



New Document on Laity Issued

Christifideles Laici Released Jan. 30

American Catholics who were expecting that the Synod on the Laity would bring about sweeping changes in the Church will be extremely disappointed by the newly-released post-Synod document revealing Pope John Paul II's evaluation of issues raised at the Synod by the world's bishops.

The long-awaited Apostolic Exhortation following the 1987 Synod on the Laity was released by the Vatican January 30. The 200 page document dated December 30, 1988, and entitled *Christifideles Laici*, focuses on roles for the laity in the Church and in the world, and includes a section on the proper role of lay people in the liturgy, and an 18 page section on women.

Like the recent Apostolic Letter "On the Dignity and Vocation of Women" (see **VOICES**, Vol. III No. 3), the new Exhortation is intended to provide an explicit theological framework for the "pastoral applications" which will follow from it. As such, it should give clarification and renewed support to those who are concerned about the apostolate of the laity and appropriate roles for lay men and women in the mission of the Catholic Church. It can help to dispel confusion about the limits of legitimate activities of lay people.

The document cautions against "clericalization" of the laity and emphasizes that the differences in function of clergy and laity, especially in the sacramental life of the Church, should be clearly maintained.

It also says that a special commission will consider in depth the offices of lector and acolyte, apparently in response to the illicit use of women as acolytes and to the many requests for Vatican clarification. The Pope again

stresses the requirement that all local Churches conform to the established norms regarding these liturgical roles.

The section on women is the longest in the document (occupying about 18 pages of text) and contains a particularly clear explanation of the meaning of Galatians 3:28, a

continued on page 2

PMR returned to committee

The controversial "first draft" of the American Bishops' pastoral letter on "women's concerns" ("Partners in the Mystery of Redemption") has been returned to the original committee for complete re-working — "from the ground up," according to informed sources.

In an interview with **30 Days** magazine, one of the committee members, Bishop Alfred Hughes (auxiliary bishop of Boston), said that the defective draft will be entirely rewritten and reformatted. Gone will be the much criticized "Voices of Affirmation" and "Voices of Alienation", and the second draft of the proposed pastoral will follow a format similar to Pope John Paul II's recent Apostolic Letter "On the Dignity and Vocation of Women" (*Mulieris Dignitatem*).

The new version reportedly will reflect a completely different methodology, and the problematic "process" of gathering information from women at "listening sessions" will no longer be utilized by the several individual committee members who will be responsible for drafting each of the separate sections of the new document.

Unlike the "AIDS" pastoral, the initial draft of which was rejected by the bishops at their general meeting last June, the draft of "PMR" never reached the voting stage in the full body of bishops. The first draft had been approved solely by the Administrative Board of the National Council of Catholic Bishops at their meeting in March of 1988. Also unlike the "AIDS" pastoral, the committee which formulated the initial draft will remain the same in the case of the "women's" pastoral. The "AIDS" pastoral (now to be called the "HIV" pastoral) will be rewritten by a new committee headed by Archbishop Roger Mahoney (Los Angeles.)

The bishops' committee for the new version of the "pastoral letter on women's concerns" — which will also have a new name — will continue to be headed by Bishop Joseph Imesch (Joliet, IL). Other bishops are Bishop Thomas Grady (Orlando), Bishop Alfred Hughes (Aux. Boston), Bishop Amadee Proulx (Portland, ME) and Bishop William Levada (Portland, OR). No changes in the women consultants to the committee are foreseen.

Pro-Life Activism

'The Killing Must Stop...'

--Cardinal Law

p. 3

Interview--Joan Andrews

p. 4

Diary of a Rescuer

p. 5

inside voices...

"Thanks for being my voice," one of you wrote to us recently. We do thank the writer for this expression of confidence in us. Actually, however, we think of ourselves as more of a "megaphone"! What we are hoping to do is to make your voice heard more clearly rather than presuming to speak for you!

We believe that a few changes we have made will help us do this more effectively. First, we now have an operating computer and printer. (I am finding the transition from elderly typewriter to 'state-of-the-art' word-processing technology easier than I had expected. Deo gratias!) We hope this will make it possible to have more frequent issues of VOICES and other published materials for you.

We also have a telephone — at last! Our number is (314) 863-8385, if you need to call us. Women for Faith & Family is now listed in the St. Louis directory, as well as in the "Yellow Pages" under religious organizations. We hope this will make it easier for you to reach us.

In this issue you will notice articles related to pro-life rescue operations. While this kind of demonstration is somewhat controversial in some quarters, we are convinced (along with Cardinal Law, Bishop Vaughn and a growing number of Church leaders) that any non-violent action which

helps call attention to the terrible killing of unborn babies is not only justified but probably necessary to restore respect for all human life in our country.

Thanks, especially, to many of you who have written to us with comments about VOICES. We value your ideas and suggestions, and hope we can expand our format to include more of them. Let us know if there's something you'd find particularly helpful or interesting.

PLEASE NOTE: A copy of the **AFFIRMATION FOR CATHOLIC WOMEN** appears on page 7. You may copy this as much as you like. We hope you will! There are still many people who have not heard about it, or who may think we have stopped collecting signatures. We assure you that we will not stop gathering signatures and forwarding them to bishops and the Holy Father until you stop sending them to us.

Do remember us in your prayers when you can.
Have a fruitful Lent, and a blessed Easter!

International News

JAPAN - 'SEIBO NO MIKUNI' (The Kingdom of Our Lady) asks that others join them in setting aside the 5th day of every month as "Anti-abortion Day," and in praying five decades of the Rosary every day for the salvation of mankind and for an end to abortion.

(Seibo No Mikuni - 33-2 Ubasaku Oaza Matuzuka, Sukagawa-shi/ Fukushima 969-04, Japan.)

PHILIPPINES - Pro-Life Philippines, in their December '88 newsletter, *LIFE*, report that a formal Resolution has been filed by Senator Jose D. Lina, Jr. on the implementation of Natural Family Planning in the Philippines. Resolution No. 286, introduced to the Congress of the Philippines late last fall, directs "the appropriate Senate committee to evolve a national policy...on responsible parenthood" and to "inquire into the Billings Ovulation Method as a universally applicable...means of achieving or avoiding pregnancy and raising a family in accordance with the religious convictions of spouses and the demands of responsible parenthood."

(WFF contact: Corazon Valdez-Fabros, Pro-Life Philippines/ Caritas Bldg, 2002 Jesus St., Pandacan, Manila, Philippines.)

ARGENTINA - An Institute on Marriage and the Family has been established in the diocese of Buenos Aires at San Isidro. The director of the Institute, Juan Martin Reddel, obtained his Master's degree in Marriage and Family Sciences at the John Paul II Institute at Lateran University in Rome. Mr. Reddel writes that "This is a diocesan Institute and we prepare Family Pastoral Agents" and others who wish to "obtain a more profound view of the human and Christian project of marriage and family..."

(Juan Martin Reddel, Instituto para el Matrimonio y la Familia, San Isidro/ Virrey Feliu 1750 - Olivos/ Buenos Aires, Argentina)

Document on Laity--continued from page 1

passage most often misused by feminist partisans of radical change in Church practice. This section incorporates in an abbreviated form the reflections of the Holy Father which were contained in *Mulieris Dignitatem*, his Apostolic letter on women's vocation and roles.

It seems clear that Pope John Paul II is, once again, exhorting Catholics — clergy and laity — to adjust their thinking and their actions, when necessary, to reflect the truth which the Church teaches, and to exercise utmost caution in seeming to encourage those who would transform the Church to fit their particular contemporary agenda.

It is also clear, as it has been throughout his entire pontificate, that the Pope hopes to convert people to a true understanding of the Church by explaining and persuading, rather than by forcefully extracting obedience. He is, no doubt, overwhelmingly aware that he stands as a symbol of Christian unity — not just for Catholics, but for all people in the world. The new document confirms the consistent teaching of the Church and calls every Catholic, lay, religious or clergy, to a new commitment to accomplish the Church's evangelical mission in the world.

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Cardinal Law: The Killing Must Stop!

NOTE: (The following excerpts from the text of Cardinal Bernard Law's address to the 16th annual Assembly for Life held in Boston, January 22, 1989, are reprinted from the Boston archdiocesan newspaper, *The Pilot*.)

Slavery scarred the soul of this nation. The justification of that evil system dehumanized thousands of Africans, torn from their families and continent to be brought in shackles to become the engine of other people's wealth and ease. Long after Emancipation, the lie continued that blacks were something a little less than human, and so a system of legal racial segregation found justification in a denial of the obvious fact that all human beings of whatever race or culture are inherently equal.

Inescapable biological facts

So often in the past the pro-life position has been characterized solely as a position of religious belief. More

often than not, it has been characterized as a Catholic position. For those who support abortion, it is most convenient to isolate the pro-life stance as a matter of religious judgment. Once this is done, then the position can be safely dismissed as a question of personal belief which is quite separate from the realm of the state and its laws.

Politicians find in this tactic a ready means to evade responsibility for the protection of human life in the womb. If the pro-life position is a question of belief, then each citizen should be free to follow his or her own belief. The state, after all, is not to canonize a particular system of belief.

Our task is to say and say again that it is not a matter of belief that the expectant mother carries human life within her womb—it is a matter of fact. We are dealing in abortion not with one life, but two—the life of the mother and the life of the child within her womb. It is not faith which reveals that human life begins at conception; it is the inescapable conclusion manifest in the empirical biological evidence.

Voice the facts

The depressing truth is that the evidence is either unknown or ignored, and that many people...justify their position by placing the issue in the realm of belief. We cannot assume...that the reality of abortion is understood. It is not. I know it and you know it as a fact that chills our bones that each year in this country one-and-one-half million human lives are put to death through abortion. There are many people, however, who do not know this. There are many people who...have their consciences anesthetized by the fiction that abortion is not the taking of human life.

The task of the pro-life movement is to present the facts of abortion. The facts are not pleasant. The facts are not tasteful. The willful taking of human life by means often violent cannot be presented in an inoffensive way. ... It is imperative that the curtain of ignorance, real or feigned, which hides the reality of abortion from popular consciousness be pulled down, and that we begin to deal with the fact that abortion is the taking of innocent human life.

Stop ALL abortions

A second objective of the pro-life movement is to make it unmistakably clear that our opposition is not simply to legal abortions; it is an opposition to all abortions. ...Whether the abortion mill has the dubious sanction of *Roe v. Wade*, or the abortion mill is in a back alley, in both instances it is dealing out death—and those responsible should be held accountable by the law for their crime.

If the legality of abortions were to end, the work of the

continued on page 6

WFF Evening

WFF will sponsor an evening of recollection for Southern New England on March 14 at Holy Name Church in Providence, RI. Father Richard McManus will conduct reflections on the recent papal Apostolic Letter 'On the Dignity and Vocation of Women.'

The evening will begin at 7 p.m. For information, contact Dale O'Leary, 6 Overlook Rd., Barrington, RI - 02806 (Tel. 401-247-0822).

DAY OF RECOLLECTION

"On the Dignity and Vocation of Women", Pope John Paul II's recent Apostolic Letter was the subject of a Day of Recollection on February 4, sponsored by WFF. Father Paul Mankowski, S.J., of Boston conducted meditations and celebrated Mass for the group. Despite a heavy early February snowfall about forty people attended the pre-Lenten day of prayer and meditation which took place at Annunziata Parish in St. Louis.

Father Mankowski led the participants in an examination of some of the prominent themes in the Pope's letter in two lectures and a discussion session. He stressed the importance for Catholics to understand and appreciate the Holy Father's original insights about the relationship between man and woman created "in the image of God", and about the relationship of human beings with God. He also led the group to examine ways in which the truth about human beings must be reflected in our actions — our day-to-day life as Christians who all bear "His image." That this truth has immediate practical applications for all of us, whatever our state in life — and most particularly, at this time, for women — was the subject of discussion and informal conversations. By coincidence, a "rescue operation" was taking place in St. Louis on the same weekend at two local abortion clinics (see related stories in this issue) Since every abortion necessarily involves a woman, the urgency of the Pope's teaching, which goes back "to the beginning"—to the Creation of human beings as male and female, is even more striking.

We strongly encourage every Catholic woman to read this Letter. We invite you to contact us if you would like to plan a group study of this "gift" of the Holy Father to faithful Catholics. We believe it would be very appropriate Lenten reading.

Interview with Joan Andrews

NOTE: Joan Andrews, who received a five-year prison sentence for her participation in an anti-abortion demonstration in Florida, visited St. Louis Feb. 2-4 to take part in a rescue operation sponsored by the St. Louis Pro-Life Direct Action League.

Women for Faith in Family met with Miss Andrews to discuss her involvement in the pro-life movement and her spirituality.

WFF: To start off, how did you get the bruise on your cheek?

JA: It was at the rescue operation in Washington, DC — Rachel's Rescue on January 23. That rescue was organized by Project Rachel, a group of women who have been exploited by abortion. They are now coming forward to stop the killing of other children and to help women who face a difficult pregnancy. During the rescue itself I kept crawling back to the door from the paddy wagon to keep the door blocked. Eventually the police got very angry and threw me so that my face hit the ground.

WFF: How many years have you been involved in the pro-life movement and what type of involvement has it been?

JA: I have been involved for sixteen years. I've done lobbying, picketing, sidewalk counseling. I worked in a maternity home and for Birthright and helped establish a couple of maternity homes. I've written letters and worked on political campaigns for pro-life candidates. I've done a little of everything, I guess. I got involved in rescue operations when I first heard about them and came here to St. Louis for my first one in 1979.

WFF: Do you think rescue missions are the final step in the pro-life movement?

JA: I absolutely do. The rescues will highlight a continuous movement and include much else. We will continue trying to change the laws but we don't have to worry about that — that will all fall into line once we stop the killing of babies physically. But even after baby killing has been outlawed and protection has been won for the children, we'll still have to have rescue missions. We'll have to have people going out to find those who continue to do baby killing and then force police to arrest them. I do believe that we will see in our country what we've seen elsewhere. In Canada, for example, even after baby killing was outlawed it went on unabated. It was a reality in this country prior to 1973 because the courts and the Justice Department turned their heads the other way and allowed it to take place.

WFF: Do you foresee a time when this type of demonstration will stop abortion? What kind of a time frame are you working in?

JA: I think we're looking at a short amount of time — perhaps a few years — before we start seeing the significant fruits of our labor. This movement is blessed by God if people are faithful and do not get wrapped up in results. We have to leave the results in God's hands and just do what we are called to do in charity and love. We will be out there at the death camps, in any given community, by the hundreds and thousands, and we will not only physically stop the killing, we will make it impossible for this country to continue to exist as there won't be enough courts or prisons to handle the number of people who are protesting. We will be able to guarantee baby protection.

WFF: Feminists claim even now that they're winning. They say Roe vs. Wade will never be reversed. What is your response to this?

JA: Even the feminists are admitting that abortion is the killing of a child but that it is justifiable because it protects that quality of that baby's life. But when good people step forward and stop the killing, even the feminists will have to back down.

WFF: How do you sustain yourself spiritually? Do you have any special devotions?

JA: Oh yes. I believe, and my spiritual director has helped me in this, that anyone involved in this type of work has to have a deep spirituality and stay very close to the Sacraments, the source of all grace. Daily mass and holy hours before the Blessed Sacrament with the scriptures are the best way. We have to have a Eucharistic and scriptural foundation in everything we do. We have to be open to Our Lord and let Him speak to us and stay sustained in that so that even if our numbers disappear totally we will continue to do what is right, no matter what the consequences are. The only way a person can do that is by having a deep spirituality and staying close to the Sacraments.

WFF: What would be helpful to other women going through a crisis?

JA: The rosary for me is very helpful. I even know Protestants who are close to the rosary. It is such a powerful prayer and anyone can see the scriptural basis of it.

WFF: What about homemakers with young families or other people who cannot afford to be arrested in a rescue operation. How can they assist you and others on the front line?

JA: I think people can participate in rescue operations, not as somebody risking arrest but certainly as somebody willing to take in the pregnant woman or willing to be there as sidewalk counselors or even a prayerful presence. The number of people present can keep the place closed down. In New York city several weeks ago, during a rescue operation there, even though the police took a wedge and opened the doors immediately, more than a thousand rescuers — sidewalk counselors and picketers — surrounded the place. The numbers alone kept the death camp closed down and stopped the killing that day.

WFF: Is it advised for women to bring their children or babies to these rescue operations? Is there any danger?

JA: I don't think there is any danger because the rescues are so well organized. Anyone who stays on the sidewalk is very safe. However, there are children being arrested, because they are risking arrest by blocking doors. I've seen children as young as 7 or 8 doing it because they feel called to do it and their parents realize — and I support this myself — these children have a heart for it.

WFF: Do children ever go to jail?

JA: Never. They are released immediately.

WFF: Are you prepared to be arrested this weekend in St. Louis — and perhaps spend another two years in prison?

JA: Absolutely. When I wake up in the morning my prayer is "Lord, whatever you have in store for me today and for my life, please give me the strength to do it. I trust that you will give me the strength." God has all the graces we need and I believe that He will give them to me and to anyone else who asks Him for it. So this weekend I am prepared for whatever will happen. Certainly I don't look forward to prison again but I have to be willing, and I think we all have to be willing, to abandon ourselves. The only way we will stop baby killing in this country is if we, as individuals who love the Lord, are willing to abandon ourselves into His hands and accept whatever comes.

Diary of a Rescuer

NOTE - Sherry Tyree, of WFF's St. Louis staff, accepted a request to risk arrest during a pro-life rescue operation. Following is her account of that day.

February 3, 1989

7 a.m. - I awoke after a restless night's sleep and read, drank tea and ate breakfast (although I was told later food and drink before a rescue is not a good idea.)

8 a.m. - Dressed for Rescue-St. Louis. Eight degrees outside, not counting wind-chill. Three layers of sweat pants, thermal underwear, blouse, shetland cardigan and two sweat shirts, knee socks, leather boots, woolen cap and hood up on navy sweatshirt. Vaseline on face, kleenex, rosary, ID, all jewelry off (forgot to remove wedding rings). Today's Epistle recommends being kind to prisoners as you never know when you will be in prison yourself.

9 a.m. - My sister, Jane, arrived to accompany me. My husband, Donald, said he would visit us in jail on Sundays, and waved us off.

9:15 a.m. - Arrived at shopping center parking lot. Wandered around looking for the others, then were told we had a good half-hour before departure. Stayed in car, as we would soon be cold enough.

10 a.m. (approx.) - Got into someone's van and were driven with seven or eight others to Regency Park abortion clinic. Before we arrived at the entrance of the building, we saw "Christy", an employee, lock the front door, and lock her car. She was shouting at us, "You are trespassing! You are trespassing!" Evidently she went into the "clinic" through the back door.

10:05? until ?? - We stood in rows praying, quoting scripture, singing, sometimes saying nothing.

A man arrived trying to get into the building to see his dentist. He was not amused to see us there, kept ordering us to open the building. We told him we didn't lock it and didn't have a key. He left.

A youngish woman arrived for an ob/gyn appointment and seemed not at all put out to leave.

A young man arrived in uniform "to deliver oxygen" and was verbally abusive — all just in time for the TV cameras. We decided later he must have been a set-up.

St. Louis Post-Dispatch interviewed a demonstrator. Meanwhile, pro-life picketers and counselors were on the sidewalk.

Police Chief O'Connor arrived, manhandled us a bit, pushing us aside, knocking us into one another. The Chief entered the clinic (Christy let him in) and a little later departed from the same front door. Then his troops arrived, coming around the side of the building so that we didn't see them until they were upon us. They marched in two columns, two abreast. There were about as many police as demonstrators.

The first row of rescuers sat down. One by one they were arrested. I was saying my rosary the entire time. Difficult to concentrate on the Hail Mary while all this was going on, but I did.

As each row was hauled away, the next row sat down. (A couple of the "regulars" had fastened rubber pads to the backs of their trousers for just this sitting down.) A policeman stepped on my foot accidentally. He and two other officers were attempting to pick up a limp rescuer next to me. As I stepped aside, I was caught by both arms by two other policemen who ushered me into a paddy wagon. I did not go

limp. Neither did Jane, who was taken next.

Once in the paddy wagon we scooted to the end of the bench and were asked by a policeman to help a limp male rescuer into the van "once he is out of range of the cameras." So we did.

Our toes were frozen. In transit to a bus in Queeny Park, we tried to warm up. We were ushered into the bus in groups. Seemed a bit like camp, at this point. A busload singing songs — people telling us what do. Only difference was the grill between us and the officers in front.

Last to arrive was Joan Andrews, with an intact kryptonite lock around her neck. She had locked herself to the back door of the clinic. Evidently the police decided to saw through the door handle rather than her lock, as kryptonite is very hard to cut.

Everyone now on board the bus. The paper later said there were 38 of us. We were driven to the Clayton jail, singing on the way. The voices were beautiful — sounded like a choir of angels. Jane and I chatted. A couple in front of us offered us homemade fruit rollups and gave us the recipe.

? p.m. - Once at the Clayton jail, we were taken through processing in small groups. Five in ours. We were required to remove all jewelry and other items (including rosary), shoelaces and belts. We were frisked. (No frisking around bra area, so my kleenex and Jane's chapstick went unnoticed.) Items removed were listed and a receipt issued.

We were later told that the woman who frisked us has had two abortions. She has a history of treating abortion protesters roughly, and was told by her department to cool her jets.

While in the processing room, we could see other miscreants in a glass-enclosed room. A sorry-looking lot. But I suppose we were too.

Underguard, we were taken to the elevator and upstairs into the prisoners' gymnasium. Two rooms, actually, one a full-sized basketball court and a smaller workout room with no windows. We piled our outer clothing onto the pingpong table and surveyed our surroundings. A manual stationary bike (which few of us could master) hard gym mats, one chair, two telephones with 'touch-nine-and-dial-any-local-number' privileges, a bathroom without a door and a toilet without any lids; a temporary "door" made out of blue sheet fixed to two overhead pipes; punching-bag, weight lifts...

We spent a good deal of time chatting. Many, particularly the regulars, snoozed on the mats.

Those with medicine were visited by a prison nurse who administered the medicine and reconfiscated it. No smoking. The only time an official was gruff was when one woman started to smoke.

4 p.m. - A guard arrived with a brown cardboard box filled with stacks of brown paper bags, each filled with two identical sandwiches: white bread, baloney and cheese. I rearranged it into a double-decker: bread cheese bread cheese bread. (Bye-bye baloney!)

Father Edwin Arensten sat cross-legged on the floor playing a prison game with anyone who would take him on: fifteen wadded up pieces of toilet paper, rolled into balls and divided into three groups of seven, five and three. Player can remove any number of balls in any group, but must stick with just that group in that turn. Object is to leave opponent with one ball. Father never lost. Lovely to see Joan Andrews play

continued on page 6

Diary of a Rescuer--continued from page 5

him. Father beat Joan, too. Jane asked Father to reveal his trick when *Roe v. Wade* is reversed.

As the day wore on, between trips under guard to be fingerprinted and photographed, a guard handed out some domino sets. Jane and I played with a man with a white beard. The gentleman told us tales of the Atlanta rescue. Much sleeping and snoring going on.

Before we knew it, someone announced we were to be released. We dressed for outdoors. I couldn't find my receipt for my belongings. They didn't ask for the receipt.

7 p.m. - Out into the darkness and snow to be picked up and taken back to the shopping center for our car. We learned there had been a "stink pellet" thrown into the clinic while we were in jail, and about six clinic personnel were evacuated from the building. Perhaps there were no abortions, or fewer than scheduled. I may never know.

We gave two men a ride to their car. One of them, an Illinois lawyer, thought that St. Louis lawyers should have been on hand through the day to advise us. I don't know. We did fine without lawyers that day, I thought.

8 p.m. - Home.

How had it been? I was very impressed by the behavior of my fellow rescuers — their spirituality, patience, humility and humor. If this group is typical of the movement, it will grow.

Would I do it again? Yes, indeed.

Huswifery

Make me, O Lord, thy Spinning Wheele compleat,
Thy Holy Worde my Distaff make for mee.
Make mine Affections thy Swift Flyers neate,
And make my Soule thy holy Spoole to bee.
My conversation make to be my Reelee,
And reele the yarn thereon spun of thy Wheele.

Make me thy Loom then, knit thereon this Twine:
And make thine Holy Spirit, Lord, winde quills:
Then weave the Web thyselfe. The yarn is fine.
Thine Ordinances make my Fulling Mills.
Then dy the same in Heavenly Colours Choice,
All pinkt with Varnish't Flowers of Paradise.

Then Cloath therewith mine Understanding Will,
Affections, Judgment, Conscience, Memory;
My Words and Actions, that their shine may fill
My wayes with glory and thee glorify.
Then mine apparell shall display before yee
That I am Cloathed in Holy robes for glory.

Edward Taylor
(+ Westfield, Mass., 1729)

Cardinal Law--continued from page 3

pro-life movement would not be over. As long as innocent human life within the womb is threatened by abortion, legal or otherwise, so long will the pro-life movement continue.

Armed with love

Some would criticize the pro-life movement as too singular in its focus. While it is certainly necessary to situate our concern for the right to life of the unborn in that continuum of life which ends with natural death...we need not apologize if our efforts are particularly directed to protect the unborn, for they are those whose life is most vulnerable.

While the pro-life cause is an eminently righteous one, it is imperative that we not be self-righteous. ... We are about the business of affirming the right to life of the unborn because we are convinced of the dignity and worth of every human person. Every abortion is a tragic drama, and never more so than when those involved...are impervious to what it is they are doing. Our effort must be to speak the truth in love to all those who have fallen victims to an abortion culture, for this is what we have developed—an abortion culture. ... The elites of our society have transformed what once was universally considered a crime into the lawful exercise of a right to choose... To speak the truth in love means to show the face of compassion to all who are victimized.

On 'rescue operations'

Operation Rescue expresses in one way...the frustration in the hearts of thousands of us as we realize that with each passing day more human lives are being destroyed through abortion. ... Those whom I know personally who have been involved in Operation Rescue are women and men outstanding in their desire to act nonviolently in compassion and love. They have my admiration and support. They do not sanction physical violence, nor do they sanction the destruction of property. ... We...deplore all forms of physical violence and destruction, but must be relentless in championing the right to life of the unborn.

Assurance in Faith

I began by stating that the pro-life position is a matter of fact, not a belief. This is certainly so. I began by pointing out that abortion, like slavery, rests on a denial of fact about the inherent dignity of every human being. For many of us, however, the facts revealed by empirical, biological evidence are illumined by faith. Faith...carries us beyond reason, and reinforces the facts revealed by the empirical evidence. How poignantly is this so in this passage from Isaiah in which the inspired prophet attempts to express in human categories the love which God has for every man, woman, and child—the love which we are to strive for in our relationships with one another. Isaiah writes:

"Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of the womb? Even should she forget, I will never forget you."

May God grant us the grace never to forget.

AFFIRMATION FOR CATHOLIC WOMEN

Because of the assaults against the Christian faith and the family by elements within contemporary society which have led to pervasive moral confusion, to damage and destruction of families and to the men, women and children which comprise them;

Because we adhere to the Catholic Christian faith as expressed in Holy Scripture, the Nicene, Apostolic and Athanasian Creeds, in the early ecumenical Councils of the Church, and in the continued deepening of the understanding of the revelations of Sacred Truth to the Church by the Holy Spirit through the teaching authority of the Church and of the Successors of Peter, Apostle;

Because we wish to affirm our desire to realize our vocations and our duty as Christians and as women in accordance with these authentic teachings, following the example and instruction of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and the example of Mary, His mother;

Because we are cognizant of our obligations as Christian women to witness to our faith, being mindful that this witness is important to the formation of the moral conscience of our families and of humanity,

we wish to make this affirmation:

1. We believe that through God's grace our female nature affords us distinct physical and spiritual capabilities with which to participate in the Divine Plan for creation. Specifically, our natural function of childbearing endows us with the spiritual capacity for nurture, instruction, compassion and selflessness, which qualities are necessary to the establishment of families, the basic and Divinely ordained unit of society, and to the establishment of a Christian social order.

2. We believe that to attempt to subvert or deny our distinct nature and roles as women subverts and denies God's plan for humanity, and leads to both personal disintegration and ultimately to the disintegration of society. Accordingly, we reject all ideologies which seek to eradicate the natural and essential distinction between the sexes, which debase and devalue womanhood, family life and the nurturing role of women in society.

3. We affirm the intrinsic sacredness of all human life, and we reject the notion that abortion, the deliberate killing of unborn children, is the "right" of any human being, male or female, or of any government. Such a distorted and corrosive notion of individual freedom is, in fact, inimical to

authentic Christianity and to the establishment and maintenance of a just social order.

4. We accept and affirm the teaching of the Catholic Church on all matters dealing with human reproduction, marriage, family life and roles for men and women in the Church and in society.

5. We therefore also reject as an aberrant innovation peculiar to our times and our society the notion that priesthood is the "right" of any human being, male or female. Furthermore, we recognize that the specific role of ordained priesthood is intrinsically connected with and representative of the begetting creativity of God in which only human males can participate. Human females, who by nature share in the creativity of God by the capacity to bring forth new life, and, reflective of this essential distinction, have a different and distinct role within the Church and in society from that accorded to men, can no more be priests than men can be mothers.

6. We recognize and affirm the vocations of women who subordinate their human role of motherhood and family life in order to consecrate their lives to the service of God, His Church and humanity. Such women's authentic response of consecrated service to the physical, spiritual and/or intellectual needs of the community in no way diminishes or compromises their essential female nature, or the exercise of inherent attributes, insights and gifts peculiar to women. Rather, it extends the applications of these gifts beyond the individual human family.

7. We stand with the Second Vatican Council which took for granted the distinct roles for men and women in the family and in society and affirmed that Christian education must impart knowledge of this distinction: "In the entire educational program [Catholic school teachers] should, together with the parents, make full allowance for the difference of sex and for the particular role which Providence has appointed to each sex in the family and in society." (*Declaration on Education*, Sec. 8, paragraph 3, from Vatican II Documents, ed. Austin Flannery, 1981)

8. We pledge our wholehearted support to Pope John Paul II. We adhere to his apostolic teaching concerning all aspects of family life and roles for men and women in the Church and in society, especially as contained in the Apostolic Exhortation, *Familiaris Consortio*; and we resolve to apply the principles contained therein to our own lives, our families, and our communities, God being our aid.

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Lent '89

Your Home: A 'Little Church'

NOTE: During the season of Lent we often look for ways to increase the spiritual lives of our families. Sometimes it is easier to "start something new" during Lent than at other times of the year. In an article in the Arlington Catholic HERALD written by Mother M. Claudia, IHM, we found some suggestions we wanted to pass along to you. Mother Claudia's complete article (with the above title) appeared in the January 12 edition.

We appreciate Mother Claudia's helpful suggestions and insights, especially at this season of the year. We might also suggest that Lent is a good time to institute the practice of saying the Angelus at the evening meal, or starting a family (or neighborhood?) Rosary. You may find that it is not really hard to continue a "habit" started during Lent!

"Is your home 'a little Church?' Is it a home where God is not only present, but is known to be present by everyone in the family? Is He included in all family plans and activities?

"Pope John Paul II keeps asking these questions whenever he meets families. In his Exhortation on the family, *Familiaris Consortio*, he suggests that every home should be 'a little Church'...

"Your new 'little Church' will include each member of the family, with Christ as guide and director of a new force that will give unseen strength to the entire people of God, ... a force that will enliven the whole Mystical Body of Christ.

"Faith will be the generator of such a noble effort and today's weakened family could become once more the first and best means to holiness for each of its members. ...

"In every home there are built-in ways in which faith can be deepened. In forming their children, parents become aware of the need for certain qualities to be nurtured. ... The practice of virtue and self-denial is often overlooked. Yet that is what Christ preached. ... 'Take up your cross and follow Me!' ... has been the hallmark of every saint in every century.

"Opportunities for patience and endurance abound in all families. ... Family life blossoms in the atmosphere where faith is practiced in unimportant matters as well as those that

seem crucial to the survival of the family.... Moments of loving tolerance make love of God and love of family grow by leaps and bounds.

"Parents can awaken in their children... this concern for one another... Youngsters can be taught to 'offer up' their small disappointments... chores... or obediences that strengthen character. ...

"Children are given to the family in order that they may grow through genuine love and parental authority. Care to reward efforts and keep promises is essential, but so also is loving, firm correction for deliberate failure. Love inspires both means.

Family Prayer

"Family prayer is indispensable. Modern moms and dads are certainly pressured by time demands. But 'Good-bye and God bless you!' takes only a moment and is a worthy substitute for 'Have a good day!'

Grace at meals teaches thanksgiving. When study time arrives, parents can pause long enough to say: 'Let's say a little prayer for God's help as you get ready for school tomorrow.' Getting into or out of the car offers a chance to say: 'Dear Lord, take us there safely', or 'Thank you for bringing us home safely.' Make up your own little petitions and thanksgivings and encourage the children to do the same. The actual examples given by parents are a hundred times more forceful than all the explanations children receive in school or in religion class.

"Prayer together... where dad, mom and the children kneel together before the crucifix... can be the inspiration for a lifetime of fervent prayer and love of God. ... Many families I know are making heroic efforts to develop in their children... a living, vibrant 'faith life' that will be the most precious treasure they ever give their children. ...

"What will the children think as you start your 'little Church'? Secretly they will be thrilled and delighted. Children want to know Jesus. ... For courage to begin, start at once. Ask! Seek! Knock! Never stop!"