

WORLD & NATION

Vatican backs parents' priority in sex education

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — A new Vatican document urged parents to take the primary role in their children's sex education and oppose immoral and overly explicit programs in schools.

It said that in today's "sick civilization," parents have the main responsibility to make sure their children are protected from mistaken attitudes about abortion, contraception, premarital sex, homosexuality and masturbation.

The document, issued in Italian Dec. 20 and in English Jan. 22 by the Pontifical Council for the Family, was titled, "The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality."

It emphasized that sex education is best accomplished in the context of a good family relationship, as part of the formation of conscience. Parents should provide individual attention, make sure their teaching always has a moral dimension, present the virtue of chastity in a positive light and explain sexuality in a clear but delicate way, it said.

The document said that in general a child's pre-puberty years "should never be disturbed by unnecessary sexual information." But it said that because information about sex is easily picked up outside the home by youngsters, parents may sometimes need to correct chil-

dren's impressions in a limited but accurate way.

It said young children should learn that there are differences between men and women. Parents should be on guard against "exaggerated opposition" to what some define as stereotyped roles for males and females, it said.

It said puberty is generally the time when more explicit sexual education should be given. Sexuality should be explained in the context of marriage, it said.

Pubescent girls should be taught to welcome their physical and other changes, it said. While this is a good time to provide information about fertility cycles, detailed explanations about sexual union are not needed unless the girl specifically asks.

It said that in late adolescence, children should be introduced to fertility regulation in marriage and natural family planning methods. It said this approach contrasts with many programs today that try to promote contraception.

Parents should explain contraceptive birth control and sterilization only after their children reach adolescence, and make it clear that the practices are morally wrong, it said.

The document said abortion should also be explained in the context of the value of human life and the church's strong teaching against the practice.



CNS/Reuters

Pope John Paul II talks with Guatemalan President Alvaro Arzu after the pope's arrival in Guatemala City Feb. 5 (see story, Page 7). The pope called on the army, militias and rebels to "stop the thunder of war."

Masturbation should be presented as morally wrong, it said, although parents will recognize that due to adolescent immaturity it is not always a grave sin.

It said homosexuality should not be discussed before adolescence, unless there is a specific problem. Parents should teach that homosexual acts are wrong but that people with such tendencies should be treated with respect, dignity and sensitivity, avoiding unjust discrimination.

The document said parents must be extremely vigilant over school-sponsored and other sex education programs. It said parents should oppose such elements as:

- Presentation of erotic materials.
- Dramatic or mime representations of genital or erotic questions.
- Use of sexually explicit images or models.

• Requests to divulge personal or family information about sexuality.

• Oral or written exams about genital or erotic questions.

The document said a common abuse in sex education programs today is the graphic teaching of "genital relations" to young children, as part of "safe sex" campaigns against AIDS.

It said parents should oppose such programs as dangerous and immoral. It is an illusion to think that condoms are adequate protection against AIDS, it said.

Not only do parents have the right and responsibility to withdraw their children from abusive sex education programs, but they should insist that these programs be changed, the document said.

It encouraged parents to inform themselves about the content of such courses, and participate as much as possible.



Open Registration Begins
Monday, March 4
All Saints Catholic Jr. High School
170 Spencerport Road • Rochester
(716) 429-6010

MISSION NEWS

In 1896, Bishop Armido Gasparini of Awasa, Ethiopia, wrote to the Propagation of the Faith, telling of his dream, the formation

of a community of local sisters. In 1991, four young women took their first vows in that Community.

◆ In 1964, the first missionaries lived in Awasa. Today, Catholics in Awasa number 100,000. ◆ Day by Day... year after year... the Church in the Missions grows. ◆ Through the Propagation of the Faith, you are there today, helping support

that growth. Through a Propagation of the Faith Gift Annuity, you can be there to support future growth—and provide a guaranteed income for yourself for your lifetime. Please write to me for details.

Bishop William McCormack



Bishop Gasparini today at 82; he recently retired as Awasa's bishop

The Society for THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH
Most Rev. William J. McCormack, National Director
Propagation of the Faith, Dept. "C", 366 Fifth Ave., NY, NY 10001

□ Please send information on your Gift Annuity
For the Church in the Missions today, I enclose...

□ \$100 □ \$50 □ \$25 □ \$10 □ \$____(other)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please remember The Society for the Propagation of the Faith
when writing or changing your Will.

#344 2/8/96

HART MONUMENT COMPANY

Since 1856

Monuments, Markers
and Cemetery Lettering

2301 Dewey Avenue
(OPPOSITE HOLY SEPULCHRE CEMETERY)
(716) 865-6746

ARNDT FUNERAL HOME

Family Owned & Operated



RONALD JOHN ARNDT
ROBERT J. ARNDT
SHARI L. ARNDT

Funeral Directors

225-6350

1118 Long Pond Road
(South of Maiden Lane)



John & Joe Dady
invite you to join them for the

Dady Brothers'
Easter Ramble to Ireland
April 13-20, 1996

Coach tour featuring singing and music playing in the
Pubs. Providing an
intimate look at Ireland not normally
available to visitors.

Join us on our musical tour of Ireland

• 2 nights Limerick • 2 nights Dublin • 2 nights Killarney

Trip includes: Round-trip airfare from Rochester/ Boston(Logan)/Shannon, Six nights accommodations at Tourist First Class Hotels (all rooms with private bath and shower), Full Irish breakfast daily, Table d'hote dinner daily (except two nights in Dublin), Sightseeing for six days in BMIT luxury motorcoach, Plenty of shopping all over including Dublin and Shannon Airports, Professional BMIT driver/guide to escort entire tour, All local taxes, service charges and gratuity on included features (except to our driver/guide)

All prices double occupancy. \$1,299 \$100 deposit due immediately. Make checks payable to Brian Moore Int'l. Tours. Mail checks c/o John Dady, 355 Lakeview Park, Rochester, NY 14613.

For more information, call

John Dady at (716) 254-3704 or Joe Dady at (716) 254-4368