom wanted to be anonymous, according to the committee. The panel received some 300 letters representing the views of 1,000 women by April.

Formed in 1982, the committee consists of nine women and two bishops. It is scheduled to follow up the survey and report with a plan for action within a year.

According to the committee's study, women feel alienated, are tired of being placed in what they regard as "peripheral" roles in church decision making and are upset by church policies involving various other issues, such as birth control and marriage annulments.

Because they cannot be ordained priests, "they cannot exercise authority in the church," said Elisabeth Lacelle, a theologian at the University of Ottawa and a member of the bishops' committee. "They are excluded from making decisions on the whole life of the church."

She said 10 years ago women thought they were not free to discuss many of the issues, and the committee's survey marked "the first time many had been asked how they feel."

In recent years, women have had "confidence to speak out in the religious world, but some are still nervous to criticize the church," she said.

Marion Dewar, the mayor

of Ottawa, wrote that in forbidding contraception to women, the church is "denying us the right to human dignity."

"If the church continues to deprive women of the choice of whether or not to bear their children, (it) must also work to ensure that the sup-

port systems are in place," so that women do not live in poverty, she wrote. "Life does not end at birth."

Other women commented but did not want to be identified by name.

"Make no mistake," one wrote to the commission. "I

am not a fallen-away Catholic; I chose, deliberately, to walk away from an institution which has ceased to have relevance in my life."

Ms. Lacelle said the committee's aim "is to have women become equal partners with men on all levels. We're not interested in

just making recommendations. We want them to become actions and to take them up ourselves."

If the Canadian bishops approve the report at their annual meeting, they are likely to present it to Pope John Paul II in Rome during the fall synod.

Poland Lifts Martial Law

Warsaw, Poland (NC) -- Poland has lifted martial law -- effective July 22, the country's national day -- but given the government other new powers to declare a state of emergency and clamp down on dissent.

On July 20 and 21, the Polish Sejm, or parliament, granted wide-ranging new powers to the Communist government until 1985, unless changed sooner. The government can declare a state of emergency in a given situation, re-imprison dissidents, keep top leaders of the outlawed independent trade union Solidarity interned, and control labor and cultural organizations and the economy.

Nonetheless, the new government powers are less harsh than those the government originally had proposed and which were opposed by Cardinal Jozef Glemp of

Warsaw and Gniezno and by the Catholic Church.

The Sejm also approved plans for a conditional amnesty for martial law prisoners, freeing women, dissidents under age 21 and those serving sentences of less than three years, but not key leaders of Solidarity. Pope John Paul II and Polish church leaders had called for a blanket amnesty.

Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, Poland's communist leader, said "martial law was a necessity, an act of defense. The lifting thereof is a conscious choice."

Jaruzelski said the Military Council of National Salvation also was dissolved.

Martial law was imposed in December 1981. Many of the daily restrictions under martial law were lifted in December 1982.

Lech Walesa, leader of banned Solidarity, said July 18 the government's proposals, at least as of that day, "are worse than martial law regulations" and that "this is imposing dictatorship."

Bloodmobile In Charlotte

The Red Cross bloodmobile will be at Holy Cross auditorium, Lighthouse Street entrance, from 3 to 7 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 9, to give Charlotte residents the opportunity to donate blood.

"We are asking all eligible Charlotte residents to give blood but we can't ask everyone personally, so consider yourself invited," said Father Thomas Weiland, Holy Cross pastor.

According to Norma Aleksander, American Red Cross Blood Services, the Rochester region must collect 400 pints of blood each working day, or 101,500 pints of blood this year to meet the needs of the patients it serves in 45 hospitals within the 15-county area.

Franciscans Jailed

Vatican City (NC) -- Two Czechoslovakian Franciscans recently received prison sentences for carrying out illegal religious activity, according to Vatican Radio. The Jesuit-run radio station reported July 20 that Fathers Frantisek Pometlo and Jire Mazanec were convicted by a court in Pilzen July 13. Father Pometlo received a six-month sentence, and Father Mazanec received an eight-month sentence.

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even more important, were perennials.

We stuck them in the ground and then for some color invested in some day lilies -- Chinese red -- for either end of the fence.

In the spring, John's Latin plants began to flower with easily recognizable English-sounding blooms -- Forget-Me-Nots, Jacob's Ladder and Columbines.

Beautiful, we agreed, but we still needed something more. I added my favorite flower cliches -- pink and purple petunias. Still not enough. Back to the garden store for something tall and showy. We picked coreopsis partly because it sound like a character out of a Shakespearean play and partly because tall yellow daisies seemed just right for the middle of the fence.

In the meantime, last year's snapdragons decided to reseed themselves.

By then, the country garden was beginning to look like a hodgepodge. Since that was the case, a few more choices wouldn't make much difference, we reasoned, and came home from the garden center with carnations and dianthus.

As a potential feature for Architectural Digest, we decided, the garden doesn't quite make it. But for plain show and color, it's something else.

Sarah Child



All in the Family

How Does Her Garden Grow?

According to a copy of Architectural Digest which I brought home from the library the other night, "The cottage garden style has a lot to do with a certain sprawl -- abundant planting that is slightly haphazard."

From the vantage point of the patio, I gazed down to the end of the yard to our "cottage garden" and decided haphazard was the operative word.

The latest addition to our "landscape architecture" began a couple of years ago when the head of the house put up a few sections of rail fence at the bottom of the back lawn. Then one of the neighborhood boys came by with his rototiller and dug up the grass for an 18-inch swath the length of the fence.

The first year we put in tulips and crocus for a spring show, covering the bulbs with stones so that the critters who dwell around us would not have them for breakfast some autumnal morning.

They came up the following spring and I learned another less about rows of flowers. To make a splash you need literally hundreds. As spring lengthened, we cast about for some tall flowers the birds wouldn't like and settled on snapdragons.

Snapdragons. I decided a little later, aren't really my kind of flower. The only thing I really like about them is their name, a problem I have with a lot of flowers.

"We need something blue down there," I mused aloud and John Dash, colleague and good friend with a thumb as green as ever there was, began sending out pots and pots of little green plants with Latin names which I loved and which,

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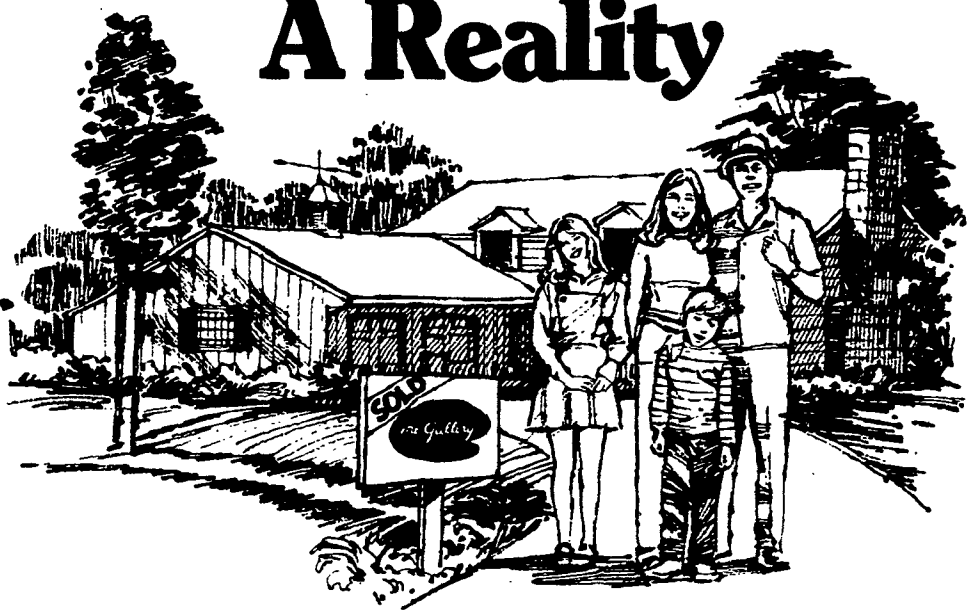
Is grief stressful?

One of the most intense and prolonged producers of stress is grief that results from the loss of a loved one. The reaction is not just psychological; there are actually physical effects. Our body secretes more hormones to help it cope with stress. Over a period of time the increased strain of grief and the higher hormone level can predispose us to illnesses. Research indicates that the best way to manage stress is to discuss it, to express our feelings, go about reorganizing our life and to take good physical care of ourselves through good eating and sleeping habits, and reasonable exercise. Extra care of our mental and physical health during this period of stress can have long lasting benefits.

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