

PARENTING

Releases laud characters led by faith values

NEW YORK (CNS) — The following are home videocassette reviews from the U.S. Catholic Conference Office for Film and Broadcasting. Each videocassette is available on VHS format.



'A Different Path'

What makes a woman decide on becoming a nun is explored in visiting two religious communities, the socially active Sisters of St. Joseph at their shelter for battered women in Brooklyn, N.Y., and the contemplative Benedictine Sisters of Perpetual Adoration at their monastery in Clyde, Mo.

Directed by Marinella Nicolson for the Catholic Communication Campaign. Rewarding fare not only for family viewing but for use in parish discussion programs. (USCC Publishing Services, (800) 235-8722, \$29.95)

Frances Cabrini:

Mother of Immigrants

In examining the life and times of Mother Cabrini (1850-1917), the documentary focuses on the difficulties met by the foundress of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart in providing for the spiritual and physical needs of Italian immigrants at the turn of the century.

Directed by Father George Torok; a 28-minute program. Part of the "Catholic Life in America" video series, for all interested in our nation's Catholic heritage. (Hallel Communications, (800) 445-7477, \$24.50)

'VeggieTales: Dave and the Giant Pickle'

In the fifth episode of this zestful children's series featuring colorful, computer-animated vegetables, level-headed Bob the Tomato relates to madcap Larry the Cucumber the story of how Dave, a small Israelite asparagus, defeats Goliath, a giant Philistine pickle.

Produced by Phillip Vischer, it's a half-hour of lighthearted fun for preschoolers, delivering biblical values in witty, charming fashion, with enough creative originality to appeal to older members of the family. (World Records & Music, 3319 West End Ave., Suite 200, Nashville, TN 37203, \$14.95)

Church visit is a step back in time

My husband, Joe, my two children and I recently went to visit my parents in New Jersey. On Sunday morning we attended Mass at Holy Spirit Church, the parish that was the center of my family's life for many years. It was the church where I was baptized, received my first Communion and was confirmed.

As we pulled into the church parking lot, my son Bobby, never one who goes happily skipping into church, asked, "Oooh, what church do we have to go to now?"

"This is the church where Mommy went when I was a little girl," I answered him. He seemed to perk up slightly, "How old were you when you went to this church? Does it look the same?"

In some ways it did. The cry room, where our family of six children set up camp for quite a few years, hadn't changed a bit. The structure was the same but the church seemed brighter than when I was a child. One of my earliest childhood memories was walking down the church's aisle with my grandfather and watching the red glow of votive candles flickering in the dark sanctuary.

As Mass began, we quickly discovered that we were going to participate in the celebration of two sacraments that morning — a baby girl's baptism and 11 children receiving their first Eucharist. As the children sang a song, "These are the Signs of New Life," and formed a circle around the altar with the priest, I recalled my own first Communion day. It is the people — family, priests, religious women, teachers and parishioners — who nurture our faith through the years, but it's the church buildings — where the sacraments are celebrated and the rituals are performed — that often stir up the strongest memories.



family matters

By ELLEN MARX

Following the Liturgy of the Word, the infant was brought forward to be baptized. It's a deeply spiritual and emotional moment as an infant is welcomed into the church. The baby girl's body stiffened and her raised arms trembled as she was gently taken from her mother and held over the baptismal font. Finally, the predictable wail came from the depths of her soul as she felt the cold water pour over her head. But from that moment on, nothing else is predictable. Each individual's journey of faith is unique. Each person will come to know the Lord in their own way.

The pastor at Holy Spirit, Father Al Lampron, gave a moving homily. He said that later that week a group of seventh-graders was going to receive another sacrament, confirmation. Father Lampron told the story of one boy who said his mother told him that once he received his confirmation he wouldn't have to go to Mass anymore.

"Now imagine this: If you were part of a baseball team, would you go to all the practices, learn all the plays, get to know your teammates, buy a uniform and glove, show up for the first game and then never come to the ball park for the rest of the season?" The priest asked.

"Then," he continued, "how can we

possibly think of doing that with something as important as our faith?"

Unfortunately for some people, baptism or confirmation represents the end rather than the beginning of a new life in Christ. As parents and members of the faith community, we have an obligation to nourish the child in the faith. No parent or priest has all the answers, but participating with our children on their journey of faith is one of the best ways to lead by example. It can also help us to rediscover our own faith and to find some of those answers that we're all searching for.

Many young parents return to the church after the birth of their child. Baptism can be a time of grace not only for the infant but also for the parents. It's important to remember that it can be awkward and scary for people to step back into a church after an extended leave of absence. Perhaps they were hurt or disillusioned. A baptism is a wonderful opportunity for welcoming young families back into our churches and supporting them while they grow together as a family of faith.

As parents and godparents we make some serious promises on a child's baptism day. We will need the help, prayers and guidance of the entire faith community if we hope to honor them throughout our lives.

The new catechism reminds us of this connection to our larger community of believers: "Baptism makes us members of the Body of Christ ... Baptism incorporates us into the Church. From the baptismal font is born the one People of God of the New Covenant, which transcends all the natural or human limits of nations, cultures, races, and sexes. For by one spirit we were all baptized into one body."

Marx lives in Lawrence, N.J., with her husband and two children.

Catholic school graduates 'perfect' student

CHARLESTON, S.C. (CNS) — For the first time in its 80-year history, Bishop England High School has produced a perfect student.

Well, maybe Sarah Rackley just seems perfect. She volunteers weekends at the Atrium, a playroom for ill children at the Medical University of South Carolina; arranges entertainment for the elderly at a nursing home; writes for the school newspaper; is a member of the track team; and says she "tries to be a good Catholic." She also is an honors student who loves math.

Alice D. Bolchoz, director of guidance at the high school, calls the 17-year-old junior "humble" and says she is popular among her peers and her teachers. Sarah will be editor of the yearbook next year.

If all that is not enough to prove Sarah is perfect, then consider this: She scored a perfect 1600 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test earlier this academic year.

According to Nancy Ervin of Educational Testing Service in Princeton, N.J., whose client College Board conducts the SAT, perfect scores are rare indeed.

"In 1995, 32 students out of 1,067,993 scored 1600. Six of them were females," Ervin told *The New Catholic Miscellany*, newspaper of the Diocese of Charleston.

The usual number of perfect scores comes out to mere thousandths of 1 percent nationwide, and includes students who are taking the SAT for the second or third time. Sarah took the test only once.

The daughter of Mary and David Rackley, a medical technologist and a state fish-

eries biologist respectively, was a local media star because of her perfect SAT score.

"It's kind of amusing that everyone's paying attention to me. The SAT score is not the biggest accomplishment of my life," she said. "I'm more proud of how I do in school and my activities out of school."

Her friends are enjoying her fame, without any apparent jealousy or bitterness. Sarah said one of the many things she likes about Bishop England is that her peers are genuinely happy for her success.

Nicholas Theos, principal, said Sarah's accomplishment goes further than Bishop England. "It's something the whole community can be proud of, not just us."

To help celebrate 125 years of service to the community, Holy Sepulchre Cemetery's staff and friends would like to invite the public to the following events:

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| June 16 | 10 a.m. annual Field Mass, celebrated by Bishop Dennis W. Hickey inside All Saints Mausoleum, St. Bernard's Chapel. Co-sponsored by Holy Sepulchre Cemetery and Knights of St. John. |
| October 12 | 8:30 a.m. anniversary Mass celebrated by Bishop Matthew H. Clark, followed by open house. |
| October 13 | 1 p.m. annual tree tour, beginning at All Souls Chapel. |

For more information on any of these events, please call (716) 458-4110.



CELEBRATING
125 Years
1871-1996

Holy Sepulchre Cemetery
and Mausoleums

2461 Lake Avenue
Rochester, New York 14612

See what your
friends are up to.

Check out the
"On the Move"
page.

CatholicCourier

Faith Haven Invites You To...



"An Evening With Cal Thomas"
Pro-Life Conservative, Author, Columnist, TV host

Tuesday June 4th at 7:30 PM
Browncroft Community Church
2530 Browncroft Blvd.
Rochester, NY

Tickets: \$12 in advance \$15/door.

Tickets are available at:
Alpha & Omega, Logos, Lemstone

Funds raised at this event will help
Faith Haven Maternity Home continue to
save the lives of unborn babies and help
shape the future of their mothers.