

Thomas More Lawyers' Guild Slates Forum on Immigration, U.S. Church Role in Sanctuary

The St. Thomas More Lawyers' Guild will hold a forum on the general topic of immigration with particular emphasis on the plight of political immigrants from non-communist countries, such as El Salvador, 8 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 21 at St. Bernard's Institute.

In addition, the forum will explore the sanctuary movement, in which U.S. churches, including churches in Rochester, have agreed to provide sanctuary for illegal immigrants under belief that the laws of the U.S. require these immigrants to return to their homelands where they will be put to death by repressive governments or violent rebels.

The federal government has begun legal proceedings throughout the U.S. against such immigrants and those harboring them.

The pro-sanctuary argument will be advanced by Wade Henderson, an attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union in Washington, D.C.

Explaining the U.S. bishops' position on the matter will be Father Silvano Tomasi, director of the NCCB's division of Pastoral Care of Migrants and Refugees.

A spokesperson for the federal government's position is still being sought.

The program is free and will be open to the public.

Synod

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The Second Vatican Council resulted in major reforms of the liturgy, strongly promoted dialogue with other Christian churches, and emphasized collegiality in relations between the bishops and the pope.

Bishop James A. Malone of Youngstown, Ohio, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, said in a prepared statement that "the announcement means that the bishops of the entire world will have an opportunity to collaborate with the Holy Father in a special way in seeking to make Vatican II even more pastorally effective in the life and mission of the church."

Since presidents of national bishops' conferences would be the primary participants in the extraordinary synod, Bishop Malone would be the U.S. hierarchy's representative at the meeting.

Cardinal Bernardin, a member of the permanent council of the general secretariat for the Synod of Bishops, said in a statement that "from my experience of past synods, I know that this meeting will provide a unique instrument for reviewing, evaluating and furthering the goals of the council (Vatican II)."

Cardinal Silvio Oddi, prefect of the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy, characterized the synod as a

means of correcting "abuses" since Vatican II.

"The pope wants to know how these reforms have been applied in practice," Cardinal Oddi said. "If there have been abuses, naturally they should be corrected. If there are teachings that have not been applied, perhaps now they should be."

He added that "there are many abuses in the celebration of the Mass today" that ought to receive attention at the synod. "Some changes that looked useful 20 years ago perhaps do not (look useful) today," he said.

Cardinal Oddi said the clergy congregation would be meeting before the synod to discuss areas of concern. One such area, he added, is "the external conduct and behavior of priests" as it has developed since the council.

An article Jan. 27 in the Vatican newspaper, L'Osservatore Romano, said the synod was necessary to review "a situation that evidently requires clarifications."

But the article also noted Pope John Paul's support for the reforms of Vatican II and said his pontificate has been inspired by the council.

"He has recognized and fought against the two principal risks: that of exceeding with impudence the just limits of renewal, and that of letting constitutions and decrees mold away in the attic," the article said.

The pope himself has commented several times on the importance of the council. In 1982, at a celebration of the 20th anniversary of the opening session of the council, Pope John Paul thanked the Holy Spirit for the "richness of (the council's) contents, which has illuminated the church in the second half of the 20th century, and for the direction indicated in so many important questions."

Father Thomas Herron, an official at the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, acknowledged concerns that the pope might make changes but said that the pope "doesn't need a synod to change things."

"One calls a synod to find out other people's opinions," he added.

Sarah Child

All in the Family



No Bugaboo About Seeking Mental Help

Among the news releases that hit my desk last month was one from the DePaul Clinic which is taking part in a large-scale media campaign designed to raise public awareness and lessen the fear of professional counseling for mental health problems.

According to a National Institute of Mental Health study, one out of five Americans has suffered some kind of mental disorder in the last six months for a total of 30 million persons.

That's a lot of crazy people, right? Wrong! But, unfortunately, "crazy" is the label too many individuals, even those stricken, think of when they hear someone has an emotional problem.

The bad thing about such labeling is not just that it's false but that it prevents many who could use some counseling to forgo it for fear they'll be so branded.

I was in that position some 20 years ago. In my early 20s with a great job, a supportive family and many good friends, I was nonetheless very unhappy with myself.

When my doctor suggested that I see a psychiatrist in an attempt to confront and deal with problems of self-image, I felt as if he had hung a scarlet letter around my neck — an L for Looney. I remember telling my

roommate that I had something to confide. When I managed to spit it out, she started to laugh.

"Is that all?" she asked, elevating it to the importance of a sore toe, and mentioned a couple of mutual acquaintances who were getting similar help.

I spent three years in psychotherapy, seeing the kind, gentle man who was my doctor twice a week. Looking back now, the worst thing about it was the time of my appointment, 8 a.m., not exactly a shining hour for a reporter whose bedtime and daybreak often coincided.

The best things about those three years? So many that I can't recount them all. It was certainly one of the most productive, liberating and satisfying periods of my life. With the psychiatrist leading the way, I embarked on a journey of self-discovery that continues to this day.

I also came away with the firm belief that almost everybody could benefit from counseling — a periodic checkup for some people, much like the yearly physical, with more frequent visits for others. Far from being crazy, those who seek help are often the sanest among us.

One last note: It is imperative that individuals seeking help are comfortable with and like and respect their counselors. A couple of visits will tell. If they're not happy, they shouldn't be afraid to switch, more than once if need be.

AT YOUR PARISH

St. Patrick

Corning — Parishioners of St. Patrick's Church were alerted to an afternoon of Marriage Enrichment sponsored by the spiritual life committee, 2-5 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 17. The program will be presented by Mr. and Mrs. Richard Volbrecht. Tickets are \$3 per couple; and the program is limited to 20 couples. Registration is made by calling Bill or Brenda Hatch, 936-8950.

St. Jerome

East Rochester — The primary grade school children of St. Jerome's Parish will stage a circus, 7:30 p.m., today, Feb. 6 in the school gymnasium. Leading the children in the event are Ms. Clare Anne Stefanucci, Mrs. Dalton, Mrs. Termotto, Keith Saturn, and Mrs. Kathy Smith.

Holy Trinity

Webster — "Parvuli Dei" awards were given to Cub Scouts Christopher and Matthew Bobowski, Robert Gorski, Jason Monsees and Andreas Vagianos from Williamson's Pack 125, during rites at Holy Trinity Church. Since the event Matthew Bobowski and Gorski have advanced to Boy Scout status.

St. Stephen

Geneva — The parish life committee of St. Stephen's Church is hosting a public ziti and meatball supper, 6-8 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 9 at the Knights of Columbus hall. Tickets are available at the door for \$3 for adults; \$2.50, senior citizens; \$1.50, children 5-12; free for children under 5. Take-out service will be available.

St. Mary

An information session on tax questions for retirees will be held 2:30 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 9 at St. Mary's Church rectory, downtown. The program will be given by Inka Samoyska Sloan of Davie, Kaplan & Braverman. The public is invited to the event. Further information is available at the rectory, 232-7140.

St. Thomas Apostle

The pro-life group of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish is sponsoring a baby shower for the benefit of Melita House, 8 p.m., Thursday, Feb. 7. Donations of new and used baby clothing and furniture will be welcomed. Sisters Therese and Jane of Melita House will be present.

St. Francis Assisi

The annual Mardi Gras-Carnevale of St. Francis of Assisi Parish on Whitney Street will begin with a social hour at 6 p.m., Saturday, Feb. 9 in the parish hall. A buffet dinner will be served at 7 p.m. A limited number of tickets at \$10 per person are available at the rectory, 436-0669 (9 a.m.-4 p.m. weekdays except Friday). Music for the event will be provided by Sam Trulio from Tru-Sound Studios.

Assumption

Fairport — The Church of the Assumption of Our Lady has asked adult parishioners to donate one to two hours a month maintaining the church sanctuary and sacristy. Responsibilities include cleaning and care of vestments, linens and vessels. Further information is available from Monica Sherony, 223-7353.

St. Mark

The Rosary Society of St. Mark's Church will meet 7:30 p.m., Feb. 19. Following recitation of the rosary, participants will work on a craft item to be given to an area nursing home at Easter. All parish women have been invited to the event.

St. Mary Our Mother

Horseheads — An "Information Sunday" will close the Catholic Schools Week celebration for St. Mary Our Mother School, 9 a.m.-2 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 10, in the auditorium. An open house will be held 12:15 p.m.-2:30 p.m., Monday, Feb. 11; and 9 a.m.-11 a.m., Tuesday, Feb. 12 for parents considering sending their children to the school. Babysitting services will be available to parents calling ahead. Further information is available by calling Barbara DeAngelis, 562-8178; Sister Nancy Clark, 739-9157.

St. Stanislaus

The Holy Name of Mary Society of St. Stanislaus will hold a Valentine Card Party, 2 p.m., Sunday, Feb. 10 in the School auditorium. A donation of \$1.50 will be asked at the door.

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