

'Governmental Interference' Seen Prompting New Charter

Washington (NC) — The Holy See's new Charter of the Rights of the Family arose from concern by many Catholic bishops over "governmental interference" in parents' rights, said a New Jersey priest who helped produce the document.

The 1980 world Synod of Bishops took up the idea of a family rights charter "because these rights and prerogatives are often overlooked or even at times violated," Msgr. James T. McHugh of Newark said in a telephone interview Nov. 28, four days after the new charter was issued.

The charter, he said, will be useful in helping to frame public policy on a number of levels, from guiding individuals active in family life issues to helping international organizations develop goals or norms for public

policy on the family. Msgr. McHugh said he served as a consultant in revising and editing the charter partly because he was one of the papally appointed experts for the 1980 synod and partly because he is a special adviser to the Holy See's U.N. Observer Mission. A long-time specialist for the U.S. bishops on family life, abortion and population issues, Msgr. McHugh has frequently represented the Holy See at U.N. or other international conferences touching on those concerns.

The 12-article charter, dated Oct. 22 but released Nov. 24, repudiates governmental interference in the rights of persons to marry freely, to have children and to educate them according to their religious and moral beliefs. It insists that public policies protect and promote

marriage and the family and provide adequate socioeconomic structures to assure family stability, security and development.

The "whole point" of the charter, said Msgr. McHugh, "is to state the rights and prerogatives of the family that ought to be respected and enhanced" by governments and organizations.

"It is not meant to be a legal code, but to guide those who draw up legal codes or international conventions," he said.

"It proposes rights that are natural to the family that should be universally protected and advanced by laws and social policies," he added.

It is also addressed to families "to create a stronger awareness of the family's role in society and to motivate families to work together in behalf of their rights and in fulfillment of their responsibilities," he said.

Msgr. McHugh said he thought the charter would be particularly useful for international organizations such as the Council of Europe, the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Such organizations are constantly reviewing international conventions and welcome such documents as the new charter, he said.

He also called it a helpful document for bishops' conferences when they address questions of their own government's legislation or policies.

Msgr. McHugh expressed the hope that the charter would be widely read and studied by families, particularly by people engaged in various family movements. It avoids "heavy juridical language" and is as much a statement for families themselves as for governments or international organizations, he said.

Agca Charged With Slander

Rome (NC) — An Italian judge has formally charged Mehmet Ali Agca with slandering a Bulgarian, Sergei Ivanov Antonov.

Agca, a Turk, is serving a life term in an Italian prison for the attempted murder of Pope John Paul II in St. Peter's Square in May of 1981.

Agca has accused Antonov, former head of the Rome office of Balkan Airlines, of complicity in the papal attack.

Italian news sources — including the Vatican newspaper, L'Osservatore Romano — say however, that the slander charge stems from another accusation made by Agca: that Antonov was part of a plot to attempt to assassinate Polish labor leader Lech Walesa with a car bomb when Walesa visited Rome in January of 1981.

Ilario Martella, who has been investigating the papal attack, made the slander charge formally on Nov. 24.

Generosity

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brothers and sisters in need.

Each year, in conjunction with the fund drive, the Courier-Journal presents the true stories of 100 neediest cases in the diocese. Though taken directly from the agency files, these stories only represent a much wider suffering in our area.

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Neediest Cases

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furnished apartment. He tries to go out and keep busy as much as possible to keep his mind off his illness. When he isn't up to going out he stays home and listens to the radio. He is getting weaker and weaker and will be spending more time in his apartment alone. He doesn't own a television because he can't afford to buy one.

48 L is in her 70s and has many physical problems. She lives on Social Security and needs help cleaning out her debilitated house; but she can't afford to pay for the help.

49 G is elderly and very poor. She pays her bills before she buys herself food.

50 The Hs live with their two children and nephew. They are on public assistance and find themselves with less than \$150 a month to live on after their rent is paid. Their money frequently cannot be stretched out to help them with their expenses.

51 M lives with her four children in a building that does not meet housing codes. She and her children had tried staying with a relative, but it became too much for the relative to handle. Therefore M moved back into the condemned build-

ing. Her public assistance income is considerably less than her expenses.

52 Mr. and Mrs. N have five children. He works and brings home about \$160 a week. After the \$400 rent is paid and the groceries bought, the Ns have little money to work with. They are presently behind with their utilities bill.

53 Y is a single parent with a two-year-old mentally retarded daughter. In addition to the needs of her daughter, Mrs. Y also has special needs: her health problems necessitate surgery in the near future. She is on public assistance and frequently cannot make ends meet. She often doesn't have enough food to last her through the month.

54 C is in her early 30s and has serious back problems. Though on SSI, once she pays her rent, she has only \$42 each month to live on.

55 Mrs. A is the single parent of two children. Although she works, her income is not enough to cover her monthly expenses, with the result that she has had three shut-off notices this year alone.

56 Mrs. M is a home-bound senior citizen. She is living alone because her husband was placed in a

hospital for long-term care in August. She is very lonely without him. She is in financial difficulty now because her SSI has not yet been adjusted since the loss of her husband's income from the household.

57 Mrs. D is 83 and lives with and cares for her retarded adult son. She has had operations for cancer three times. Her hearing is very poor, but she has no extra money for a hearing aid. The two skimp on food during winter so they may pay for their heating bills.

58 R is 78, recently widowed and very lonely. She has serious medical problems, including poor eyesight and partial deafness. Because of her income, she has not been to a doctor in years. She spends much of her time taking in and caring for stray cats, which, in return, keep her company.

59 L lives with a chronic health problem which is causing paralysis. In order to remain somewhat independent, he needs help to equip a bathroom on the first floor of his home.

60 L has one child and is expecting another. Her estranged husband has moved out of state and is delinquent on child-support payments. She has little money; and needs rent and bus fare to take her sick child to the pediatrician.

Child Abuse To Be Topic

A community forum, "Child Abuse: Causes and Cures," will be presented by the diocesan Office of Black Ministries at 7 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 7, at the Phyllis Wheatley Library, 13 Bronson Ave.

Panelists will be Bernice Everett and Irvin Gill, both of the Monroe County Department of Social Services; Angelica Curley of Family Services of Rochester, and Gwendolyn Thornton of the Catholic Family Center. A brief question period will follow the presentation.

The event is free and open to the public. For further information, the telephone number is 328-3210, ext. 269.

Nazareth College Information Night

Prospective students and their parents can find out about Nazareth College at an Information Night from 6 to 8 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 7, in the Forum of the Otto A. Shults Center on the campus.

The program, sponsored by the Nazareth College Alumni Association, is free and open to the public. A free soup and sandwich supper will be served.

Members of the college administration and a panel of current students and parents will discuss aspects of the college selection process, including academic programs, financial aid and student life.

Reservations may be made with the Nazareth College Alumni Office, 586-2525.

Parishes Respond To Bishop's Call For Day of Peace

Parishes across the diocese are responding to Bishop Matthew H. Clark's call for observance of a "Day of Prayer for Peace," Dec. 15.

Prayer services and other activities are scheduled in a number of parishes to note the day.

For his own part, Bishop Clark will sequester himself in private retreat that day, thereby joining his prayer with the prayer of diocesans for peace.

According to Pam Schaeffer, spokesperson for the diocesan Liturgy Office, parishes were offered several options to celebrate the day, from declaring a day of fast and abstinence for peace, through providing for discussions of peace in schoolrooms and religious education programs, to devising an evening prayer service for peace.

Among the parishes which have indicated they are holding special activities are Sacred Heart Cathedral, St.

Joseph's in Penfield, St. Monica, St. John the Evangelist on Humboldt Street, St. Mary of the Lake in Ontario and Immaculate Heart of Mary in Painted Post.

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Quant. Meth. for MGT	(3)	Wed. 4:00-6:50 p.m.	Dr. Sen
International Bus.	(3)	Mon. 4:00-6:50 p.m.	Mr. Phillips-Patrick
Data Base Mgt. Syst.	(3)	Tue. 4:00-6:50 p.m.	Mr. Alai Tafti
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International Econ.	(3)	Thr. 7:00-9:50 p.m.	Dr. Scahill
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