

FEATURE

Speaker to help explore Catholic vs. secular choices

Young Adult

MONTHLY FEATURE



By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

PITTSFORD — If Catholics earn the ire of the secular world for adhering to their principles, that's a sign that the church is alive and well, according to Dr. Joseph G. Kelly, professor of religious studies at Nazareth College.

Particularly in an era when such practices as legalized abortion and physician-assisted suicide clash with basic Catholic teachings, the church's members will be called upon to uphold its tenets, Kelly said.

"If the church sticks to its point of view on the sacredness of human life from womb to tomb and gets picketed, I think that's great," Kelly said during an interview in his college office.

Kelly will be the guest speaker at The Catholic Leadership Forum's Last Friday Series luncheon Sept. 27. The event will be held at Mario's Restaurant, 2740 Monroe Ave., from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The CLF consists of young adult Catholic leaders from various parishes.

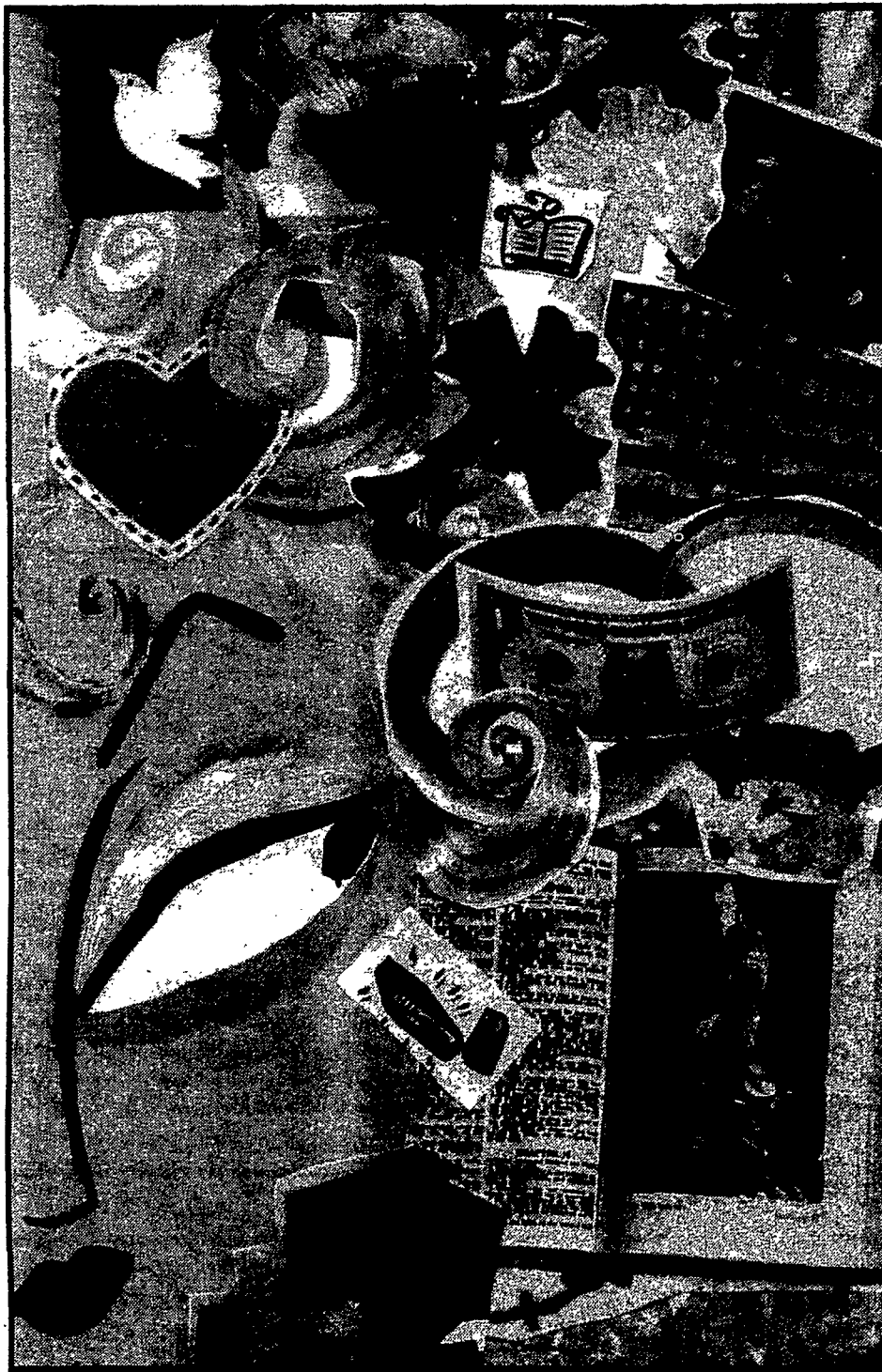
Kelly applauded the fact that the church often sticks to its moral guns, but expressed concern that many Catholics do not understand the reason the church goes to such trouble to defend itself in the first place. That's why his talk, titled "The Catholic World View and Modern Society," will explore the differences between how the church sees life and how various secular movements see it.

"Different world views define the good in different ways," Kelly said.

Young adult Catholics, in particular, Kelly said, are often confused on various issues because many were raised and taught the actions of Catholicism but not ingrained with the thought behind it. It's one thing to go to church and receive the sacraments, he said, but it's another to reflect on the meaning that lies behind such acts.

"We've taught religion in terms of indoctrination," Kelly said. "It's the why of Catholicity that we need to explore."

To illustrate his point, Kelly pointed out that when the church speaks out against physician-assisted suicide, it does so because it believes that human suffering has



Kim Parks/Catholic Courier

a purpose and that life is to be lived until its very end. Those who support physician-assisted suicide may mean well because they desire to alleviate suffering — a desire the church also shares, he stressed — but the church believes there is more to life than simply seeking the most comfortable existence possible.

"You cannot use any active means to end a person's life," Kelly said of the church's teaching on euthanasia. "We say that human suffering has value. That doesn't mean we're masochists. But in the end, suffering is part of human life."

In another example, Kelly noted that

young adults entering the marketplace will have to wrestle with moral dilemmas on the job. Take the case of an accountant who discovers that his firm's best client has been engaging in major illegal financial activity, Kelly posed. If his boss tells him to ignore the discrepancies because the firm needs the business, the accountant will have to wrestle with his conscience over the issue, Kelly said.

Most people who look at the issue from a secular point of view would tell the accountant to accept his superior's decision, Kelly opined. But Catholics are called to a higher standard of living, he continued.

If the accountant is Catholic, he would have to consider the cost of his dishonesty, the professor said. Such a price might be too high to pay for a good Catholic, Kelly noted, forcing an employee to choose between his job and his conscience.

"You might lose your job. You might be out of work," Kelly said. "But you can live with yourself because you tried to live as honestly as possible."

The CLF luncheon costs \$12 per person. Parking is free. Payment is due with a reservation no later than Sept. 23. Checks should be made to the Diocese of Rochester and mailed to Nancy Nash, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.

Would you be interested in attending a diocesanwide young adults convention? Karen Rinefierd, diocesan coordinator of young adult, adult and faith formation, wants to know.

Rinefierd has been discussing the possibility of such a convention over the last year with young adult leaders from throughout the diocese. It would be open to all diocesan Catholics, single or married, in their 20s and 30s, she said.

Young adult ministry is happening as a piecemeal activity throughout the diocese, she said. The convention would be a means of networking for young adults in each parish interested in enriching their church experience through young adult ministry.

Initially, Rinefierd and the leaders would like to hold regional meetings at which social, spiritual, educational and service activities could be planned. Rinefierd is looking for young adults in parishes and on campuses to serve on a planning committee to organize regional events, and who meet the following criteria:

- They have good people skills and ideas for events.
- They want to work with their peers to make the church a more welcoming place for young adults.
- They may already be a part of young adult ministry.
- They are already active in their parish, or interested in becoming active.

Committee members would commit to work for one year, Rinefierd said, and meetings would be held at times most convenient for committee members. The frequency of the meetings will depend on the number of events that the committee chooses to plan.

"It's at the pure blue-sky stage right now," Rinefierd said. "I want to make sure that there's really some interest."

To learn more about the convention, contact Rinefierd at 800/388-7177, or 716/328-4340, ext. 255.

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