

What will adults do when they grow up?

I'm still not sure what I want to do when I grow up and neither are my friends. Some older generations may accuse Gen-Xers of flitting around from job to job, incapable of commitment, uninterested in hard work. But I think it has more to do with needing to love what we do and with finding meaning in our work. This is especially true for young women.

Last year, the U.S. bishops' Committee on Women in Society and in the Church conducted focus groups in a cross-section of archdioceses and dioceses around the country. The common responses to questions regarding the relationship of faith, work and family don't surprise me.

First, the report asserted that many women have found "workable, creative ways to integrate family, work and spirituality." At times they struggle in balancing the three, but find it easier when they resist the temptation to compartmentalize these priorities.

Moreover, young women successfully bring their spirituality, religious beliefs and values to their workplace and family. Both become places of evangelization.

Second, women need their work to be valuable and fulfilling. They are satisfied when they feel as



Therese J. Borchard

Our Turn

though they are contributing their gifts and skills to the world. They want to make a difference.

Nowhere was this more obvious than at my 10-year college reunion. Conversations at the tables in the social hall revolved around family and career. After showing off pictures of weddings and children, we moved on to questions of work or other responsibilities (like volunteering) that fulfilled us when the children were asleep or throwing tantrums.

We were all still trying to figure out what we wanted to be when we grew up.

I was shocked to learn that the biggest hippy in our class, dressed right out of the '70s, obtained her MBA and was working for IBM. Another friend, who had had no doubts where she was headed — first toward grad school to get her doctorate in biology, and

then to the lab and the classroom to research and teach — dropped out the first year, traveled to Nepal and was changed forever. Now she wants to explore new places for a living and is figuring out how to get paid for that job.

Perhaps peculiar to our generation, young adults haven't stopped asking themselves how they best can contribute to society. By the time we attend our 30th college reunion, we may well have been in school as many hours as in the office. Since we must be fulfilled and satisfied by what we do outside and inside the home, it makes sense that one set track just won't do. As we evolve, our careers evolve with us.

Sometimes I wish I could be content with one job responsibility for the rest of my life. Then I wouldn't have to ask myself so many questions and walk around in seemingly endless circles, but I might feel cheated out of becoming all that I could be and giving all I could give.

And that makes me wonder: If everyone generously shared his or her skills and gifts with the world, would any of us really have to grow up?

Therese J. Borchard is a columnist for Catholic News Service.

Saddened by loss of Fr. Shamon

To the editor:

It saddened my heart to hear that our beloved Father Shamon had died.

My hometown is Avon and each year I go north to see family and friends. While there a friend and I always drove to Auburn to visit Father Shamon including this past August. Because of his illness we had the feeling it might be our last visit. The greatest gift he gave us was his blessing.

Our memories of Father will remain with us always. We shared the excitement he felt toward Tyburn Academy. We poured our hearts out to him and we enjoyed laughter.

Father Shamon was so dear to us and he will be missed terribly.

A niece in Avon mails me copies of the *Catholic Courier* and I have clipped and saved Father's articles for the past three years. What a treasure!

Mary T. Hammonds
Duck Pond Road
Evergreen, N.C.

Statement is illogical

To the editor:

Mark Scibilia-Carver's recent letter claimed that soldiers are abortionists. In order for that illogical

statement to be true, soldiers would be targeting pregnant women instead of enemy soldiers.

In Mr. Carver's world no defense is acceptable so we should all wait unarmed until the terrorists destroy us.

According to Mr. Carver's logic automobile drivers could be considered abortionists as they sometimes kill pregnant women. So do suicide bombers. So do doctors. So do dictators.

Laying a guilt trip on our service men and women is not only wrong but it encourages our enemy, the terrorists, to continue their mindless killing.

The number of people killed in abortion clinics far outnumbered those killed in armed conflict. Therefore, we should heed Mother Teresa's advice and do all we can to stop abortion.

Then perhaps the current violence caused by the sin of abortion will lessen and lead to world peace.

Robert Bart
Ithaca

Work to do

To the editor:

Mark Scibilia-Carver's letter (*Catholic Courier*, Dec. 11: "Calls story 'illiterate'") is most interesting. His description of "soldiers," apparently military personnel, as killers and abortionists is not original.

The truth is that most combat veterans would have preferred to beat their swords into plowshares. Throughout history they have become accomplished at humanitarian works.

Perhaps the military has not finished its mission in that respect.

Richard L. Reinhardt
Beach Avenue
Rochester

Are schools our priority?

To the editor:

The letter of December 18 entitled "Gift of faith worth price" struck a response in me. One is a personal response as my granddaughter attends St. Michael's in Penn Yan, and I've been

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©2004 Rochester Catholic Press Assn
1136 Buffalo Road
P.O. Box 24379
Rochester, NY 14624

585/529-9530
800/600-3628 outside Rochester
<http://www.catholiccourier.com>
e-mail: info@catholiccourier.com

President
Bishop Matthew H. Clark
General Manager/Editor
Karen M. Franz
kfranz@catholiccourier.com

Editorial Department

Assistant Editor
Jennifer Ficaglia
jficaglia@catholiccourier.com

Staff Writers
Rob Cullivan
rcullivan@catholiccourier.com

Mike Latona
mlatona@catholiccourier.com

Jennifer M. Burke
jburke@catholiccourier.com

Staff Photographer
Mike Crupi
mcrupi@catholiccourier.com

Editorial Assistant

Louis Litzenberger
llitzenberger@catholiccourier.com

Business Department

Office Manager
Mary DiPonzio
mdiponzio@catholiccourier.com

Administrative Assistant
Arlene S. Gall
agall@catholiccourier.com

Circulation Manager
Donna Stubbings
dstubbings@catholiccourier.com

Graphics Department

Graphics Manager
Kim Parks
kparks@catholiccourier.com

Graphic Artist
Linda Jeanne Rivers
lrivers@catholiccourier.com

Advertising Department
Advertising Director
Daniel M. Zollo
dzollo@catholiccourier.com

Display Advertising Executives
Jerry Rivers
jrivers@catholiccourier.com

Donald P. Wilson
dwilson@catholiccourier.com