



The Truongs in their West Irondequoit home are, from left, (seated) Lesuong, Chau, Sang, Mrs. Hien, Lan, Haydee; (standing) Nghia, Quang Si, and Minh.

Buddhist Family Noted In National Family Week

The "baby" of the family was six years old at the fall of Saigon, and he doesn't remember much of his life before that.

But the memories, the traditions and values of his parents and siblings are very much alive in his West Irondequoit home.

And those traditions bring Nghia Truong's world, in some measure, to conflict with the prevailing patterns of life elsewhere on his street.

He takes orders from his sisters, because they are older and deserve the respect given to those older.

He respects and honors his parents, and he worships the family dead.

Nghia is the youngest child of Quang Si Truong and his wife Mai Thi Hien who fled Vietnam in the very last days of Saigon's existence as a battlehold against Communism.

The family has been in the U.S. for almost ten years.

(Next week, Catholic Family Center, for which Mrs. Hien works; Family Service of Rochester and Jewish Family Service are sponsoring the local observance of

Family Week Activities

Getting a jump on National Family Week, Jewish Family Service, Catholic Family Center and Family Service of Rochester, are sponsoring a series of three lunchtime seminars on family life, noon to 1:30 p.m., in McCurdy's Community Room.

"Life with an Adolescent: Pain or Pleasure?" a panel discussion exploring the impact of adolescence on the entire family, is slated for today, Nov. 14. Lilian Merry will moderate the discussion among Mary-Jo Amatruda, Tom Freeman and Martin Pedraza.

"Real Men Don't Go for Counseling... Until It's Too Late!" will be presented Nov. 15 by Steve Webster and Father Tom Hanson. They will provide a brief look at common family and marital problems and ways they can be resolved.

Yesterday's presentation was "Trigger Plays on Aging," a slide show on Jewish Family Service and a Trigger Play which portrays some of the typical problems confronted by aging parents and their adult children. The leader was Edith Bernstein.

National Family Week. The Truongs consented to present their family life before the public as an example of the diversity of U.S. family traditions, celebrated by the week.)

The Truongs are Buddhists, in diaspora: The nearest temples are in Toronto and Sterling, Pa. They nevertheless gather their family for prayer in their home.

Most often during a recent interview, Mrs. Hien and her daughter Chau Truong spoke of the family's worship of its dead. "Tous saints," in Chau's words, "like the Christian celebration of All Souls and All Saints days."

The worship occurs particularly on the anniversary of death and at the celebration of Tet, the New Year. "It's an occasion for the whole family," such worship, Chou said.

Special foods are prepared and laid out for the dead to enjoy at the family table.

Mrs. Hien noted that at the New Year, all the dead are invited to join in the three days of feasting. "We treat them like human beings," she said. And on the final day, "We serve them a big meal to wish them goodbye."

The observer is reminded of the Christian doctrine of the communion of saints.

The dead are not afterwards forgotten, however. Each night, Mrs. Hien said, the family prays "to Buddha and the dead, prays for peace, health and the family."

Parents command and receive a very special respect. And, again at the New Year, the Truong family ritual reflects that.

On that occasion, the children line up before their seated parents, and, one by one, step forward to express their obedience and to give

wishes of health and good fortune. The parents in turn give each child a wrapped package of money.

According to Chau, the Vietnamese traditions and customs "are one of the most important parts of our lives with the elders."

The question of respect due elders extends to the relations between the children, and evidence of that was forthcoming during a recent interview.

Nghia made a half-hearted foray into the question of "equal rights," stating that he was against passage of an Equal Rights Amendment.

Less than ten seconds later, Nghia's sisters quietly and softly spoke him into silence; and he complied, less from the force of their arguments, rather, because they are his seniors.

During the interview, Chau noted that she observes the interecine battles in the homes of friends and at school. "We do not have that. In our home there is a respect for brothers and sisters, there is no raising of the voice, slamming of doors. The youngest must listen to and respect his elders."

Mrs. Hien smiled proudly at her daughter's words.

Celebrating Jewish Feasts: Lecture Topic

"Celebrating the Jewish Festivals," will be the topic of a presentation 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Nov. 17 at St. Margaret Mary School, 400 Rogers Pkwy.

Rabbi Laurence Skopitz of Temple Beth David will lead the program which includes a slide show on the annual cycle of the festivals, a talk on the faith of Judaism and a question and answer period.

The public is invited to the free event, but pre-registration is requested.

Pre-registration is done by calling 342-7114 or 342-2100.

Mercy Students to Fast To Aid Hunger Crisis

Students at Our Lady of Mercy High School will help combat world hunger tomorrow, Nov. 15. They are going to give up eating for the day.

Participating students will join hundreds of thousands across the country in Oxfam America's 11th Fast for a World Harvest.

The money the Mercy students save by not eating will be donated to help Oxfam's development projects in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

"Hunger is a real problem in the world," said Sister Anne Curtis, director of Mercy's campus ministry. "This will be an opportunity to show the kids how it feels to be hungry." She added that there will be a hunger banquet after school that day to show that people in the world eat varying amounts of food.

Sister Anne said that Mercy is also hoping through the fast to focus more public

attention on the current famine in African areas.

More than 2,400 groups participated in the national fast last year, raising \$475,000.

Mercy seniors Sabra Ebersole of Mt. Morris, and Anne Peacock of Brighton are student chairpersons of the fast.

SSJs Plan Upcoming Programs

The Vocations Office of the Sisters of St. Joseph is sponsoring a series of events for women interested in learning more about religious life.

Evenings of prayerful reflection will be offered on various Fridays and Sundays through next Spring. All sessions will be from 7-9 p.m. The first, titled "Faithfulness," will be led by Sister Mary Lourdes McCarthy on Friday, Nov. 30 at the Nazareth College Faculty House, 4245 East Ave.

Other evenings scheduled include: "Silence and Waiting," by Sister Kay Heverin, Sunday, Dec. 18 at the Sisters of St. Joseph Convent, 10 Almay Rd.; "Makers of Peace," Sisters Christine Wagner and Judith Greene, Sunday, Feb. 24 at the Sisters of St. Joseph Convent, 461 Lyell Ave.; "Brokenness," Sisters Rose Gonzaga Newton and Margaret Joseph Margaret, Friday, March 22 at the St. Joseph's Convent and Infirmary, 4095 East Ave.; and "Wonder and Beauty," Sister Magdalen La Row, Friday, May 24 at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse, 4095 East Ave.

Also scheduled is a coffee hour following the 11 a.m. Mass on Sunday, April 21 at the East Avenue Motherhouse; and a picnic on Sunday June 23 at the Holy Childhood Convent, 720 Beach Ave. Weekend retreats are also planned for Nov. 16-18 and May 3-5.

Further information is available from the congregation's Vocation Office, 716/586-1320.

Wine Taster

The Bishop Kearney High School Marching Kings Band will hold its annual wine tasting party 2-5 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 18 in the school cafeteria. Tickets are \$5 per person. Featured will be a wide variety of wines from various countries and hot hors d'oeuvres. Proceeds will go to the band's trip fund.

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