

Moral vision

Continued from page 1

His followers to leave their homes and possessions and insisting on marriage's permanence. He commanded people to love their enemies and attacked those who equated observance of the Law with moral living.

At the same time that He made such challenging demands, Jesus noted that "those who come to the vineyard at the eleventh hour can be saved."

After His Ascension, the church began to journey on a road that took it into many different regions of morality, the handout explained.

For example, the sixth century was heavily influenced by Celtic monasticism, and saw the development of private confession and an emphasis on avoiding sin.

The Middle Ages saw the church develop a systematic approach to morality through the university system. St. Thomas Aquinas framed his moral teaching with the doctrines of creation and redemption, urging Christians to show concern for the way they act because they are made in God's image and likeness.

As the medieval era continued, moral minimalism arose — a concept that asked

people to simply do what they were absolutely required to do to avoid sin.

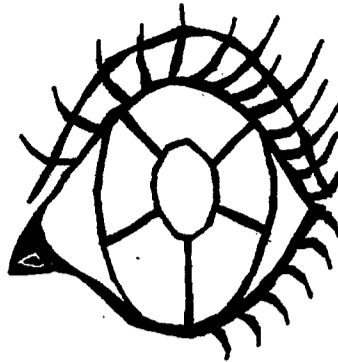
After the Protestant Reformation shook the church, moral theology textbooks were created in the wake of the Council of Trent and the Counter-Reformation. Moral theology was treated entirely separately from church dogma and Scripture, the handout explained.

In the 19th century, the church's moral theologians began reconnecting with the Old and New Testaments, emphasizing such themes as Christian discipleship, conversion and Christ's commandment to love.

And in the 1960s, Vatican II called for a renewal of moral theology, stressing its Biblical roots, the idea of a baptismal call, the primacy of charity, the mystery of Christ and the history of salvation, the handout noted.

Undergirding morality today is the church's emphasis on justice in the social order, an emphasis first outlined by Pope Leo XIII in the 19th century when he supported the right of workers to organize into labor unions.

Since then, the church has insisted



that "you can't separate personal and social morality," Deacon Driscoll commented.

In fact, such current issues as abortion, the death penalty, and euthanasia — all of which contain both personal and social elements — make up the topic of discussion for the second evening of his series Nov. 16, Deacon Driscoll said.

After finding out from participants what current issues intrigue them the first night, the deacon outlines the church's position and the ongoing debate surrounding such issues on the second evening.

He said, for example, that if participants choose capital punishment, he will explain how the church has generally accepted its existence. But he will add how in recent times, the church has come to view the death penalty negatively given its insistence on a consistent ethic of life, which holds all life sacred from womb to tomb.

The deacon added that an enormous number of Catholics disagrees with church leaders on capital punishment, and sees it as a positive way to deal with

crime. Hence, participants in his series will discuss the issue from every angle, exploring why so many Catholics find themselves at odds with their own church on capital punishment.

Conscience formation takes center stage on the third and final evening of the deacon's series Nov. 23. He may even refer to a handout for parents that outlines how to encourage a child to develop his or her conscience.

For example, the handout says: "Children need to ask the question 'why?' and get reasonable answers. Learning that things are done for a reason is important. 'Because I said so' does not help conscience formation."

Not everyone will leave the deacon's series praising the wisdom of the church's teachings, Bach and Deacon Driscoll explained. Yet, at least they will have the makings of a moral rudder with which they can sail life's often stormy ethical seas without always fearing sinking.

"There are a lot of folks who are not clear on what the church teaches on many issues," the deacon said. "(And) a lot of folks aren't clear on where they are."

EDITORS' NOTE: "Conscience In Conflict: How to Make Moral Choices" is published by St. Anthony Messenger Press, 1615 Republic St., Cincinnati, Ohio, 45210.

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Nat Hentoff to speak about consistent life ethic

BRIGHTON — Nat Hentoff, noted civil libertarian and an advocate of the consistent life ethic, will speak on Monday, Nov. 14, at 8 p.m. at Temple B'Rith Kodosh, 2131 Elmwood Ave.

A columnist for the *Village Voice* and *The Washington Post*, Hentoff's speech is titled, "But Speeches for Me — But Not for Free." His talk is sponsored by Feminists for Life of Western New York.

Hentoff originally came to prominence in the 1970s as associate editor of *Downbeat*, the well-known jazz magazine he left in 1987. He has since gone on to write several books, including one on New York City's Car-

dinal John O'Connor, and to contribute articles to such publications as *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *The New Republic* and *The New York Times*.

Hentoff, an atheist, has become known for arguing against legalized abortion, euthanasia, nuclear arms and the death penalty, as well as ardently defending the conservative provisions of the First Amendment. His speeches are virtually guaranteed to anger, provoke and challenge liberals and conservatives alike.

Tickets for Hentoff's speech are \$10, and can be purchased at the door. Students will be admitted free with I.D. Call 716/432-3467.

MISSION NEWS

NEWS IN BRIEF...

...On October 7, 1993, in

the Diocese of Agats in

Indonesia, Bishop

Alphonsus Sowada,

O.S.C., ordained his

first diocesan priest,

Father Bavo

Felndity; "this

brings us much joy

and hope for the

future."...A new local Religious

Community in Awasa, Ethiopia, now has 23 members

preparing for vows. As Sisters, they will teach in the

newly-established Secondary School. Bishop

Armando Gasparini, 80, writes: "I hope some will be

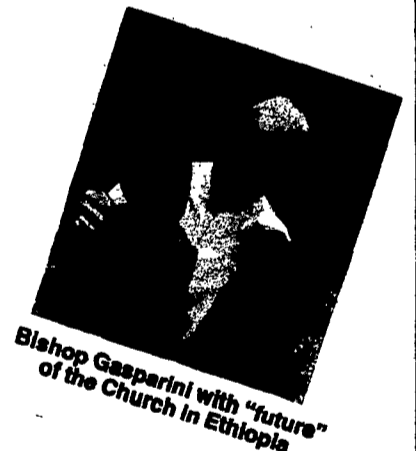
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Bishop Gasparini with "future" of the Church in Ethiopia

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