

HEALING

Continued from page B1

Academy of Medicine, 1441 East Ave. The session is more clinically oriented and geared toward health professionals. Father Hewes said this component is vital because "therapists don't know what to do with this issue," explaining that abortion may end up getting side-stepped during therapy sessions if professionals have a pro-abortion stance or are simply uncomfortable with the subject.

Along with Theresa Burke's presentations, her husband — a licensed social worker and executive director of Project Rachel — will speak Nov. 4-5 about the effects of abortion on men.

"Often when folks think of post-abortion healing, they think of the women. Some folks don't recognize that men are suffering, too," Kevin Burke remarked. He said that unaddressed suffering can lead men to extreme anger, problems in the workplace, alcohol and drug abuse, extramarital affairs and addiction to pornography.

MINISTRY EXPANDS

Rachel's Vineyard retreats are an outgrowth of Project Rachel, which was founded in the Milwaukee Archdiocese in 1984 by Victoria Thorn.

The project involves a network of specially trained therapists, clergy and spiritual directors and offers one-on-one counseling for women who have had abortions, as well as for men. This ecumenical ministry has spread to nearly all 50 states and several countries.

Retreats incorporate Project Rachel into a group setting, and are attended by people grieving losses due not only to abortion, but also from giving babies up for adoption as well as miscarriages. The retreats were launched in the Rochester Diocese in 2000, four years after Project Rachel was established here. The next local Rachel's Vineyard retreat is due to take place Dec. 3-5 (it will be held at an undisclosed location to protect the confidentiality of those attending.) Approximately 350 retreats are held annually in the U.S. and other countries.

"Rachel's Vineyard is a beautiful integration of spirituality and psychology," said Theresa Burke, who wrote the retreat manual and does many retreat-team trainings. She has also written the book *Forbidden Grief: The Unspoken Pain of Abortion* (Acorn Books, 2002), with David C. Reardon.

The Burkes, residents of King of Prussia, Pa., have been married 19 years and have five children, ages 5-18. Father Hewes said that Theresa Burke's expertise in psychology,

along with her tireless efforts, make her an invaluable figure in the Project Rachel movement.

"I think people (in Rochester) will be enthralled to hear her," Father Hewes said.

LOCAL EFFORT IS SOLID

The Burkes' early November appearances will mark their first trip to the Rochester Diocese. However, Theresa Burke said she's familiar with several people connected with local Project Rachel efforts — particularly Father Hewes, who has served as Project Rachel's diocesan director since its local inception eight years ago. He is also the pastor of St. John the Evangelist/St. Patrick in Clyde and Savannah, Wayne County.

"Father Jim is fantastic," Theresa Burke said, further noting that Rochester ranks high with its level of effort toward Project Rachel: "They have a good program and they're continually working on it."

The Burkes' trip to Rochester is being sponsored by Project Rachel in conjunction with diocesan Catholic Charities. Father Hewes said Project Rachel enjoys a strong partnership with Catholic Charities' Jann Armantrout, diocesan life-issues coordinator, and that the project also benefits from the diocesan Thanks Giving Appeal and Partners in Faith campaign.

"We couldn't exist without Jann

and the diocesan support," Father Hewes said. He also noted that St. Anne Parish, host for the Nov. 4 event, designated 5 percent of its Partners in Faith allotment to Project Rachel and that the parish's Knights of Columbus council is a consistent sponsor as well.

Father Hewes said approximately 150 people are trained to provide one-on-one support and referrals through Rochester's Project Rachel. Although he estimates that the project serves 35 women per year, he said the target group — women who have had abortions — is a tough one to reach and that Project Rachel's effort need to be continually publicized.

He further stated that because Rochester's Project Rachel is spearheaded by Catholics, it's important for women served by the project to know they are welcomed. Otherwise, Father Hewes remarked, "They'll think, 'I can't talk in the pro-life community or in the church; I might feel condemnation.'"

EDITORS' NOTE: For information about the Rachel's Vineyard retreat Dec. 3-5, or to contact Project Rachel, call the confidential toll-free number, 888/972-2435; e-mail fhewes@dor.org; or visit www.ggw.org/ProjectRachel. For details about Theresa and Kevin Burke's visit to Rochester, call 585/328-3228, ext. 1323.

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