

## CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

■ **SAT. SEP. 20** — Trucks day: Zoom, Zoom, Zoom! Hop aboard a school bus, fire engine, Wegmans delivery truck, police cruiser, power investigation truck, Kodak pallet truck and cab, engineer a paper truck to take home. Strong Museum, One Manhattan Sq., Rochester, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., \$7 adults, \$6 seniors, \$5 children 2-17; 585/263-2700.

■ **SAT. SEP. 27** — Interactive walking tour: "A Circle of Friends: An Abolitionist's Tour of Mt. Hope in 1860," presented by Friends of Mt. Hope Cemetery and RMSO Players, learn about Frederick Douglass' personal and public life in Rochester. North Gate House, Mt. Hope Cemetery, 791 Mt. Hope Ave., Rochester, 10 & 11:30 a.m., \$10 adults, \$5 children 3-18; 585/274-4352, ext. 342.

■ **SUN. SEP. 28** — Mushroom fun: Cumming Nature Center, 6472 Guick Rd., Naples, learn about the world of fungi & try tasty mushroom treats; noon-4 p.m., guided walk 1 p.m., \$3 donation; 585/374-6160.

■ **WED. OCT. 1** — Registration deadline: learn to ice skate: Genesee Valley Park Ice Arena, 131 Elmwood Ave., Rochester, Sundays Oct. 5-Nov. 9, 3 p.m.; \$80; 585/428-7888.

■ **OCT. 4, 5** — Exhibit opening: Alice's Wonderland "Mad Tea Party," Strong Museum, One Manhattan Sq., Rochester; meet Alice and other favorite characters, make a Mad Hatter hat, sample tea party snacks; Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sun. noon-5 p.m., \$7 adults, \$6 seniors, \$5 ages 2-17; 585/263-2702.

# Chastity and your children

## Couple offers advice on sharing teachings

Rob Cullivan/Catholic Courier

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This is the seventh, and final, article in a series on raising your children in the faith.

Sex is not a four-letter word. But if you treat sex as if it is, your children won't be able to comprehend the church's sexual teachings, according to Anne Paluskiewicz, a former sexuality educator.

Currently a home economics teacher at Our Lady of Mercy High School in Brighton, Paluskiewicz served as the Diocese of Rochester's associate director of youth ministry for adolescent and parent sexuality education from 1985-92. During an interview in her Greece home, Paluskiewicz emphasized the role parents play in modeling a healthy sexuality for children.

"Don't use crude, sexualized language," said Paluskiewicz, who is raising two children with her husband, Deacon David Paluskiewicz of St. Columba/St. Patrick Parish in Caledonia. She urged Catholic parents to avoid using derisive terms or nicknames for body organs, homosexuals and the sex act itself.

"If their kids are using (a crude term), explain what it means and redirect them," she said.

Her husband added that when parents talk to their children about sex, they need to emphasize that the church wants its members to see each other as whole persons, not sex objects. One way for fathers to model such a belief is to treat their wives with gentleness and compassion, he



Karin von Voigtlander/Catholic Courier

said.

"The father's job is important because the son wants to be like the father, and the daughter wants to marry someone like the father," he said. Gentle treatment also teaches boys and girls to not accept, or inflict, abuse later on in life, he said.

His wife also pointed out that research shows mothers profoundly influence their children's decisions to delay sex, and she urged parents to help children preserve their natural innocence for as long as possible. For example, she said, parents could emphasize group dates and "good clean fun" for their teenage offspring so that they aren't placed in situations that can lead to having sex at too young an age.

She added that spouses need to model married love, and shouldn't be afraid to kiss and hug in front of

## Parenting

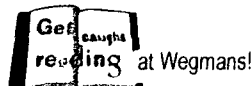
their children, and tell each other they love one another.

Paluskiewicz said as children grow, they will have questions that will need to be answered about their changing bodies and sex. Although she encouraged parents to answer such questions verbally, she added that Christian bookstores often stock volumes on sexuality that a parent can give a child if the parent feels uncomfortable answering sexual questions.

Paluskiewicz noted that parents also need to know where they stand on the church's sexuality teachings. If they question some of them, parents can nonetheless give children the chance to explore the teachings for themselves by providing them copies of such documents as *Humanae Vitae*, Pope Paul VI's landmark 1968 encyclical on married love and procreation, which reinforced church teaching that the use of artificial birth control is morally wrong.

Paluskiewicz acknowledged that in a sexually charged culture, it's difficult to sell adolescents on the value of abstinence. However, she added, parents can stress many positive factors about chastity, including the fact that it keeps young people free from sexually transmitted diseases and the temptation to have abortions. Most importantly, she noted, chastity allows young people to learn the true meaning of sex.

"The church believes it is the symbol of married love," Paluskiewicz said.



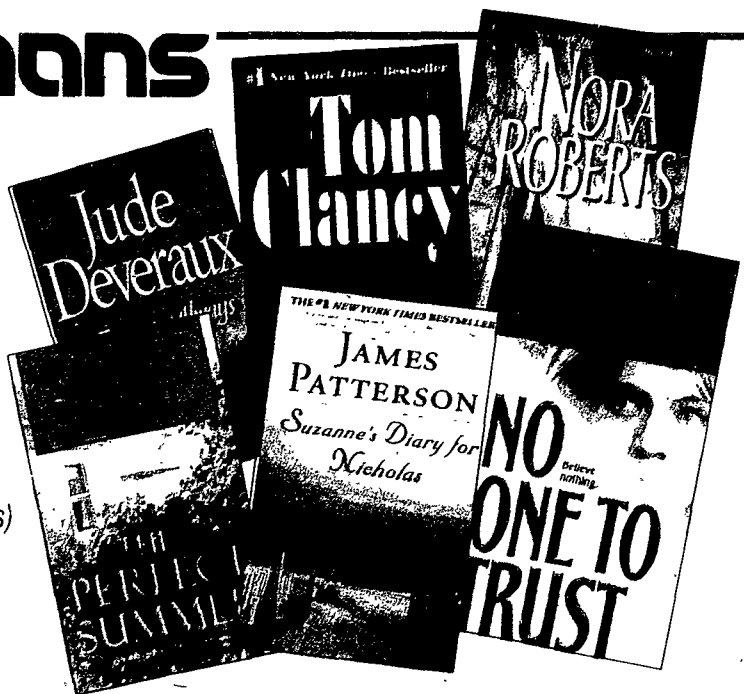
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