

Pastoral

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roduction, four chapters and a conclusion. The first chapter focuses on the church's approach to the differences between men and women and the consequences of the sin of sexism. Chapter 2 talks about what equality means in terms of family life and treatment of single Catholics.

Chapters 3 and 4 treat the topics of equality of women in the church and in society.

Interspersed throughout the draft are candid remarks from women who participated in nationwide hearings on women's concerns held in preparation for the writing of the document. Among these are the following statements:

- "We are seen as 'mother' church — educating, nurturing, nursing, comforting, cooking and cleaning — but the 'father' church regulates and decides."

- "Women are banned from meeting the needs of the people of God. Christ ... was highly empowering of women — the institutional church is not."

- "As a black woman, I would never even consider participating in any group that was blatantly racist — yet, I maintain membership in a church that is blatantly sexist."

The draft calls on the church to undertake an examination of its own "practices, possessions, power structures and lifestyles" that prevent the advancement of women. "We cannot preach justice if we do not respond by providing women with just wages and employment opportunities in keeping with their gifts and talents," it says.

It urges each diocese to establish a commission for women to ensure women's rights and to develop a pastoral plan to address the issues raised in the bishops' pastoral letter.

The draft advocates use of "explicitly inclusive" or non-sexist language.

In a section on marriage, the draft refers to women's complaints of "male insensitivity."

"With little or no assistance from their husbands, some women who work outside the home may be forced to expend many

hours on household chores, child care and myriad other tasks from nursing to chauffeuring with minimal cooperation from the 'man of the house,'" it says.

The draft pastoral says women consistently request longer and better marriage-preparation programs, noting that society and the church present "a romantic ideal of marriage that does not correspond to reality."

It says consultation with Catholic women throughout the nation showed some are

deeply disturbed by church teaching on birth control. "The gap between the teaching of the church and the practice of many Catholic women is unquestionably a troublesome reality," the draft says.

People of good will who "cannot see how to guide the gift of sexuality along the way intended by God and taught by the Catholic Church" should be treated with "Christlike compassion" and provided "patient instruction," says the draft, which calls for increased emphasis on natural family planning.

Ordination

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the start that they couldn't please all women, and Bishops Inesch and Clark noted that pleasing people wasn't their intent.

"I would think there will be a group of women who will not accept what we have written because it does not go far enough — and a group also who will say we went too far," Bishop Inesch said. "Hopefully there will be a large middle group who say: 'Yes, what you're talking about is of importance to us and you've addressed our concerns,'" he added.

The proposed document should be seen "not as the end," but as the beginning of an ongoing dialogue with women, said Sister Frye.

Bishop Clark said he hoped U.S. Catholics would "take seriously our invitation to local churches to enter into conversations with women of our church."

It is especially important that men read the proposed pastoral, he said. "We call on the men of our church to think about their

patterns, points of view, habits, relationships, dispositions" with regard to women, Bishop Clark said. Positive changes "aren't going to be accomplished without the spirit of cooperation and commitment of all of us," he said.

Committee members hope readers "take seriously the fact that sexism is sin, and that all of us have a responsibility for challenging the attitudes, structures and behaviors that perpetuate sexism," said Sister Frye.

Bishop Inesch said the committee decided to include in the second draft a section on "Christian feminism" in order to say that "there is a feminism that is acceptable and Christian. Because a woman is a feminist doesn't mean she's anti-Catholic Church or anti-God."

After Pope John Paul II's 1988 letter on women, titled *Mulieris Dignitatem* ("The Dignity of Women"), criticized "radical feminists," Bishop Inesch said, he began to hear more and more people using the term "feminist" only in a pejorative manner, to describe "someone that was way out or off the wall."

RIJM plans support groups for families of incarcerated

ROCHESTER — Families of Incarcerated: Support and Services, a project sponsored by Rochester Interfaith Jail Ministry, is now offering two support groups.

Families Anonymous Support Team (FAST) is a group for families and friends of individuals incarcerated in the Monroe County Jail or the New York State Correctional System, or those otherwise involved with the criminal justice system. The group meets every other Monday evening at Westminster Presbyterian Church from 7:30-9 p.m.

The second group is Ex-offenders and Families, which deals with issues surrounding ex-offenders' re-entry into their families, communities and workplaces. The group meets every other Wednesday evening from 7:30-9 p.m. at the RESTART Counseling Center.

Call Bruce Colburn, 716/454-3683, for information on either group.

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GENERAL

Announcements 7

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Miscellaneous 9

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