



# OUR RESPONSE

November						
16	Community Forums	7:15-10 p.m.	St. Ambrose School 31 Empire Blvd. Rochester	Office of Religious Education Office of Continuing Education	All	Maribeth Mancini (716) 328-3210
30	Peace Perspectives In Hebrew Scripture	7:30-9:30 p.m.	St. Rita's Church	Adult Religious Education Committee (716) 671-6342	All	Margie Klehr
December						
7	Peace Perspectives In Christian Scripture	7:30-9:30 p.m.	St. Rita's Church	Adult Religious Education Committee	All	Margie Klehr (716) 671-6347
14	Biblical Foundations For Bishops' Peace Pastoral	7:30-9:30 p.m.	St. Rita's Church	Adult Religious Education Committee	All	Margie Klehr (716) 671-6342

We encourage parishes and groups throughout the Diocese who are sponsoring activities on the Bishops' pastoral to send information to M. Lourdes Perez-Albuerne, 750 W. Main St., Rochester, N.Y. 14611, so that it can be included in the calendar.

## 'The Day After' ... 'Don't Watch It Alone'

Washington -- For the first time ever, the nation's largest educational organization, the 1.7-million-member National Education Association, has issued a "parent advisory" on a television program.

The NEA suggests a series of steps that parents can take to make ABC's upcoming drama on nuclear war -- "The Day After" -- an effective learning experience instead of a shattering emotional ordeal.

"We're extremely concerned about how children may react to this powerful film," said Mary Hatwood Futrell, NEA president. "We believe that parents, under no circumstances, should allow their children to watch this program alone."

(Lourdes Perez Albuerne, head of the diocesan International Justice and Peace Commission, had already offered a caution on the program which depicts the aftermath of a nuclear holocaust. She said psychologists had advised that "it would be best not to watch it alone, children under 12 should not watch it, those between 12 and 18 should watch it with parents or adults.")

(She is asking pastors to consider inviting people to view it at the parish and discuss it after.

(Meanwhile in Rochester, Physicians for Social Responsibility have scheduled three forums at 7:30 p.m., Monday, Nov. 21, at Temple B'rith Kodesh, Third Presbyterian and United Church of Christ in Greece.)

The NEA suggests the following steps:  
 1. Before the movie, tell children that it will be a dramatic portrait of the effects of a nuclear war on the United States. Warn them that some parts may be difficult to watch and that they are likely to have strong emotional reactions.  
 2. Watch the movie as a group.  
 3. After the movie, take a short break and then follow with a discussion on the following points:

- Which scenes had the greatest impact and why.
- In what ways do you feel different after watching the movie.
- Which of the following statements about nuclear war come closer to your own opinion -- a. I think it's a real threat, and I worry a lot about it; b. I think it's a real threat, but mostly put it out of my mind; c. I don't think it's too likely to happen so I'm not really worried about it.

- What can be done to create a future free from the threat of nuclear war?
- How do you think a nuclear war would start? Accident? A "small" war escalating into nuclear war?
- How can the danger of nuclear war be reduced?
- What can all of us do to help prevent nuclear war?

## Provocative and Controversial

By Michael Gallagher  
 New York (NC) -- "The Day After," which airs Sunday, Nov. 20, at 8 p.m., may be one of the most hotly discussed programs ever to appear on television.

Though it is doggedly unpolitical in nature, the way in which it concretizes all the calculations about the effects of a nuclear shoot-out is bound to provoke reactions from those who have thought a lot about this grim subject and, perhaps even more so, from those who up to now have done their best to think about it as little as possible.

The scope of "The Day After" is much wider than that of "Testament," the just released theatrical motion picture of similar theme. The two main characters in its large cast never meet. One is Dr. Russell Oakes (Jason Robards), who lives in Kansas City, and the other is Jim Dahlberg (John Cullum), a farmer whose home is about 40 miles away from the city.

Once the missiles strike, Oakes, who is on his way to Lawrence, Kan., where he is the senior resident surgeon at the hospital attached to the University of Kansas, finds himself with the frightening responsibility of keeping the shattered hospital functioning even as thousands and thousands of walking wounded converge on it from all directions.

He has no time to mourn his wife and his son and daughter, who perished with the obliteration of Kansas City, much less to spare any thought that he himself may

well have incurred a lethal dose of radiation.

Jim Dahlberg's responsibilities are more limited: his wife and three children, including an older daughter, whose marriage plans occupied the family almost to the end.

Far enough from Kansas City to escape blast damage, the Dahlbergs, with one exception, also avoid the worst effects of the consequent fallout by holing up in their basement. But once they come out, they must cope with a radically altered world in which the things that one could depend upon before are simply not there.

And so for Oakes, Dahlberg and everyone still living, the tragedy is just beginning to unfold, verifying Khrushchev's memorable observation that the living would envy the dead.

In artistic terms there's not much that's special about "The Day After" save for the look of the production and the special effects depicting the nuclear assault, which are quite commendable.

The script by Edward Hume and the direction by Nicholas Meyer, however, are earnest and serviceable but far from inspired, circumstances that, with one notable exception, limit what the actors are able to do.

The exception is Jason Robards. As happens almost invariably with this fine actor, he is much too good for his part, but though his talent is in a sense wasted on the role, it is by no means wasted on the theme, one of such momentous importance

that it cries out for the humanity and perception and sense of tragic grandeur that Robards is able to bring to it.

Thus, though "The Day After" is no more than an adequate treatment of its theme, the theme itself is so extraordinary that, given Robards' presence, the film is going to have a powerful effect upon those who see it. And I recommend it urgently on that score.

Nonetheless, I have two serious and not unrelated reservations.

For all its daring, "The Day After" cleaves to one of the great bedrock principles of prime time: nobody ever prays. Religion is irrelevant.

Here we have people dying all over the place, families and society as a whole faced with unimagined tragedy, and there is not even so much as a glimpse of a priest anointing a victim.

True, there is a fragment of a sermon, but this only underscores the implicit bias. For the minister who delivers it is half-crazed from burns, and, far from offering consolation, he rants on from a text of the Apocalypse, declaring that God has punished those who caused this.

Lest anyone miss the pointlessness of this, the Dahlbergs get up and leave in the midst of the sermon when they notice that their daughter is beginning to hemorrhage from radiation sickness.


Finally, the makers of "The Day After," though they have made some tentative passes at it, have skirted the question of moral

responsibility. All the adult victims whom we see and empathize with are to some greater or lesser extent -- depending upon their sophistication, their education and their degrees of awareness -- responsible for what happened.

How, for example, did Oakes or Jim Dahlberg feel about the morality of nuclear confrontation? Had either of them ever done anything to try to effect a backing away from the abyss?

We don't know because the filmmakers apparently did not think it relevant, an indication that for those for whom religion is irrelevant, morality soon follows suit.

**THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER**



**EDWIN SULEWSKI**  
FUNERAL DIRECTOR

**Why should I consult my family about my funeral plans?**

Funerals are for the living! Many times plans made without family members unhappy and dissatisfied. Telling close family members that you would like to have a serious discussion about your plans for your funeral and inviting them to help with the arrangements assures they understand your desires. It will also offer them an opportunity to tell you what they would prefer. Planning a funeral ahead of time is helpful. Don't neglect to take into consideration the wishes of those who will live after you. They are the ones who will benefit or suffer from the choices you make.

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