

## Family decade

Continued from page 16

Again, we hear and are part of the cry of the poor: "Who in the Church will help support the family as a unit instead of dismembering the family to support the Church?"

If our church at times fails us as families, the institutions that employ us and the societal codes we live by actively pull us apart. In pre-modern times, the family was the root of the economy — working on the family farm or in the family shop. We have since moved into the industrial society.

Today, we sell our labor to the corporation, and buy back from the corporation finished goods and services — an arrangement that isolates husbands from wives, parents from children, nuclear units from extended families, and all of us from our wider communities.

Whereas family values are cooperative, industrial values are competitive, pulling families apart every which way they want to, knowing we will obey to survive.

Where do we go from here, as we try to instill moral values and protect our families from materialism, consumerism, sexism, militarism, racism? How do we stave off the "I-me material worlds" direction and focus our sights on God's direction for us?

Where is the justice and peace, we wonder, and we look to our church for love, support, acceptance, direction to help sustain our families.

The Code of Canon Law, *Familiaris Consortio* on the family, "Church in the Modern World," and Charter Rights of the Family — a few of the church's encyclicals, grant us those rights as constituted by God himself. But if our own diocese won't support and sustain a family ministry office, how can we expect our

parishes to minister to the whole family system?

If we went to our pastors and parish councils and asked "What have you done for the church in the past 10 years?" we would probably hear: fixed the roof, put new windows on the school, paved the parking lot, bought a new organ or built a playground. If we asked, "What have you done for the family?" how long a pause would there be?

We need to ask ourselves whether we believe the church is people, not buildings. Are we willing to open ourselves to the mission of the church to evangelize and embrace the gospel message of Jesus?

Look for a moment at our attitudes, and at their effect on our families. Is it charity or a human right that basic needs for food, clothing and housing be met? If our church

doesn't accept artificial birth control, then why doesn't every parish have couples teaching natural family planning so that every couple can make an informed moral decision?

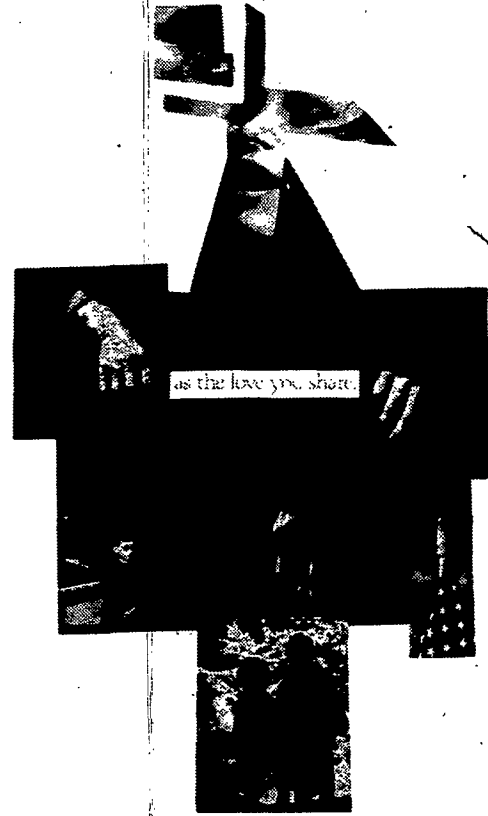
Do we include family in our decision-making process regarding church programs such as RCIA, religious education, liturgy, sacramental preparation? How about those who come back to our community from drug or alcohol rehabilitation or a term in jail. Will we allow them and their families full membership in church and society? Or will we isolate them and shut them out? Are we prepared to meet the needs of those who might become infected with AIDS?

These are among the behavioral changes we need to make in the 1990s. To begin, we need to ask God for his plan for our

lives — through prayer and by consulting church teaching, in discussions with our parish priests, spiritual directors, spouses. We need to listen to society, and if necessary, speak out on secular issues and laws not in our best interest. Finally, we need to minister to families not in crisis.

Ten years from now, we enter not only a new decade and century, but a new millennium — the third thousand years since Jesus' birth. How will we answer the call to ministry as a people? Will we say "yes" to our Father, or will we say "no"? The future of the church depends on us as a family.

*Denny and Shari Fischer are members of St. John the Evangelist Parish, Greece. Shari is regional coordinator of marriage preparation and family ministry for the Genesee Valley region.*



## Fractured life

Continued from page 17

needs a lifeline. Instead, the connection is broken, leaving the individual drowning in a pit of questions about one's spiritual, emotional and physical life. Is it a wonder so many Catholics leave the church during this personal crisis turned spiritual crisis?

I feel people's hurt when hearing such stories, but rejoice when they somehow discover a local support group, plans for a conference or a lay organization that offers support, networking and resources with which to turn the pain to growth.

Divorce always hurts. My divorce wasn't easy, and I suspect none is. The experience brings with it enough rejection for anyone to handle without more being dispensed by a community from which we expect compassion.

My church community was there for me.

I hope experiences like mine become more the rule than the exception.

But if you feel abandoned, don't despair. Look around for a parish- or diocesan-based support group. There you'll find people who will listen to your story, help you understand and accept your part in the death of your marriage, challenge you to grow and empower you as an individual.

Who knows, maybe you — like me — will discover talents you never believed you possessed. Maybe you — like me — will grow into a leadership position and see Christ in those you serve.

Maybe you — like me — will make life-moving decisions you never dreamed of a few years back. These are possibilities that a loving, supportive community can bring to life.

*Constance Hanser is a staff member of the North American Conference of Separated and Divorced Catholics.*

An Affair to Remember  
presented by

# Burgundy BASIN INN

Guaranteed Prices for 1990

SPECIAL WEDDING PACKAGES  
FOR FRIDAY NIGHT, SATURDAY AFTERNOON  
AND SUNDAY

CHOICE DATES STILL AVAILABLE  
FOR 1990-1991

1361 Marsh Rd., Pittsford  
**248-2660**

# Logos book store

## Your Wedding Day Checklist

- Wedding Invitations, Napkins, Accessories (Wide Choice - Quick Delivery)
- Marriage Union Candle (A symbol of your love to keep forever)
- Brides books & Album (To record this special day)
- Liturgy Program Covers (Beautiful Testimony to your day; \$5.50/c)
- Brides Bible or Prayerbook (To Keep always)
- Bridal Attendants Gifts (Fine Jewellery, Figurines, Cups, Plaques, Pictures, etc.)
- Large Assortment of Cards (That expresses appreciation to those who participated in your special day).

Let Logos help you with your plans.

THE STREET OF SHOPPES — 1600 Ridge Road West (716) 663-5085

"And now abideth faith, hope, love these three; but the greatest of these is love." - 1 Corinthians 13:13

OWNED AND OPERATED BY McQUAID  
JESUIT HIGH SCHOOL, LEMOYNE, AND ST.  
JOHN FISHER COLLEGE GRADUATES

"We were probably playing the music  
when you met that someone special"

# Beal's

## Rock & Roll Revue

PROFESSIONAL DISC JOCKEY SERVICE

**334-3815**  
Call For Our Brochure

"Today's Accessories for Today's Bride"

## Bridal Images by Evelyn

offers a unique selection of

- Favors
- Bridal Veils & Head Pieces
- Italian Doilies
- Precious Moments
- Gift Items
- Rentals

"For That Special Touch"

**256-1812**  
15 Henrietta St. • Located Within South Wedge Florist