

voices voices voices



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CONTENTS:

- *Words and Worship* — page 1
- *Inside Voices* — 2
- *Statement on Feminism, Language and Liturgy* — 4
- *'Altar Girls' Q & A* — 5
- *Changing the Way We Talk About EUTHANASIA* — 10
- *Cardinal O'Connor: "The War Against Life Itself"* — 13
- *Bishop Myers: "To Reach Full Knowledge of Truth"* — 14
- *Memorials* — 18
- *Other Voices* — 19
- *Book Reviews* — 22
- *Novena for the Unborn* — 24

Liturgy Conflict Continues —

Words and Worship

THE LONG WAIT for the English translation of the Catechism for the Catholic Church continues, as *Voices* goes to press. The proposed English version done by translators appointed by Boston's Cardinal Law was originally scheduled to appear last December 8, when the original French version and some other translations were released. But it was seriously flawed by feminist ("inclusive") language and related errors, and the project has been further delayed. While the sixteen co-publishers of the Catechism still solicit pre-publication orders, a rash of confusing and contradictory media reports have intensified apprehension about the outcome of this and other English translations of biblical and liturgical texts now in preparation or awaiting Vatican approval.

Two years ago the U.S. bishops approved several Scripture translations for liturgical use. Feminist-language translations of the New American Bible (NAB), the version most used for readings at Mass, and the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) received Vatican approval almost instantly, as expected.

Also in November, 1990, the bishops published "*Criteria for the Evaluation of Inclusive Language Translations of Scriptural Texts Proposed for Liturgical Use.*" Although viewed by some bishops primarily as 'damage control' in response to the growing problem of unauthorized changes in liturgical texts made by local liturgists, the Criteria nevertheless accepted in principle the feminist claim that standard English usage is "sexist" or "exclusive". The problem of unauthorized changes continues unabated, however. Frequently "white-out" is used to cover offending words the official texts used in parishes, with "corrections" penned in or, even more frequently, feminist usage is simply improvised on the spot.

The Lectionary prepared by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) based on the NAB and approved by the U.S. bishops last year is still awaiting Vatican approval. The Lectionary (Scripture readings for Mass) is part of the massive revision of the Roman Missal, which consists of the

Continued on page 3

Judah rejoiced for the priests... Nehemiah 12:44

Betrayal of the basic moral principles of the Christian faith deeply wounds the Church and causes grief to all believers. When such betrayals involve the Catholic priesthood, the wound is even greater. Continual revelations of the sexual "misconduct" of priests causes shock, outrage and grief. We are scandalized and ashamed when we learn of priests who abuse their office to lead people astray, and we are further scandalized and ashamed when their destructive actions are not corrected. It is almost unbearable to see the faith and trust of children being systematically destroyed. The spiritual seduction of false teaching is awful, but the most horrible form of physical and psychological abuse surely must be homosexual seduction. Faithful Catholics properly recoil in horror at these incidents — and of late, we almost dread opening our newspapers, since a new sexual scandal involving a priest (or even a bishop) seems to be revealed nearly every week.

We would be naive, however, to believe that those who hate the Church most are not making use of these stories for the purpose of destroying the priesthood itself. As we know, priesthood and celibacy are under attack not only from those outside the Church who may not understand it, but also by those within the Church who regard the celibate male priesthood as a dangerous remnant of an intrinsically oppressive, patriarchal religion; a hierarchical institution whose "evil structure" must be destroyed.

The portrayal of sexually twisted Catholic clerics is a classic pornographic theme: the utter moral corruption and hypocrisy of those who claim to be particularly religious. The demonic within the human heart enjoys unholy glee when the best among us is shown to be worse than most of us — when the sacred is profaned. *Corruptio optima pessima* — the corruption of the best is the worst. Nothing could convey profound moral corruption more acutely than a priest, consecrated to the true, the good and the holy, defiling an innocent child in the cruelest and most degrading way imaginable.

The relish with which the accounts of these scandals are transmitted in the media evidences deep hostility to the Catholic Church and to her priesthood. The accounts usually imply that the priest child-abuser is psychologically crippled by sexual repression and the rigidities of Catholic faith and practice — especially celibacy. Misogyny, hatred of women, is implicit in

this picture of abusive priests. Vowed celibacy, according to this view, is the source of dark and sinister sexual impulses which erupt in sexual abuse: if not pederasty, then seduction and abandonment of young women. These accounts *never* suggest that aberrant sexual behavior is influenced by the sexual revolution, feminism, liberationism and related ideologies that have pervaded seminary training in recent years.

The practice of other forms of homosexuality by Catholic clergy does not arouse similar media outrage, however. No negative editorializing attends news of a priest dying of AIDS. Catholic school children are taken to view the AIDS quilt on field trips, and "AIDS awareness" is considered a necessary part of a Catholic school-child's education by many people who register horror at the pederasty scandals. Catholic adolescents have been taught to regard homosexuality as an acceptably loving "life-style", chastity as a hopelessly old-fashioned alternative to the "sexually active" norm, and celibacy as a diseased repression of healthy sexual impulses. It is not surprising that among the most destructive feminist reformers within the Church are avowed homosexuals.

The climate of suspicion of and contempt for the Catholic faith these scandals have caused affects all Catholics — priests most of all. All priests are suspect. Any priest knows that he

could be falsely accused at any time by almost anyone because of the actions of a handful of men. The publicity surrounding sexual scandals involving Catholic clergy has had a 'sensitizing' effect comparable to that of "sexual harassment", which intruded on society's consciousness when Justice Clarence Thomas was accused by Anita Hill. Both pederasty and sexual harassment target

only men as victimizers. Both fit well within the attitudes towards men of feminist fundamentalists. And destruction of the Catholic priesthood is, in fact, a principal objective of feminist reformers.

We should never be passive in the face of grave moral evil — whether the sin is pederasty, homosexual activity, calumny against good priests, or lies about the Catholic Church. When even a few priests are guilty of wicked acts it demoralizes the countless faithful priests who have sacrificed so much for all of us, and whose gift to the Church of celibacy is almost universally sneered at. We should defend these men, surround them with our prayers, let them know it is a privilege to call them 'father' — and rejoice for our faithful priests.

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† Gertrude McNerney

President, WFF—Toledo

*"Let her own works praise
her in the gates."*

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Lectionary and the Sacramentary, or liturgical prayers.

Still another troublesome Scripture revision is the radically "inclusivist" new version of the Grail Psalter, the translation of the Psalms commonly used by religious orders in praying the Divine Office. This new Psalter has been rejected once as being too extreme; nevertheless, it is being used in some religious communities without the authorization of the Holy See.

COMPOUNDING THE CONFUSION over the revised translations is the recurrent rumor that the request of some English-speaking bishops' conferences for official approval of "altar girls" is about to be granted. Liturgy committees in many dioceses are aggressively promoting the practice of using vested girls and women as "altar servers", and pastors and people are being told that the new Code of Canon Law (1983) permits this practice since it does not expressly forbid it, and that if women are allowed to serve as lectors or extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist, there is no reason why they should not serve as acolytes. Some bishops now permit girl altar servers in the expectation that eventually the Vatican will cave in to pressure to "open all ministries not requiring ordination" to women. (A few bishops have openly stated their support for women's ordination.) But many bishops and priests recognize the "altar girl" issue as an important part of the feminist assault on the priesthood, and continue to forbid the practice. Still, there is concern that the Holy See's silence on the matter is being widely (if falsely) interpreted as implying consent.

The Holy See's 1980 document on the liturgy, *Inaestimabile Donum*, says in the Forward, "The faithful have a right to a true Liturgy, which means the Liturgy desired and laid down by the Church." This document was written to reaffirm "all the documents concerning the Eucharist promulgated since the Second Vatican Council and still in force." It explicitly cites as abuses "the use of private texts, the proliferation of unapproved Eucharistic Prayers, the manipulation of the liturgical texts for social and political ends," which lead to "falsification of the Catholic liturgy." *Inaestimabile Donum* also repeats the 1970 Liturgical Instruction about roles for women. It says, "Women are not... permitted to act as altar servers" [¶18]. (The article on page 5, "Why Can't Girls and Women be Altar Servers — Questions and Answers" is one of three in WFF's publication, *On Female Altar Servers*. To order a copy, see Order Form in this issue.)

IN APRIL, 1989, Women for Faith and Family and two organizations of women religious, the Consortium Perfectæ Caritatis and the Forum of Major Superiors of Women of the Institute on Religious Life, issued a statement of concern about feminist ideological influence on liturgical practices and revised translations. This *Statement on Feminism, Language and Liturgy* was sent to all bishops, to Vatican officials and to the press at that time. Because the problems addressed in this *Statement* persist, we reprint it in this issue, and grant permis-

sion to reproduce it.

Abuses of the liturgy are, in fact, increasing rather than decreasing after years of permissiveness and perceived indecision on the part of Church authorities. Liturgical "experts" have too often deliberately distorted the clear instructions of the Holy See in order to achieve their reforms.

MANY VOICES READERS have expressed deep concern (and sometimes great frustration) about the current confusion surrounding the worship of the Church, and have asked what can be done to encourage bishops to resist the intensified pressure for new Scripture revisions and liturgical change and to re-evaluate and amend, when necessary, changes reflecting feminist ideological bias that have been already initiated and which were too hastily approved. WFF has received an alarming number of questions about whether or not a liturgy which changes readings, the Creed or the Eucharistic prayer is valid; whether a Catholic is obliged to participate in an improvised liturgy.

Priests and laity alike are seriously concerned that the sweeping liturgical changes proposed by ICEL will further erode and compromise authentically Catholic worship.

BISHOPS, WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE for the worship of the Church in their dioceses, need to be made aware of the genuine suffering that goes on in the parishes because of defective liturgies. They should hear from priests who are often under pressure to make unauthorized changes in the Mass. They should hear from parents whose children's faith is in jeopardy from bad liturgies, as well as from defective religious instruction. And they should be encouraged to take action to protect the right of Catholics to correct worship. The mission of the Church — to bring salvation through Jesus Christ into all the world —

Continued on page 23

Addresses

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("Your Eminence:")

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STATEMENT ON FEMINISM, LANGUAGE AND LITURGY

BECAUSE WE ARE Catholic women who accept and affirm all the teachings of the Catholic Church, not only as true propositions but as the norms of our thought and life;

Because we are aware of the influence within the Church and in society of alien ideologies which attack the fundamental assumptions of Christianity about human life and of the relationship of human beings with their Creator, and which effectively undermine the Catholic Church;

Because we understand our responsibility as Catholics and as women to witness to the truth which the Catholic Church teaches and our willing and free acceptance of her just and true authority vested in the Magisterium of the Church, particularly in Christ's vicar, the Pope, and Bishops in union with him, we believe it our duty to make the following statement:

1. In our time and culture, ideological feminism, which denies the fundamental psychic and spiritual distinctiveness of the sexes and which devalues motherhood and the nurturing role of women in the family and in society, is often misrepresented as expressing the collective belief of women. As women, we are particularly concerned about the pervasive influence and the destructive effects on the Church, on families and on society of this "feminism."

2. As Catholics who have been formed, inspired and sustained by the Sacraments of the Church through participation in the liturgy, the Church's central action and principal means of transmission of the Catholic faith, we are strongly aware of the power of symbol in human consciousness. We therefore deplore attempts to distort and transform language and liturgy, both of which make such potent symbolic impressions on the human mind, to conform to a particular contemporary ideological agenda at odds with Catholic belief and practice.

3. We reaffirm our belief in the divine origin of the Church and that the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, which is often criticized in our time as insufficiently egalitarian, was intentionally established by Christ, and that He selected the Apostles and Peter, among them, as head, giving them and their legitimate successors magisterial authority to guide His Church until He comes again.

4. We believe that Jesus Christ, the Word of God made man, was limited and restricted by His culture only in that which, apart from sin, limits man. But we also believe that He came in a time and to a people chosen by God. Thus, all that Jesus took up from His culture by His teaching or action is normative for every culture of every time and place. We reject the notion that Jesus Christ, God Incarnate, was limited or restricted in the fulfillment of the Mission entrusted to Him by the Father by the cultural context of His presence on Earth, His life as a Jew of the first third of the first century, or by any other factor.

5. Accordingly, we also reaffirm the constant teaching of the Catholic Church that ordained priesthood is not a "right" accorded to any member of the Church, but a state of life and a

service to which, by Christ's will, only men, not women, may be called.

6. Following the teachings and example of Christ and the constant tradition of the Catholic Church, and mindful of its full significance, we consider it a privilege to call God 'Our Father,' a name which reflects not only the relationship between human beings and their Creator, but which also provides a powerful symbolic model for men of the steadfast love, faithfulness, justice, mercy, wisdom and objectivity which are ideal components of human fatherhood vital to women, to families and to the social order. Contemporary efforts to impute a 'feminine' aspect to the Godhead, by retrojection of alien and anachronistic notions into the body of Sacred Scripture, by forcibly changing the language used to refer to God, by deliberate reversion to pagan notions of deity, or by any other means, we regard as dangerously misguided and perverse.

7. Therefore we reject all attempts to impose ideologically motivated innovations on the liturgy of the Church or changes in official lectionaries or sacramentaries or catechisms in the name of 'justice' to women. We deplore the deliberate manipulation of liturgical actions, signs and symbols and the politicization of both liturgy and language which effectively impede both receiving and transmitting the Catholic faith and harm the unity of the Church.

8. For these reasons, we oppose the systematic elimination from Scripture translations, liturgical texts, hymns, homilies and general usage of 'man' as a generic. The claim that the language is "sexist" and that such changes are required as a sensitive pastoral response to women collectively is false. We believe that the symbolic effect of mandating such changes in the language and practice of the Catholic Church is negative and confusing, effectively undermining the authority of the Church and her hierarchy.

9. We also oppose changing the constant practice of the Church in such liturgical matters as acolytes or 'altar servers' and homilists, and repudiate the increasingly frequent practice of women saying parts of the Eucharistic Prayer with the priest or in his place or performing other liturgical functions reserved to ordained men.

10. We are grateful for the profound contribution of Pope John Paul II to our understanding of the meaning of human life and of the fundamental relationship of human beings with one another and with God through the many theological works he has given the Church during his pontificate, including his Apostolic Letter, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, which help to deepen our understanding of the centrality of the role of Christian women to the Church's evangelical mission. Constantly seeking the aid of the Holy Spirit, and in solidarity with the Pope, the Bishops in union with him, and with the universal Church, we pledge to respond to our Christian vocation with wisdom, with love and responsibility.

“Why Can’t Girls and Women be Altar Servers?”

THERE IS MUCH CONFUSION surrounding the liturgical ministry of women. Rumors that the Vatican will approve “altar girls” have been circulating since 1987. There is also much misinformation, which leads to further confusion, hurt feelings, divisions within parishes, and other problems. Many people are justifiably concerned that a novel liturgical practice is being introduced in their parishes without approval of the Universal Church. Some don’t see the point of all the fuss.

Following are some of the questions we have received; we hope that the answers may help to clarify the issues involved, and promote understanding of some of the reasons for the continued prohibition of girls and women from serving in the role of acolyte, as well as the reason why we should be concerned about observing the Church’s laws and discipline.

Q: “*In my parish we have been told that altar girls are now officially permitted. Is this true?*”

A: No. The directive covering the liturgical ministry of women is given in the official liturgical instruction *Inaestimabile Donum* (no. 18). It says:

There are various roles that women can perform in the liturgical assembly: these include reading the word of God and proclaiming the intentions of the prayer of the faithful. Women are not however permitted to act as altar servers.

These instructions are binding, and in full force and effect. Furthermore, the 1983 Code of Canon Law states

Since he must protect the unity of the universal Church, the bishop is bound to promote the common discipline of the whole Church and therefore to urge the observance of all ecclesiastical laws. *Canon 392#1*

He is to be watchful lest abuses creep into ecclesiastical discipline, especially concerning the ministry of the word, the celebration of the sacraments and sacramentals, the worship of God and devotion to the saints, and also the administration of property. *Canon 392#2*

These statements within the 1983 Code provide a basis for protecting the liturgy from such innovations as females performing the role of acolyte.

Of course, not even a bishop has the authority to make any changes which would conflict with the law of the Universal Church.

Q: “*In my parish girls dressed in albs carry candles and the processional cross, but they are not called “altar servers” because they do not hand the cruets to the priest at Mass. Isn’t this okay?*”

A: Some local liturgists interpret the laws this way; but permission has *not* been given for girls or women to perform these functions. The Vatican has repeatedly attempted to clarify this in writing. In November, 1989, for example, the Apostolic pro-nuncio to the United States emphasized that the term “altar server” as used in *Inaestimabile Donum*

“...includes those functions traditionally associated with serving as altar server, thurifer, candlebearer, and crossbearer, and other such functions.”

Archbishop Laghi also said in the same letter,

“In all matters regarding the liturgy, the local bishop is to be consulted since he is responsible for promoting and deepening the liturgical life of the diocese, (Sacrosanctum Concilium n. 41)” (*Letter dated 11/2/89*)

In a letter dated April 17, 1991, signed by Monsignor C. Sepe, of the Vatican Secretariat of State wrote:

“I am writing in reply to your letter to the Holy Father concerning the possibility of girls acting as altar servers. The Church’s traditional discipline in this regard was reaffirmed in the Instruction *Inaestimabile Donum*, issued by the Congregation for the Sacraments and Divine Worship on April 3, 1980, and remains in force: “[text followed by quotation of *ID* No. 18, above.]

Q: “*The pastoral minister in our parish told us that there are no theological reasons why women cannot be ordained, and certainly there is no reason why girls cannot be altar servers. She has recruited girls from our parish school to be servers at Mass.*”

A: Your pastoral minister is mistaken. Even if she does not understand the theological reasons for restriction of the ordained priesthood to certain men, or the reason girls and women may not serve in the role of acolyte, that does not mean there are none.

The Pope has offered several theological reasons for the Church's prohibition of "women priests", (in *Christifidelis Laici* and elsewhere.) He has emphasized that this restriction "represents the mind of Christ", who could have chosen women as Apostles if he wanted to. He has also repeatedly said that this is a matter of essential Catholic belief, and cannot change.

Although who may serve the priest at Mass is a discipline of the Church, not a dogma, one theological reason which has recently been advanced to support the constant tradition of the Church in this matter is that the altar server's *function* is to directly serve the priest, who acts "in the person of Christ" (*in*

the minor orders" were abolished, and the role of Lector was open to lay men. Many years ago the liturgical role of altar server once performed only by ordained Acolytes came to be given to boys. More recently, permission was given to the bishops [in the Church in the United States] to allow laywomen to function as Lector, although nuns, particularly in cloistered convents, had earlier been permitted to serve as Lectors for their convent Masses.

Allowing boys to serve in the role of Acolyte has been a very rich source of vocations to the priesthood. As you know, altar boys wear priestly vestments (just as ordained Acolytes had done) and come to know intimately the text and structure of the Mass, and often learn the prayers of the liturgy and the Canon of the Mass by heart. They are taught their duties and formed by their parish priest, who becomes a powerful role model for them.

One of the distinctive things about the Catholic Church in this country has been the relatively vigorous piety of men. In other churches (and in other countries) religion often comes to be regarded as mostly women's business. Probably one reason for the remarkable participation of Catholic laymen in the

The Church does not fully develop theological positions until a teaching is challenged ... But theological arguments everyone will find persuasive are not necessary for a teaching to be binding on all Catholics.

persona Christi) in making the Eucharistic Sacrifice; so the server is actually an "extension of the priest's hands" in this role (when he hands the cruets to the priest, for example.)

It is important for us to realize that the Church does not fully develop theological positions until a particular teaching or practice is challenged. Only now, after nearly two thousand years of Church history, has the teaching and practice of the Church regarding the male priesthood (and connected liturgical roles) been questioned. Undoubtedly, the theological reasons for the restrictions will become more fully developed, eventually. But we also have to realize that theological arguments which everyone will find persuasive are not necessary for a teaching or a discipline or practice to be, nevertheless, true and binding on all Catholics. (Examples are the Church teachings on abortion and artificial contraception, which many people in our society reject.)

Q: "I am a lector in my parish, and I am thankful that I am allowed to do this, but I understand that Church law forbids this. Do we have to observe Church law regarding altar servers?"

A: Yes, all Catholics, bishops, clergy, laity, have to observe Church law. Part of the confusion about roles for women in liturgical ministry is that in the past both Lectors and Acolytes were actually "minor orders;" that is, both required ordination. Laity could not perform these functions. In recent times

life of the Church in America is attributable to their having been trained to be altar boys.

Q: "Two of my sons have been altar boys for several years, and it has always been important to them. However, this year our parish has started an altar girl program, and my sons now want to quit..."

A: You bring up one of the serious problems with including girls as altar servers. The effect of changing the norms to allow girl servers (even if they are only cross-bearers or candle-bearers) will likely lead to further feminization of the Church. Human nature being what it is, pre-teenage boys and pre-teenage girls do not always mix well. This is a stage in development during which most boys strongly prefer the company of members of their own sex, (notable in sports teams, scouting clubs, &c.) While this is also true of girls to some extent, for whatever reason girls have less resistance to associating with boys than vice versa. The existence of this dynamic has not been acknowledged by the promoters of girls as acolytes.

Q: "I recently attended a parish Mass where, I became aware, the only male present was the priest, and he was entirely surrounded by several adult women wearing vestments who were serving the Mass. The choir, the readers, the extraordinary ministers, and the entire congregation were

women. I overheard one woman saying that it would be a perfect Mass if only they didn't have to have the priest's 'magic words.' I was very distressed..."

A: The comment you overheard is typical of those which frequently appear in the writings of Catholic feminists who also claim that the Church is an 'oppressive, patriarchal structure' and maintain that the priesthood itself, because it is hierarchical, is the main obstacle to achieving equality for women in the Church.

Members of feminist groups who formed the Women's Ordination Conference (which met with a small group of bishops for about ten years before the process of writing the pastoral letter on "women's concerns" was begun in 1984), the Women's Alliance for Theology, Ethics and Ritual [WATER], 'Women Church', Quixote Center, New Ways Ministries, and other feminist groups and individuals, have advocated ordination of women as a matter of justice and equal rights for women in the Church.

Now most of these women say they no longer want to be ordained into the 'defective structure' of the Church, although they still regard expanding the liturgical roles women may perform as an important objective in achieving the kind of reform of the Church they desire. For example, feminist theologian Rosemary Radford Ruether has said, "We don't want a piece of the pie, we want a whole new recipe." Another, Sister Sandra Schneiders, who teaches at the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, has written a book, *Beyond Patching*, which argues that the Church is so defective that it cannot be "patched", but must be discarded entirely and "rewoven."

Among the short-term goals of feminist reformers is to promote female altar servers. They realize the immense symbolic significance it would have if people became accustomed to seeing women wearing vestments performing functions formerly reserved to men and clergy. They understand the power of ritual and symbol very well.

While Catholic feminists (of both sexes) represent only a very small percentage of the Catholic population, many occupy leadership positions in the Church—national, diocesan and parochial—in Catholic schools, seminaries and publishing houses. They are liturgists and theology professors, and lead countless workshops on feminist spirituality. They also have almost instant access to the media and financial resources; thus they have influence far beyond their numbers.

Q: "My sons are not interested in being altar boys, but my daughter is, and some of her girlfriends at school are servers. How can I tell her she is not allowed by the Church to serve this way when Sister is saying the opposite?"

A: Parents have a difficult job in cases like this — made more difficult when other authority figures contradict them. It is doubly difficult for most parents, who cannot be expected

to be experts on liturgy or Church law to explain such matters. It is most unfortunate and confusing when the various authorities conflict. And it is not only children who are tempted, in such circumstances, to ignore the voices of all. This is one reason why the refusal on the part of individuals in positions of authority, whether a pastoral minister, priest or whomever, to conform to the clear norms established by the Church causes so much distress and even scandal to the faithful.

However, as parents know in other matters, "everybody else does it" or "sister says..." does not make something right. Even if you do not feel really qualified to explain all the theological nuances to your child, you do have an opportunity, in this case, to say something about the importance of obedience — in this case to what the highest authorities in the Church have been saying over and over again for several years. Eventually all children will have to learn that even adults make mistakes. Unfortunately they will have to be told that Sister is in error.

Q: "Our parish has just started to have altar girls. This really bothers us, but our pastor says that this has been approved by the diocesan liturgical office and we should be open to change. If we voice our objections, we know that we'll just be branded as 'right-wing nuts' and it probably won't do any good anyway. Should we speak out anyway, or should we just keep quiet and try to find another parish?"

A: There is no easy answer to this question. You are obliged, we think, to voice your concern (not your anger) to the pastor, and, if necessary call the matter to the attention of the bishop. Your *personal* responsibility for the pastor's error ends here. Of course, the bishop cannot correct a situation he does not know about, so you may have to give him the information he needs. Correcting the mistakes of a parish priest is, ultimately, the bishop's responsibility.

Nobody likes to be called names, naturally, or to be unfairly stereotyped and disregarded. However, even if you discharge your obligation in a manner of great charity, you may well find yourself branded a "right-wing nut." If its any consolation, you'll be in good company. Some folks call the Pope and Mother Teresa similar names!

Q: "We just got a new assistant, and now all the readings are being changed to 'gender neutral' language. He changes the parts of the Mass where God is addressed as 'Father,' and he's asked several fifth and sixth grade girls to be altar girls. He says the Pope approves of altar girls and they have them at St. Peter's. Can this be true?"

A: For whatever it's worth, you're not alone in your distress. Liturgical abuses such as this, next to concerns expressed about deficient (or worse) religious and morality education in Catholic schools, is the complaint we hear most often from those who call and write to us.

Quite evidently the Holy Father does *not* "approve of altar

girls.” Otherwise he would have acceded to the demand of some bishops (in the U. S., Canada and Western Europe, mostly) who several years ago asked to be allowed to open all ministries not requiring ordination (e.g., altar servers) to girls and women. He has not given permission. Instead of granting this request, the rules remain in effect, as evidenced by the many individual letters which have continued to issue from Vatican authorities to bishops and others on the matter. However, even the Pope cannot personally supervise every liturgy—not even the ones in St. Peter’s, for that matter, although the story (which we have heard, too) that altar girls serve Masses at St. Peter’s is not true.

If it is discouraging to us when some priests and bishops do not see to it that the central action of the Church, the Mass, is celebrated in unity with the norms of the whole Church—if we are distressed at the divisive “reforming” actions of some in positions of responsibility—how much it must grieve the Pope when the Church’s repeated instructions are ignored or, worse, directly contradicted—whether in Rome or elsewhere. Let us keep his intentions in our prayers.

The altar girl problem is a manifestation of a fundamental conflict within the Catholic Church over the very nature of the Church and the Church’s claim to authority...

Q: “Our bishop has been told about the use of altar girls in our parish and several other parishes in our diocese. When he has responded to documented complaints, he has repeated the Vatican prohibition, but he will not stop the practice. What is going on here?”

A: We will not try to second-guess your bishop’s motives in what is apparently self-contradiction. Most bishops want to avoid trouble and hope to preserve at least the appearance of unity in their Churches. Sometimes it takes a great deal more courage than most of us have to risk criticism; and only very strong convictions can give us the courage to do what is right in spite of opposition from those around us. As most parents know very well, it is often easier to give a disobedient child his way rather than risk the embarrassment of a public scene. In the Church, as in families, there is often a desire for peace at any price. The Catholic Church has become a prime target for destructive criticism in the media and elsewhere, and most bishops try to avoid controversy. They generally want to avoid getting bashed in the newspapers.

As we all know from our own experience, it is also easier to pass the buck or to look the other way instead of forthrightly and promptly dealing with a problem. We see a lot of examples of this in cases of liturgical abuses of all kinds, and other matters where the Catholic Church is challenged, whether

from within the Church or outside it.

Q: “I’m confused. I am now a student at a Catholic university, and I think it is of utmost importance to accept Church teachings. But I was an altar girl in my parish at home. I liked being part of the “action” at Mass and, frankly, I didn’t know that there was anything wrong with it until now...”

A: You were surely acting in good faith. And Church law is different from civil law in that in the Church, acting in ignorance of the law *is* a valid excuse. You could not have been expected to know, when you were part of a parish altar server program, that whoever initiated it was acting in contradiction to the discipline of the Church.

It’s not pleasant to think that you have been ‘used’ to promote disobedience to Church teaching. That is one reason why the illicit practice is so damaging and genuinely unfair to the girls who are being in effect made hostages by those who advocate sweeping changes in the Church. No bishop (or priest) relishes the idea of discouraging youngsters who have shown above average interest in their faith, as you did, and whose *intention* was good, even if the action was actually forbidden. In fact, consideration for the girls’ feelings is frequently cited as a reason not to insist on

upholding Church law.

Some liturgical reformers are so convinced that they are right and the Church is wrong that they are willing to risk putting a young person’s faith at risk to accomplish their own objectives. This is confusing. It is also, ultimately, very unjust to the girls involved, and to everybody else who is attempting, as you are, to live by the teachings and discipline of the Church.

Q: “I personally don’t like the idea of altar girls; but that may be just my own prejudice. Why all the fuss about who hands a couple of cruets to the priest? If the priest and the girls and the congregation don’t see anything wrong with it, why not let them do it?”

A: Ultimately, the altar girl problem is a manifestation of a *fundamental conflict within the Catholic Church* over the very nature of the Church and the Church’s claim to authority — focusing squarely the meaning, value and legitimacy of the Church’s hierarchy. Contemporary Catholic reformers, like their Protestant counterparts at the time of the Reformation, reject the binding authority of Scripture, Tradition, and the *Magisterium*, or teaching authority of bishops and the Pope, which they view as oppressive and unjust. Instead, they argue for ‘adaptation’ and change of religious Truth to conform to

the
Catechism

of the
Catholic

Church

November 5, 6, 7, 1993
St. Louis — Regal Hotel
(formerly the Clarion Hotel)

Speakers

Bishop Charles Chaput, OFM, Cap.

Bishop of Rapid City, South Dakota — member
NCCB Committee on Evangelization

Monsignor Michael Wrenn

New York — pastor, consultant on Education,
Archdiocese of New York, author of *Catechisms and
Controversies*

Joyce A. Little

Houston — Professor of theology, University of St.
Thomas, author, lecturer

Father Joseph Fessio, S.J.

San Francisco — founder publisher, Ignatius Press,
Catholic World Report, theologian

Kenneth D. Whitehead

Falls Church, Virginia — author, translator, former
Undersecretary of Education

Helen Hull Hitchcock

St. Louis — director, Women for Faith & Family,
author, lecturer, editor *The Politics of Prayer*

the will of “the People of God,” or even according to one’s own individual convictions or conscience.

What is at stake here is whether the Catholic Church *is* what she says she is and has always said she is; whether the Church has at least as much right as any other human institution to make demands of its members; and whether the Church’s essential teachings are eternally true.

If the answer to these questions is ‘yes,’ then the Church’s members are required to live up to her teachings and abide by

her laws. If, on the other hand, we answer ‘no’—if religious truth is merely a construct of a particular time, culture, or individual perception—we are not talking about the same Church, the same God, the same Savior, the same Salvation. It’s just as simple—and as profoundly complex—as that. While it may seem relatively unimportant on the surface, the “altar girl” matter is but the tip of a very large and perilous iceberg.

Changing the way we talk about Euthanasia

EUTHANASIA is “an action or an omission which of itself or by intention causes death, in order that all suffering may in this way be eliminated”. (*Declaration on Euthanasia*, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 1980, Part I.)

“No distinction has been made between intentionally starving a person and stabbing him to death. Even if this is done with a good intention, e.g. out of mercy, it has been considered wrong.” (John S. Connery, SJ, “The Ethics of Withholding/Withdrawing Nutrition and Hydration”, *Linacre Quarterly*, Feb. 1987, 17.)

‘Active’ and ‘Passive’ Euthanasia

Active euthanasia indicates “commission,” or doing something (such as giving a lethal injection of drugs) which actively and directly causes death. The *Hemlock Society* and the *Society for the Right to Die* (both euthanasia advocacy groups) and a growing contingent within the medical establishments of America and a few other countries believe that *active* euthanasia should be promoted as a “right”. Euthanasia or *Death with Dignity* legislation has been proposed in several states. In the minds of advocates of euthanasia, “assisted suicide” is also a “right” and should be given government approval.

Passive euthanasia is *omission* of some ordinary treatment or care of a patient (such as withholding or cessation of medication, treatment or care) thereby intentionally causing or hastening death. This is becoming an issue of concern to many people now because some regard providing basic food and fluids to a disabled person as “treatment.”

We need to consider the way attitudes and even deeply held convictions can be influenced by our

manner of speaking about them — even by the words we use.

“Politically Correcting” Language

“All social engineering is preceded by verbal engineering”, as Catholic moral theologian William Smith has said. The words we use seriously affect our belief about human life and the reality and worth of the human being. George Orwell, in his essay *Politics and the English Language* maintained that the decline of language has accelerated the general decline of civilization.

Whenever we use vague, inaccurate, or incorrect language, the result is always confusion, misunderstanding and error — whether or not this is intended. But there is a growing tendency, in our society, to politicize the language we use by consciously choosing imprecise or faulty words in order to cover up a reality which makes us uncomfortable. Most of us unconsciously pick up these words and use these phrases.

Euphemisms and Life Issues

A notable example of this manipulation of language is the use of euphemisms (literally, ‘high speech’.) The purpose of euphemism is to conceal an unpleasant truth or a serious moral problem behind an acceptable-sounding word or phrase.

We have become accustomed to hearing an abortion called “termination of pregnancy,” an unborn baby called a “product of pregnancy,” a “mass of tissue,” or the technical term ‘fetus’ in order to distance us from the reality of what is actually hap-

pening to a living and vulnerable human being within the mother's body. We have grown used to hearing the killing of an unborn child called a 'right,' and to deliberately distorted uses of the words 'freedom' and 'choice.'

Political use of euphemism is seen in the changing of names of euthanasia advocacy organizations. During the 1970s the *Euthanasia Society of America* was renamed *Society for the Right to Die*, and the *Euthanasia Education Council* became *Concern for Dying*.

What is "PVS"?

"Persistent vegetative state" [PVS] is a phrase which is currently being much misused. It was coined in the late 1970's by New York neurologist, Fred Plum, to describe the condition of unresponsive and *evidently* non-cognitive, *apparently* unconscious (but not comatose) brain-damaged people, who are neither terminally ill nor dying, who have periods of sleeping and waking, and have normal respiratory, circulatory and digestive functions.

Some severely mentally disabled patients who have been diagnosed as "PVS", have regained full consciousness; and many care-givers of some supposedly PVS patients report a variety of meaningful responses (crying, laughing at jokes, responding to directions, &c.) which evidence "cognitive function".

Danger of Dehumanizing Terms

Other examples of deliberately dehumanizing terms used to describe severely brain-damaged people are "vegetative existence," "irreversibly comatose," "non-person," "living shell," "biological remains of a human being," "biologically tenacious," "irretrievably inaccessible to human care," "non-cognitive/affective" and simply "vegetable."

These terms are now being used routinely to describe people who are not able

to respond to their environment *in a way which is perceptible* to others. Such terms are now being applied also to *conscious* but severely mentally disabled people.

These euphemisms draw attention away from the basic humanity of the person, and focus attention on the *burdensome* and *hopeless* nature of the disabled person's existence. The life of a person who is referred to in these dehumanizing terms is also devalued. It then becomes more acceptable to say that if the *quality* of life is diminished, if a person cannot be expected to be restored to a *productive* or *affective* condition, then the person does not merit continued care.

A person's *basic right to life* thus becomes his *right to die with dignity*. Robbed of the innate dignity

Euphemisms to Avoid

for the severely mentally disabled person...

- persistent vegetative state (pvs)
- vegetable
- biologically tenacious
- non-person
- living shell
- non-cognitive /affective

for the unborn baby...

- fetal material
- blob of tissue
- product of pregnancy

for euthanasia...

- mercy killing
- right to die
- death with dignity

accorded to every human being, the person's continued life will then become *wrongful living*, and will require *aid in dying*.

All of these terms must be avoided because each devalues the basic humanity of the person.

'Ordinary' and 'Extraordinary' Means

In medicine, and in Judeo-Christian moral teaching on euthanasia, *extraordinary means* is a *treatment offering a patient no reasonable hope of benefit, or which involves serious danger of death, or only a precarious and burdensome prolongation of life.*

Ordinary means are those which offer a patient a *reasonable hope of benefit without serious danger or excessive burdens.* Ordinary means contains the concept of *minimal means* — *ordinary care and/or*

treatment, but which the method of delivery to a patient, in unusual circumstances, could be called extraordinary. Use of a feeding tube in providing nutrition and hydration (food and water) would be an example of *minimal means.*

Food and fluids are not considered "extraordinary" however they may get into the patient, *except when their delivery may cause an already dying patient more pain than benefit.* (Ref. William B. Smith, "Judeo-Christian Teaching on Euthanasia: Definitions, Distinctions and Decisions", *Lincare Quarterly*, Feb, 1987:28.)

NOTE: This article is from the WFF leaflet, Changing the Way we Talk about Euthanasia, available from WFF office. Single copy free with SASE. Multiple copies (useful for groups) 10 cents each, postpaid.

What can I do?

1. Avoid dehumanizing language.

Instead use language which recognizes basic human dignity, the inestimable value of each human life.

- Do not say "right to die" or "aid in dying" — say "euthanasia."
- Never call people 'vegetables.'
- Refuse to use phrases like 'persistent vegetative state' or 'death with dignity.'

2. Read the Vatican Declaration on Euthanasia.

(1980. Daughters of St. Paul, 50 St. Paul's Ave., Boston, MA 02130.)

Read the U. S. Bishops' Pro-life Committee statement, *Nutrition and Hydration: Moral and Pastoral Reflections*, April 2, 1992. (Origins: Vol 21:44.705f —Catholic News Service, 3211 Fourth St. NW, Washington, DC 20017)

Learn what the Church really teaches, and talk about these issues with family and friends.

3. Support legislation prohibiting euthanasia,

including "assisted suicide" and withdrawal of essential nutrition and hydration from severely disabled people.

4. Be aware of national anti-euthanasia efforts.

For more information contact:

- **International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force**
Rita Marker, Director, University of Steubenville, Steubenville, OH 43952 - Ph. 614 282-3810
- **Value of Life Committee, Inc.**
Joseph R. Stanton, M.D., 637 Cambridge St., Brighton, MA 02135.

The War Against Life Itself

Following are excerpts from an address given by Cardinal John O'Connor of New York to the Missouri Right to Life, Western Region, Tribute to Life Banquet, on October 1, 1992.

WE SEEM TO BE COMMITTED to an all-out war against life itself. Indeed, life at its most vulnerable. It has to pain any thinking person today to see legislation being proposed in state after state to “put people out of their misery”, or to permit legalized assisted suicide. I’m not being fanatic. I’m not trying to scare anyone unduly. But I wonder who’s next — the wheelchaired? The cancer-ridden? Those whose quality of life does not meet some mysterious index that the world has determined they must meet?

Those of you who have worked so long, so patiently and with so much sacrifice and dedication to protecting the unborn and their mothers are now going to have to give your talents and your passion and make your sacrifices to protect human life threatened by euthanasia, by assisted suicide and by related threats, however euphemistic their titles. When one state goes, then, in my judgment, euthanasia and assisted suicide will spread like wildfire throughout the country.

Nutrition and hydration is the focus of current argument, along with the removal of life-support systems. Of all people, I don’t have to talk to *you* about Nancy Cruzan — God rest her; or about Christine Busalacchi — God help her.* The same language has been used to prepare the American people for euthanasia and assisted suicide as was used to prepare the way for legitimizing abortion: the language of compassion, the language of privacy, the language of choice, the language of de-personalizing the

one to be put to death. It is always de-personalization because we cannot face the reality. The baby is a fetus or a piece of tissue. The patient is a vegetable in a so-called “persistent vegetative state.”

The immense costs of health care contribute to this, of course... Don’t think that such pressures are not having their effect.

What’s happening in the Netherlands is as frightening as anything we have ever seen. ...If the United States were to practice euthanasia to the extent practiced in the Netherlands, taking into account the population differences, there would be about 200,000 euthanasia cases in the United States, with approximately 100,000 deaths caused without even the consent of the patient.

In all of history this is the only time that human life is attacked only because the human beings are alive. ...Without life there can be neither law nor choice. ...We have to be sensitive, we have to be compassionate. But we still have to say that it is wrong — *horribly* wrong — to take that life. ...

Thomas Jefferson said, “The first and only legitimate object of good government is the care of human life and not its destruction.” I believe passionately that unborn babies have the right to that protection.

What do we need? We need a complete moral and spiritual *metanoia* — a complete conversion of mind and heart and soul. Nothing is more dangerous than a deadened national conscience — the loss of what we call ‘community morality’. Nothing makes us more vulnerable to the “superman mentality” of Nietzsche and the Nazis, or to the morality of the “survival of the fittest”. ☹

* Christine Busalacchi died of dehydration on March 7, 1993, at Barnes Hospital in St. Louis, nearly six days after her food and fluids were withheld. Missouri had provided legal defense of her right to life until January, when the newly elected Attorney General, Jay Nixon, withdrew the State from the case, thereby allowing her father to order her feeding tube removed. Although severely brain-damaged, she was awake and aware of her surroundings, according to nursing staff. She had been receiving most of her nourishment by mouth last July, when her father ordered mouth-feeding stopped. But chewing and swallowing as well as crying and laughing appropriately were called “reflex actions” according to neurologists who insisted she was “vegetative.”

A leading figure in the controversy surrounding Christine Busalacchi’s case was The Rev. Kevin O’Rourke, OP, medical ethicist at St. Louis University, who supported Peter Busalacchi in his determination to terminate his disabled daughter’s life. Father O’Rourke believes that unless a person can be restored to what he calls “cognitive-affective function”, they need not be given food and water.

To Reach Full Knowledge of the Truth

Bishop John Myers

Editor's note: On January 25, 1993, the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, Bishop John J. Myers issued a pastoral letter on catechetics to his diocese of Peoria. The bishop's observations reflect concern of many parents and teachers throughout the country about the current crisis of education in the faith. In this pastoral letter, Bishop Myers says that the new Catechism of the Catholic Church (issued in the original French December 8, 1992) "should be seen as the standard reference and norm of the faith." Following are excerpts from the letter. The complete text was printed in the bishops' official documentary publication, Origins, February 11, 1993, Vol. 22:35.593f.]

Jesus Christ: The Aim of Catechesis

4. "Eternal life is this: to know you, the only true God and him whom you have sent, Jesus Christ" (John 17:3). This verse, which begins the Prologue to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, succinctly states the goal of catechesis. For, as the Holy Father reminds us, "at the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a person, the person of Jesus of Nazareth... [T]he definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: Only he can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity." Thus, our catechesis must be Christocentric, focusing on a personal and communal relationship with Jesus Christ.

5. In addition to this relational aspect, a Christ-centered catechesis must also hand on to the students all that Jesus said and did. For to come to know and trust a person is also to come to know and trust what that person says and does. ...

6. The goal of our catechetical efforts is to enable people to share more deeply in the Trinitarian unity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is the mystery revealed by Christ. The one God is a Trinity of persons who freely created rational beings to extend the divine family and to share in the divine life. ... Through evangelization, people encounter the love of God addressed to them in Jesus Christ the redeemer. Catechesis

deepens and strengthens people's understanding of this mystery. ...All humanity is called to divine-human communion—one family with one Father...

7. This communion is found and maintained in the Church. It is to the Church "a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit," that Christ entrusted the transmission of his revelation. ...

The whole of revelation is to be found complete and entire in the Church, safeguarded by the teaching office of the bishops, in union with the Holy Father (the magisterium), and by the faithful who have assented to the Gospel (the *sensus fidelium*).

8. Catechesis is about handing on, in all its fullness, what we have first received. It is a continuation of the teaching mission of Jesus Christ... Catechesis is the organic, systematic presentation of the whole faith to the entire Christian community.

The Current Situation

10. ...[L]ess than one in ten of the diocesan pastoral council members and priests of the diocese believe that our students are able to articulate and defend the Catholic faith...[or] that our current teaching methods regularly lead the students to a deeper and more mature commitment to and relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church. This lack of confidence in our current catechetical programs parallels a general decline in objective results in any educational endeavor — secular or religious. ...[T]he Holy Father himself observed that among Christians in the First World "there sometimes can be seen doubts or even errors, but more frequently a widespread ignorance regarding the integral and genuine faith of Peter and the Church."

11. There is evidence, despite our most conscientious efforts, that a cry of alarm is in order. ... Study after study shows that Catholics' moral beliefs are no different from those of the rest of society. Many Catholics support abortion, euthanasia, illicit sexual acts and in vitro fertilization... Revitalized religious education alone will not solve all these problems; it is merely a necessary first step. Well-catechized Catholics may still knowingly do wrong, but if they do they will at least know

the fuller life to which they are called.

Challenges and Difficulties

12. Certain errors and imbalances in catechetical theory and practice [contributed to or exacerbated] the general decline in religious education.

13. One area of difficulties that some want to emphasize the “personal” or “affective” aspect of faith to the detriment of the “dogmatic” or “cognitive” aspect. This is a false dichotomy, for faith properly understood is both cognitive and affective. The obedience of faith, as the Second Vatican Council taught, “must be given to God who reveals, an obedience by which man entrusts his whole self freely to God, offering ‘the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals’ ... and freely assenting to the truth revealed by him: Notice that the council quite clearly states that one personally submits to God and thus believes what he has revealed “be deeds and words having an inner unity.” Thus a good catechist knows that by faith we believe in God and we believe what God tells us about himself.

14. Another common error is the belief in “ongoing revelation” and the subsequent emphasis on “personal experience.” ... People should not mistake their experiences as revelation... [and] catechists should not measure success or failure in their classrooms by the subjective “religious experiences” often rooted in emotions that may or may not occur. For Catholics, divine revelation is the object of faith and was completed with the death of the last apostle. ...

Thus, revelation in its entirety has been given. While a historical fact, it is a present reality kept alive in the Church through her proclamation of the word of God by her magisterium. [T]he proper response to this revelation is the assent of faith. Hence, the purpose of catechesis is “to make men’s faith become living, conscious and active through instruction.” The instruction must address this divine revelation, the word of God, to the minds and hearts of students so that their faith may grow. We all grow in faith as we conform our minds and hearts to what has been revealed by Jesus Christ in and through his Church. This growth is manifest in our lives of piety and in our apostolic activity in the world.

15. Sadly, dissent and disobedience continue to be a problem in catechesis in every area of the Church. Public dissent and public disobedience — dissent from magisterial teaching in the areas of faith and morals and disobedience of the norms, laws and regulations of the Church — undermine the effectiveness of any and all teaching authority in the Church. It is completely unacceptable for public persons in the Church to dissent openly from magisterial teaching — especially in a catechetical context. Due to my responsibilities as chief catechist and as the moderator of the entire ministry of the word in the Diocese of Peoria, I wish to remind all people who share in this ministry — be they priests, deacons, sisters, catechists, principals, teachers, directors of religious education, etc. — that public dissent is inappropriate. For example, the only discussion in a catechetical setting about the question of women and

ordained priesthood is a discussion by the catechist and students about why the teaching of the Church is correct. Young people should be encouraged to bring their questions. Catechists, in turn, should respectfully lead them into the Church’s teaching, encouraging its acceptance by the example of their own acceptance. The same holds true for other controversial areas of the Church’s teaching as well. In addition, advocacy of positions contrary to the Church’s position in matters of discipline and good order is inappropriate, in a catechetical context. For example, violating the Church’s clear norms requiring first confession before first communion encourages children and their parents to ignore the disciplines of the Church.

Furthermore, though less problematic that public dissent, the private withholding of assent from received teaching also poses difficulties. This withholding of assent... may be dam-

“Catechesis is about handing on, in all its fullness, what we have first received. It is a continuation of the teaching mission of Jesus Christ.”

aging to students. In such situations, instead of enthusiastically presenting the teachings of the Church, whole and entire — those with catechetical responsibility are tempted to avoid, downplay or ignore the contentious teaching(s), thereby leaving the students with an incomplete presentation of the faith. However, the faithful have the right to hear all the good news. Beyond this, the teacher’s own communion with the Church may be damaged by this withheld assent. It is difficult to “feel with the Church” (sentire cum ecclesia) when one is at odds with her in one or more areas.

One might ask what catechists who find themselves in conflict with Church teaching or discipline should do. Viewed properly, this moment offers an opportunity to grow in faith and to improve as a teacher. The necessary first step is humbly and prayerfully to seek clarification. Perhaps greater study of the area of difficulty will lead to resolution.

Discovering the source of one’s own difficulties can make it possible to help others avoid them. Certainly, using one’s position of leadership to jeopardize the faith of others cannot be a helpful solution to anyone. If after prayerful study the catechist still finds him- or herself unable to give assent to the Church’s teaching, he or she may, in honesty and for the good of the Church’s catechetical mission, need to temporarily or permanently leave the catechetical role. Just as it would be inappropriate for someone who is not trying to live the faith to be teaching the faith, so too those who are unable to embrace fully the Church’s teaching office should not act as teachers in the Church.

[F]or some people any concept of religious orthodoxy seems intolerant and a violation of legitimate religious free-

dom. Nothing could be further from the truth, however. For Catholics, freedom is inseparable from the truth. This was revealed to us by Jesus himself when he said, "I no longer speak of you as slaves, for a slave does not know what his master is about. Instead, I call you friends, since I have made known to you all that I heard from my Father" (John 15:15).

Cardinal Ratzinger, commenting on this verse...said:

"Ignorance means dependence; it is slavery ... Any freedom from which the truth is excluded is a deception. ...The image of the friend of Christ is especially dear to us today, but his friendship consists in the fact that he has drawn us into his confidence, and the sphere of confidence is the truth."

Thus, only in conformity with the truth that sets us free — namely Jesus Christ and him crucified, who is "the way, the truth and the life" (John 14:6) — do we find fulfillment, freedom and joy.

"The ultimate goal of all Catholic education is salvation in Jesus Christ." —Pope John Paul II

16. Some religious educators have confused the role of theologian and catechist. This has led to some children being taught speculative theories as if they were the faith, while simultaneously being taught little of its genuine content. ...We must recognize that catechetical settings are not the appropriate forum for theological speculation....

17. Other religious educators have confused the order of the spiritual life with the order of doctrine. These teachers wish to emphasize the "mysteriousness" of God. For them, dogmas and doctrines seem to contradict the incomprehensibility of the divine. ...But they are wrong about the nature of doctrine. Catholics are not just people who share eternal questions, but a people who share common answers, answers we know to be true. These answers do not explain away the mystery; they define the boundaries of mystery. ...

18. Other catechists have underestimated the capability of the Catholic people. Displaying a false sense of compassion they have avoided challenging people with all of the Gospel message. ... Instead of offering compassion, these catechists add to the difficulty of living totally fulfilled, Christ-like lives by standing over the word of God as if in judgment.

19. Much of our catechesis has lacked the proper emphasis on an authentic spiritual life. It is tragic that many good Catholics do not have a substantial prayer life because no one ever taught them to pray. It helps little to teach children that the Lord is really, truly and substantially present in the Eucharist if they do not have a personal relationship with the Lord who is present. This relationship, based on the grace of baptism and their knowledge of him, is fostered by a genuine life of piety. ...The child should be shown by example and by instruction how frequenting the sacraments, especially penance and the

Eucharist, can aid in their spiritual formation. This done, acts of piety — such as Bible study, the rosary and the use of sacramentals — can be introduced as ways to extend the sacraments into the students' daily lives....

Toward a Renewal

20. Partly due to the mistaken approaches to catechesis, there exists a general feeling of uncertainty among many catechists and parents. This climate leaves people unsure where to turn for help. The Church seems to speak in a cacophony of contradictory and irreconcilable voices. We hope and pray that the Catechism of the Catholic Church will be a stabilizing force in this pastoral situation. But the catechism alone will not solve our catechetical problems. Only those seriously engaged in a personal conversion of heart and who struggle to be good disciples of Jesus Christ have any hope of enthusiastically sharing the faith. One need not be a saint to be a catechist. However, one must at least be trying to become one to be effective.

21. In addition to our personal discipleship, the first and best service that we as individuals and as a Church can render is a clear, concise proclamation of the authentic content of revelation that has come down to us from the apostles. We may not always be able to persuade those who have erred in their understanding of religious education, but we will have presented them with the truth. We must remember that truth, because it is graced and because it is the truth, it has its own power to convince....

22. ... As the Holy Father reminds us, "The person who becomes a disciple of Christ has the right to receive 'the word of faith' not in mutilated, falsified or diminished form, but whole and entire, in all its rigor and vigor...."

23. Only a genuine contact with saving truths can bring conversion, faith and eternal life. The difficulty is how we are to bring people, especially our children, to this encounter. ...A class discussion does not serve the message if it allows the students to believe that morality is a matter of consensus or personal choice.

Criteria for proper method of instruction

First, ... we must never let the method obscure or confuse the message. ... Second, our children should begin on their own level of understanding, but their capacity to know and love God should not be underestimated. ... They can be introduced to concepts and ideas that they will grow into, ideas they will make their own over time. Third, although our children should not be made into automatons or parrots, memorization of basic doctrine, prayers and practices is needed.... For example, the simple response in the old catechism that "God made me to know, love and serve him in this life and to be happy with him forever in the next" is excellent material for fruitful meditation throughout one's life.

Memorization of this sort allows the child to have a permanent space in mind and heart set aside for and dedicated to the things of God and of the Church. They are permanently there

wherever the child goes. ... They are there to give comfort and solace in time of trouble, to call for conversion and to raise questions. ... In this way, young people are kept in touch with the transcendent, which is all but eliminated from a secular understanding of the world.

Recently this was brought to my attention when discussing the faith with a young man who had returned to the Church after many years away. When I asked him what in particular had drawn him back, he replied, "Because I heard something that I could not unhear." He went on to explain that when he came to his senses at last, he was drawn back to Christ and His Church through the power and grace of the Gospel message he had learned in his youth. Indeed, once truly heard, the Gospel cannot be unheard.

Parents, Pastors, Catholic schools

24. Families must be committed to catechetical reform as well. The commitment of parents is essential to true renewal:

"As it is parents who have given life to their children, on them lies the gravest obligation of educating their family. They must therefore be recognized as being primarily and principally responsible for their education. The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute." [Gravissimum Educationis, 3]

...Without a commitment to reform by parents, any hoped-for renewal is sure to be a failure. I wish to reaffirm my commitment to do whatever the diocese can do to support parents in their vocation as the primary educators of their children....

On your part, parents, we ask for your commitment to catechetical renewal for yourselves and for your families, doing everything you can to hand on the faith to the next generation. Though you are the primary educators of your children, most of what you teach them about the faith will come through your behavior, not through your words. We ask you, therefore, to live your faith with your children. Let them see the Lord's forgiveness in your unconditional love for them. Let them see Christ's love for the Church in your love for one another as husband and wife. Pray with your children openly and often. Make reading the Scriptures and studying catechisms a natural part of your children's life. Frequent the sacraments with them. More than any school or CCD program, your manifest love will prepare your children to love and serve the Lord as faithful members of His Church.

25. The Church's institutions must be dedicated to catechetical renewal as well, beginning with the parish. ... Pastors are therefore specifically charged by canon law to ensure that their flock is well catechized. : Pastors should take advantage of every catechetical opportunity, especially the homily, to proclaim the good news to the parish. Parish catechists should be dedicated, loyal, prayerful and well-trained. Almost without exception in our consultations, people asked for a continuing and increased evidence of priestly commitment in catechetical efforts in the parish.

26. Catholic schools ... greatly aid the Church's catechetical responsibilities. ...

Our Catholic schools are by far our best resource to aid parents in their efforts to educate their children in light of the vision we have outlined above...

27. The diocesan staff — especially those in the offices of religious education, Catholic schools and family life — has as one of its primary functions to support parents, parishes and schools in their catechetical responsibilities. ... They can evaluate materials and programs, provide in-services, summer institutes, workshops, etc. Most important, they can train and support catechists to meet the challenges of their ministry. ...

28. The vision of Catholic education that I wish to see implemented in our diocese was given by the Holy Father in New Orleans in 1987 to Catholic educators:

"The ultimate goal of all Catholic education is salvation in Jesus Christ. ...this work includes transmitting clearly and in full the message of salvation, which elicits the response of faith. ... By enriching your students' lives with the fullness of Christ's message and by inviting them to accept with all their hearts Christ's work, which is the Church, you promote most effectively their integral human development of faith, hope and love." ...

Catechism of the Catholic Church

29. During the 1985 Synod of Bishops, the bishops representing the world's episcopacy asked for a catechism or compendium of Catholic doctrine in faith and morals that would represent the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. ... John Paul II has called [the Catechism of the Catholic Church] "a sure norm for teaching the faith." He believes that the catechism will serve "as a valid and legitimate instrument of ecclesial communion." He prays that it may "serve the renewal to which the Holy Spirit ceaselessly calls the Church of God, the Body of Christ, on her pilgrimage to the undiminished light of the kingdom!" [The Catechism was presented]

—"As an instrument to convey the essential and fundamental content of Catholic faith and morals in a complete and summary way.

—"As a point of reference for national and diocesan catechisms, whose mediation is indispensable.

—"As a positive and objective exposition of Catholic doctrine.

—"As a text of the magisterium [teaching authority of the Church], in the sense that it was suggested by a Synod of Bishops, desired by the Holy Father, prepared in its redaction by bishops, was the fruit of the consultation of the episcopate and approved by the Holy Father in his ordinary magisterium."

30. The structure of the catechism is not accidental. It is build on the ancient pillars of Christian identity: the Creed, the Sacraments, the Commandments and the Our Father. This structure corresponds to what the Catholic Church believes (Creed), celebrates (Sacraments), lives (Commandments) and prays (Our Father). Another approach sees a parallel between

this structure and the theological virtues [faith, hope and charity]. This view sees the Creed as providing the answers to the question of faith; the Our Father as providing the answers to the question of hope; the Commandments as providing the answers to the question of love; and the sacraments as providing the living space in which these mysteries are to be lived out. (Cf. Cardinal Ratzinger, *Transmission of Faith and the Sources of the Faith*, speech delivered in Lyon, France, January 15, 1983.)

31. ... Because it is a magisterial document, we should receive the Catechism with a religious assent of mind and will. In addition, much of the teaching in the Catechism will demand the assent of faith. The Catechism of the Catholic Church should be seen as the standard reference and norm of the faith...

[Sections 32-35 give specific directions for implementing the catechetical renewal in the Diocese of Peoria based on the new Catechism.]

36. Our love of the Lord Jesus Christ must extend by definition to the Church that he founded. Authentic renewal can only come through loyalty to and love for the Church. The Church is the Mystical Body of Christ extended through space

and time. As we listen to the voice of the Church in her authentic magisterium, we hear the voice of Christ and the Holy Spirit speaking to the modern world. As we conform ourselves to her saving message, we are transformed into new creations in Christ. As John Paul II stated when he spoke to educators in New Orleans in 1987, "In regard to the content of religion courses, the essential criterion is fidelity to the teaching of the Church."

37. Our love of the Church should also extend to Mary, at one and the same time member and mother of the Church. It is to her, the Immaculate Conception, patroness of our nation and our diocese, that we turn as we begin this great catechetical renewal in our diocese. She who pondered the mysteries of God and his Son, who also was at the same time truly her Son, is an appropriate model. She is indeed a "living catechism" and "the mother and model of catechists" [*Catechesi Tradendæ*, 73]. We ask Mary, Seat of Wisdom — who loved her Son with a mother's love and who with St. Joseph taught him as he grew in age, grace and wisdom — to intercede on our behalf.

May God bless us in our work in and for his Church. ■

Special Gifts to Women for Faith & Family

In Memoriam

Gertrude McNerney from Merrie Kendrick

Joanne Monahan Bick from James Bick, John & Claire Shields

Helen W. Smith, mother of The Rev. William B. Smith

Frances Hull VanGundy from a niece • Dallas & Myrtle Murphy from Mildred Murphy

Mrs. Frances Magann from Laura Randolph • Margaret Hartung from Delores Hartung

The Rev. Edward Mandulay, S.J. from Donna Steichen

Mary Gertrude Osborn from Constance Berni • Paul Krave, father of Kathleen Sackett

Catherine Lawless from Rosemary Bettman • Mary P. Zogby sister of Rita M. Price

Mr. & Mrs. Herman W. Cissell from Mrs. Mary Skinner

Michael Grieco from Rose Grieco • Fred Metz from Maureen Neville

Helen G. Reddy from Mary Ellen Reddy • Mary E. Peterson from Mrs. George L. Meyers

Patsy Gorman & Bonnie Brunette from Frank Farrell

Aborted Children from Diane Garrett • Mary Ann Reisig from Kaye Reisig

Mrs. B. C. Portuondo from Emma P. Eaton • Edwin Vincent O'Hara from Maria J. Dwyer

Loretta Schaeffler mother of Katherine Schaeffler

Rose Tierney mother of Sr. Jeanne Tierney • Ann O'Donnell from Mary Schroeder

Grace McInerney sister of Julia C. Spellman • Mary Frances Brady Poirot from Joseph Griesemer

Requiescant in pace, et lux perpetua luceat eis.

In Honor of the Saint that Watches over Unborn Children from Frances M. McDermott

OTHER VOICES...

Quotes and Comments of Current Interest

MORE ON THE 'WORD WARS'

Muted or Mutated?

□ "Because men have been the dominant and stronger sex in society, they have structured and formed the language and have dominated verbal communication, rendering women mute. ...Language involves a power issue, and studies indicate how men have exercised their power a great deal in this area. The symbolic system of language was formed by men to explain the experiences of men; therefore, men have created the definitions and roles that are attached to gender," according to Maura O'Neill in *Women Speaking, Women Listening* (Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY, 1990. p. 45.) O'Neill is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Chaffey Community College, California.

Women, she contends, have been "rendered mute" by the male-created language. In order for their voices to be heard women must reject masculine elements in the language, such as the neuter-gender use of pronouns 'he', 'his', 'him', etc. Women must "name their own reality," by telling their own stories and engaging in dialogue in "same-sex circles".

So in order to be "inclusive" women must be exclusive. Get it?

More Tasks for Women

□ "Throughout recorded time men have 'named the sacred' from the standpoint of the male life experience. Naming is power—the power to shape reality into a form that serves the interests and goals of the one doing the naming. Today the power to name is being claimed by women, but they do it differently. ... Naming the sacred in our own experience is an important theological task for women. Finding the power to name is like being present at the creation of the world." Quoted from an ad for a one-day workshop, *Sacred Dimensions of Women's Experience*, by Elizabeth Dodson

Gray, feminist theologian, environmentalist, futurist, and co-ordinator of the Theological Opportunities Program at Harvard Divinity School. This June 27 workshop is just one of dozens advertised in the 85-page Spring-Summer catalog of INTERFACE, New England's Center for the Education of Body, Mind and Spirit, Cambridge, MA.

If you have trouble feeling empowered to name your own 'sacred', Ms. Gray would probably be happy to do it for you .

Logic or Dia-logic?

□ "A truly dialogical relationship has no other purpose than itself. Dialogue is the end of dialogue ... To attempt dialogue for what we can get out of it is too egocentric an attitude ... one compromises the dialogical relationship if one attempts to justify it by its results." Quoted from *The Dialogical Imperative: A Christian Reflection in Interfaith Encounter*, by David Lohead (Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY, 1988. p. 79-80.)

Before pinning our hopes on a 'fruitful dialogue' we may have to dialogue about what our partner(s) in "dialogical relationship" understand the purpose of dialogue to be. This dialogue process could be endless — but that seems to be the point (if any). No outcome is the outcome.

The Word According to Starhawk

□ "Peasants saw in the story of Christ only a new version of their own ancient tales of the Mother Goddess and her Divine Child who is sacrifice and reborn. Country priests often led the dance at the Sabbats, or great festivals. The covens who preserved the knowl-

edge of the subtle forces, were called *Wicca* or *Wicce*, from the Anglo-Saxon root word meaning 'to bend or shape.' ... The magnificent cathedrals were built in honor of Mary, who had taken over many of the aspects of the ancient Goddess." Quoted from *The Spiral Dance — a Rebirth of the Ancient Religion of the Great Goddess*, by Starhawk [Miriam Simos] (New York, Harper and Row, 1979. p 5.)

Starhawk bends and shapes reality at Matthew Fox's Center for Creation Spirituality at Holy Names College, Oakland, California.

Putting out Fox Fire?

□ "I guess I'd be sorry for the things I've done if I wanted to preserve a male-dominated, anthropocentric, essentially white institution that denies its own mystical tradition," Matthew Fox told the *New York Times* after his ouster from the Dominican Order in early March ("Roman Catholic Rebel Becomes a Cause Célèbre", by Molly O'Neill, *NYT* March 17, p C1.)

"Obviously I write about sensuality, and I haven't dealt with my own sexuality in an armchair. But to me, celibacy is an art, not a vow, but that's not what the church is mad about. They're threatened that I'm trying to move the institution from its bureaucratic rut into an active, engaged, socially conscious spirituality," said Fox, who remains a priest but prefers to be called Dr. Fox. Still, he says, "I'm a *Catholic*. I come from an age-old mystical tradition."

However, Fox was ousted — for insubordination, not, sad to say, for his teachings. The Rev. Donald Goergen, OP, director of Fox's former province, remarking on the Dominicans' former support of Fox, said that "It was the great era of self-actualization, and we did our best to accommodate Matt," but in the 80's "the whole church moved to the right, and Matt was stuck in the 60's."

Was that the 1260's or the 1960's? Whichever, Father Fox, it seems, is just too old-fashioned.

Sing a New Song

□ Boston College's tuition-funded Women's Resource Center Discussion Series co-sponsored a film *No Need to Repent, The Ballad of Rev. Jan Griesinger* on March 3. The ad says it is about "an ordained minister and active feminist who came out as a lesbian

at age 35. A woman of courage and vision, she has earned wide respect for her ability to integrate her ministry, her politics and her personal life. A picture not only of a strong individual but of contemporary U.S. feminism's impact on institutions and lifestyles."

Courage? Vision? Respect? Integrity? More words bent and shaped to re-name the 'sacred'?

Shame and Shaberg

□ Sexist men took over the Church after the death of Jesus and covered up his illegitimacy, according to Jane Shaberg, chairman of the religious studies department at the Jesuit-run University of Detroit-Mercy and former Religious of the Sacred Heart. In her book, *The Illegitimacy of Jesus*, Ms. Shaberg dusts off the very ancient anti-Christian myth that Jesus' birth was the result of the rape of Mary by a Roman soldier, and gives it a coat of high-gloss Political Correctness. She says her "mind was open to the possibility of violence being a part of Mary's story just as it's a part of the lives of women today" after she worked in a poor neighborhood surrounded by fatherless children and abused women. She re-translates the Greek word for 'humility' to be 'humiliation' or 'shame' to support her claim that Luke's Gospel hints that Mary was a rape victim.

Shaberg told the *Detroit Free Press* ("Bible Scholar Seeks to Uproot Tradition on Women," by David Crumm, 3/7/93, p. 1F.) that she "represents a threat to Christian tradition" by her advocacy of female priests and ending the Catholic bans on birth control, abortion and remarriage after divorce. Her book earned the enthusiastic praise of the virulently anti-Catholic Episcopal Bishop John Spong (author of *Living in Sin*). But Shaberg is not worried about keeping her tenured job teaching religion to U-D's Catholic students.

The Rev. Gerald Cavanaugh, SJ, academic dean at U-D, although acknowledging that "her basic teaching on the birth of Jesus really does cut to the core of our faith," defends Shaberg as a "careful scholar" and emphasizes that "we are not a fundamentalist institution. Fundamentalism is basically anti-intellectual. It doesn't help people to grow, to think, to inquire, to critique."

Evidently antique anti-Christian gnostic fundamentalism is 'in' in Detroit. Edsels, anyone?

More Catholic Tuition Dollars at Work...

□ At another Jesuit institution, the Loyola [University] Institute for Ministry, director Rev. Bernard Lee, SM, defends lectures by Starhawk and feminist theologians Rosemary Radford Ruether and Sr. Sandra Schneiders: "One of the functions of a true Catholic university is to promote dialogue concerning issues that matter to the church and to the world. To invite a significant spokesperson whose academic credentials are clear is a gift to the larger community from the university. This does not imply either agreement or disagreement, but acknowledges the extraordinary importance of civilized conversation, most especially over sensitive issues," Fr. Lee wrote in the New Orleans *Clarion Herald* (3/25/93, p. 11).

□ And in Philadelphia: "St. Joseph's University Welcomes: Mr Robert Harney to speak on 'Gays in the Military'". The flyer noted that "Mr Harney is a former Navy Seaman. He was recently honorably discharged from the U. S. Navy for being gay." Co-sponsored by the university's Committee on Sexuality and Sexual Minorities, Faith-Justice Institute and the Sociology Department, the lecture was held on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, December 8, 1992.

Is this the Jesuit University's "gift to the larger community"?

Schneiders Snips Scripture

□ Sr. Sandra Schneiders, a member of the Sisters Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary who teaches seminarians at the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, says in her book, *Beyond Patching* (Paulist Press, 1991), that "Feminism is a world-wide movement that envisions nothing less than the radical transformation of human history ... Women...have undertaken a deconstruction of male reality and a reconstruction of reality in more human terms" (p. 36) Feminist biblical scholarship has proven "without a doubt" that "it is no longer possible to deny that the text [of Scripture] itself is not only androcentric, i.e. a male-centered account of male experience for male purposes with women relegated to the margins of salvation history, but also patriarchal in its assumptions and often in its explicit teaching, and at times deeply sexist, i.e. anti-woman. Its God-language and imagery are overwhelmingly male. When the official church invokes scripture to justify its discriminatory treatment of women it does

not have to resort to fundamentalist proof-texting or to questionable exegetical methods. In other words, the problem is in the text." (p. 38)

Feminists, she says, see "that the church is a major legitimator of the oppression of women in family and society", "identify patriarchy as the root of women's social, economic, and political oppression", and often find themselves "overcome with anger at the sexist language of the liturgy and the unrelieved maleness of ministry" (pp. 92, 93). Nevertheless, "what Catholic feminists, especially those who are active in Womenchurch, are contributing to the spirituality of women who are both Catholic and feminist is a whole new repertoire of songs, new liturgical forms for the imagination, a proleptic image of a new church" (p.107).

Would you be open to dialogue about your image of church', Sr. Sandy?

'No [Pro-life, Catholic] Women Allowed'

□ "If you want to be *really* counter-cultural, try being a pro-life Catholic woman", Helen Alvare, the U.S. Bishops' spokesman for Pro-Life Activities, advised an audience at St. Louis University, April 1. "If I were a *pro-abortion* Catholic woman, you would all recognize me from all the talk shows I'd been on," she quipped. About forty attended her talk, co-sponsored by the SLU Great Issues lecture series and the Pro-life Student group — including only two Jesuit priests and no women faculty members. Miss Alvare, a young lawyer of Hispanic extraction, noted the irony in having repeatedly been turned-down for television appearances by network news producers who only want a man — preferably an elderly cleric — to represent pro-life views.

There are women — and then there are Women-Who-Count. "P C", clearly, does not stand for 'Pro-life Catholic'.

Briefly Reviewed...

Sex Education — The Catholic Scene, by Margaret Whitehead. 1993, Women for Faith & Family, PO Box 8326, St. Louis, MO 63132. \$5.00.

Classroom sex education, whether in the Catholic or public schools, is one of the major concerns of Catholic families. Margaret Whitehead has written an extremely helpful commentary on a subject which worries countless Catholic parents whose school-children are at risk because of the disastrous state of teaching on sexual morality. She also gives specific recommendations for dealing with the current situation.

Mrs. Whitehead reviews the history of classroom sex education in the Catholic schools in the United States, and analyses recent Church documents on the subject, with particular emphasis on *Human Sexuality, A Catholic Perspective on Education and Lifelong Learning*, issued by the Catholic bishops in 1990. These "instructional guidelines" were not unanimously supported by the bishops, however; and sex education in Catholic schools continues to be so defective that some parents have called for an all-out ban on any sex education in the classroom.

Although Catholic schools should be helping parents and children deal with the current moral crisis in our society, Church authorities have not yet arrived at an adequate solution. Finding such a solution to this increasingly complex problem will require that all proposals for sex/morality instruction of Catholic school students be subjected to prudent and careful examination and evaluation by bishops and clergy, in consultation with parents.

The author has taught in both Catholic and public schools at the elementary and high school level, as well as in adult education and parent education programs. Since 1972 she has worked with parent groups and diocesan committees developing curricula for programs in the Washington, D.C., Arlington, VA, and New York dioceses. In 1986, Mrs. Whitehead and Dr. Onalee McGraw started an educational consulting organization, Educational Guidance Institute, Inc. They worked as consultants to Catholic parishes interested in teaching chastity outside of school hours to junior-high students accompanied by their parents. They also worked with public school teachers and administrators who were interested in teaching pre-marital abstinence to their students, and co-authored a guidebook for professionals and parents, *Foundations for Family Life Education*.

Mrs. Whitehead has represented Women for Faith & Family at various meetings in the Washington, D.C. area, and was a member of the *Voices* press team at the NCCB November meetings for the past three years. She is married to Kenneth D. Whitehead, and is the mother of four sons. From her home in Falls Church, Virginia, she continues to teach, and to lecture, research and write in the field of education. ☞

Pain Management and Care of the Terminal Patient, 1992, Washington State Medical Association, 2033 6th Ave., Suite 199, Seattle, WA 98121-9934. 236 pages. \$25.

The Washington State Medical Association has produced a manual on care of dying patients, drug therapies, hospice care, legal and ethical issues. The book is primarily intended for physicians who may not have a large number of terminally ill patients, and was prepared in response to the effort to pass a euthanasia bill in Washington in 1991. The Washington State Medical Association helped defeat the proposal, according to *Life at Risk* (Dec. 1992). ☞

Life at Risk, NCCB Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, 3211 4th Street NE, Washington, DC 20017-1194. (No charge. Donation requested.)

A monthly newsletter on euthanasia trends, edited by Richard M. Doerflinger, surveys current legislative proposals, events in the news and other items of interest on the topic. ☞

The Living Will — Expansion or Erosion of Patients' Rights? by Mary Senander. 1993, The Leaflet Missal Company, 976 W. Minnehaha Ave., St. Paul, MN 55104. 44 pages. (No price given.)

A concise and important discussion of subject of "Living Wills" and the risks they involve both to patients and society; also contains up-to-the minute discussion of the impact of pro-euthanasia efforts, analysis and criticism from the standpoint of sound Catholic teaching. Cardinal O'Connor of New York calls the book "a timely and readable response to the legitimate questions being raised about living wills ... I enthusiastically recommend Mary Senander's work."

In 1985, Mrs. Senander, along with Rita Marker, organized the International Anti-Euthanasia Task Force (IAETF), now headquartered in Steubenville, Ohio. IAETF provides information and resources on euthanasia, suicide, assisted suicide and related issues. ☞

Spanish Roots of America by Bishop David Arias. 1992, Our Sunday Visitor Press, 200 Noll Plaza, Huntington, IN 46750. 352 pages. \$9.95.

This book by the Spanish-born Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar for Hispanic Concerns in the Archdiocese of Newark highlights the contributions of Spanish-speaking people to the development of the United States, and provides an alternative to the sharp criticism of the European colonization of America so often heard during last year's 500th Centenary of Columbus' discovery of America. The book describes the activities of courageous Spanish priests who brought the Gospel to the people of the New World; and includes chapters on the Spanish government's role in support of the American Revolution and other important contributions of the Spanish to American culture.

Bishop Arias is a member of the NCCB Hispanic Affairs Committee, and is a teacher of Church history. ☞

Words and Worship — *Continued from page 3*

has been severely damaged by theological and liturgical "reformists". This must be stopped.

Letters from individuals to their own bishops, to the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States, and to the Holy See (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments) can be helpful.

It is very important that letters about actual liturgical abuses be specific and well documented, including names, dates, places, quotations and/or descriptions of the problem.

Expressions of concern about changes in the Lectionary and Sacramentary should also be as specific as possible. All letters should follow the ABC formula: Accuracy, Brevity and — above all — *Charity*. (A copy of the *Statement on Feminism, Language and Liturgy* may be enclosed with your letter.)

Priests Rally to Promote Good Translations

CREDO was established early this year as a society of priests committed to faithful translations of liturgical texts. The group is "concerned about the doctrinal integrity" as well as accuracy and beauty of the proposed ICEL revision of the Roman Missal. Father Jerry Pokorsky reports that the new association of clergy has been encouraged by the very strong early response from priests who support the group's efforts.

Besides encouraging priests to let bishops know of their concern about the liturgical revisions, the association intends to suggest alternative translations to those produced by ICEL.

For further information, contact CREDO, c/o The Rev. Cornelius O'Brien, P.O. Box 7004, Arlington, VA - 22207. (Phone: 706 243-5140)

From the Femspeak Department :

"The Prayer Jesus Taught Us"

(formerly known as the "Our Father" or "Lord's Prayer")

God, lover of us all,
 most holy one,
 help us to respond to you
 to create what you want for us
 here on earth.
 Give us today enough for our needs;
 forgive our weak and deliberate offences,
 just as we must forgive others
 when they hurt us.
 Help us to resist evil
 and to do what is good;
 for we are yours,
 endowed with your power
 to make our world whole. Amen.

Attributed to Lala Winkley, in 'Widening the Web' Movement for the Ordination of Women, London, the above translation appeared in *Expressions*, the newsletter of the Sisters of St. Benedict of Madison, Wisconsin, January/February, 1990.

Women for Faith & Family Order Form

Quantity	Title	Donation	Total
	Sex Education — The Catholic Scene, by Margaret Whitehead	\$5.00	
	Family Sourcebook for Lent and Easter	\$6.00	
	Family Sourcebook for Advent and Christmas	\$5.00	
	Set of both Family Sourcebooks	\$10.00	
	Changing the Way We Talk About Euthanasia (leaflet) *	10/\$1.50	
	On Female Altar Servers, by Helen Hull Hitchcock	\$5.00	
		Total enclosed	

* Copy free with SASE

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Send order to
Women for Faith & Family
 P. O. Box 8326, St. Louis, MO 63132
 Phone and Fax [314] 863-1654

NOVENA FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE UNBORN

PRAYERS

TO THE HOLY TRINITY, THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, ALL THE ANGELS AND SAINTS

O HEAVENLY FATHER, Creator and Giver of all life, Author of Justice, Source of love and mercy: Although it is deserving of Thine anger and punishment, look with mercy on our nation which has offended Thee by condoning the killing of millions of innocent children, Thy precious sons and daughters, who, like all of us, were created in Thine image and likeness, but whose only offense was their very existence. **AMEN.**

O BLESSED LORD JESUS CHRIST, OUR REDEEMER, whose inestimable gift of self-sacrificing love provided the means of Salvation for all mankind through the shedding of Thine innocent blood: grant that all may come to know Thee, serve Thee and love Thee, and thus may know the meaning of true freedom and true liberty which never destroys, but always serves and protects life. **AMEN.**

O HOLY SPIRIT, source of wisdom, knowledge, understanding, counsel, fortitude, piety and holy fear: inspire us with these gifts. Fill the hearts of the leaders of this nation, especially those who have the temporal power and the grave responsibility to make and interpret and execute laws, with the desire to do God's Will, to restore justice and to establish laws which govern the people of this land in conformity with the Divine Law – laws which will preserve, protect and defend the lives of all sons and daughters of God, from their earliest beginnings until death. **AMEN.**

O MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS, entrusted to be the mother of God's only-begotten Son, Our Savior, through thine obedient consent to God's Will, and who thus became for all people and all time the model of faith and of the self-giving love and devotion of Motherhood: take into thy motherly arms all the babies who are victims of abortion that they may receive eternally the comfort of a mother's love. May thine example and thine intercession open the hearts of all who reject God and His holy laws, comfort all those who suffer remorse because of abortion, and restore to hope in Christ those mothers and fathers who grieve and repent the killing of their children. **AMEN.**

ALL YE ANGELS AND SAINTS: may thy guidance and example show fallen humanity the way to perfect joy and freedom and peace found only in unity with God in obedience to His Will through Salvation in Christ Jesus; and may thy constant prayers be joined by those of all the little children – the "slaughtered innocents" – as a "cloud of witnesses" interceding for sinful man. **AMEN.**

NOVENA: DAY 1

Psalm 139
Gloria Patri
Above Prayers
Rosary: Sorrowful Mysteries
Magnificat: Luke 1:46-55

NOVENA: DAYS 2-9

Our Father...
Above Prayers
Gloria Patri
Three 'Hail Marys'
Gloria Patri



voices

Women for Faith & Family
P.O. Box 8326, St. Louis, MO 63132

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