

voices voices voices



Vol. XI: No. 1

March 1996

Contents:

*Vatican issues The Truth and
Meaning of Sexuality* page 1

Letters from Bishops page 2

*Cardinal Ratzinger Accepts
WFF Award* page 3

WFF Conference Report page 4

WFF Conference Album page 8

Hitchcock: Crossing the Threshold
page 10

Publications Review page 11

From the Mailroom page 13

Vatican Issues Letter on "Sex-ed"

*Parents' efforts to teach with the Church affirmed by
Pontifical Council for the Family*

THE TRUTH AND MEANING OF HUMAN SEXUALITY, released January 18, 1996 by the Pontifical Council for the Family (PCF) gives encouragement to parents concerned about "sex education" in Catholic schools. The letter strongly emphasizes that parents have the duty and the right to be the first and principal educators of their children.

Subtitled Guidelines for Education Within the Family, and drawing from previously published Vatican documents (Pope John Paul II's *Familiaris Consortio*, 1981, and his Letter to Families in 1994, as well as the *Charter for the Rights of Families* (1981) and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the new letter, *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality*, leaves no doubt that the PCF wishes parents to be truly in control of what their children are taught about sexual matters.

THE COUNCIL OUTLINES THE DUTY OF PARENTS in dealing with this difficult task in the context of a hostile culture in its introductory remarks:

"In the past, even when the family did not provide specific sexual education, the general culture was permeated by respect for fundamental values and hence served to protect and maintain them. In the greater part of society, both in developed and developing countries, the decline of traditional models has left children deprived of consistent and positive guidance, while parents find themselves unprepared to provide adequate answers. This new context is made worse by what we observe: an eclipse of the truth about man which, among other things, exerts pressure to reduce sex to something commonplace. In this area, society and the mass media most of the time provide depersonalized, recreational and often pessimistic information. Moreover, this information does not take into account the different stages of formation and development of children and young people, and it is influenced by a distorted individualistic concept of freedom, in an ambience lacking the basic values of life, human love and the family.

"Then the school, making itself available to carry out programs of sex education, has often done this by taking the place of the family and, most of the time, with the aim of only providing information. Sometimes this really leads to the deformation of consciences. In many cases parents have given up their

Continued on page 16

Letters from Bishops to WFF

It has been a singular privilege for those who attend WFF conferences to hear the encouraging words of our bishops, whether in person or by letters. We believe our readers who were not able to attend our conference will find the bishops' messages a helpful source of inspiration and encouragement, and it is our pleasure to share them with you. (The message and Apostolic Blessing of the Holy Father to Women for Faith & Family presented at the conference by Archbishop Agostino Cacciavillan, Pro-Nuncio to the United States, will appear in the next issue of VOICES.)

I wish to take this occasion to extend to you and to all those attending the eleventh annual Women for Faith and Family Conference my sincere best wishes.

I commend Women for Faith and Family for its long dedication to promoting authentic respect for women's dignity and women's roles within the Catholic Church and within our families. In his recent Letter to Women, our Holy Father spoke about the "genius of women." He emphasized the importance of ensuring that this "genius" is fully expressed in the life of the Church and of society. In this spirit, I am pleased to see that the theme of this year's conference is "The Role of Women in the New Evangelization."

I thank Women for Faith and Family for providing support to women who are committed to the teaching of the Catholic faith and who are striving to provide strong witness to this faith.

Please be assured that my prayers are with those gathered for this conference. May our Lord's blessings be with you as you continue with your wonderful efforts to promote true dignity for women.

With prayerful best wishes, I remain,
Sincerely yours in Christ,
Anthony Cardinal Bevilacqua,
Archbishop of Philadelphia

As you gather for the 11th annual Women for Faith and Family conference, I offer you the prayers and greetings of the Archdiocese of Washington, located just across the Potomac River from the site of your conference.

You gather to consider an important theme, namely, "the Role of Women in the New Evangelization." I know that your reflections will draw their inspiration and content from all that Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, has written concerning the new evangelization and the vitally important role of women in the Church and in our world.

I know that you will keep in focus the indispensable role of the family in the new evangelization. Strong, unified families, who strive to live the Gospel in its fullness are indispensable for transforming our culture. In his recent

Letter to Women, Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, highlights the importance of women in the formation of such families. It is a contribution which our Church and our world cannot do without.

In addition, as women advance in professional life they are also called to be witnesses to Christ and to the teaching of the Church both in the home and in the workplace. It is my prayer that the reflections at your annual conference will assist many women in embracing their challenging but grace-filled vocation.

Please be assured that I shall remember you and all the conference participants in my prayers. May the Holy Spirit lighten and guide all who take part in this important conference.

With kind personal regards, I am
Sincerely in Christ,
James Cardinal Hickey
Archbishop of Washington

Let me take this opportunity to greet all the participants in the eleventh annual Women for Faith and Family Conference.

This conference provides a good opportunity for each participant to reaffirm the ideals of your organization. Today, faith illiteracy, the disintegration of the family and the destruction of thousands of unborn lives are crises which effect everyone of us who profess to be people of faith. These situations can be overcome through the good works and example of people of faith, people like you, Women for Faith and Family.

Wishing a successful conference and asking God to bless you and your families, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Bernard Cardinal Law
Archbishop of Boston

I offer my prayerful best wishes to all those participating in your special conference entitled "The Role of Women in the New Evangelization".

It is interesting and significant that your conference follows so closely on the heels of the Beijing Conference, sponsored by the United Nations with regard to the role of women in society. As our Holy Father has stated in his letter to the women of the world and in several of his addresses throughout this summer and

VOICES Vol. XI : No. 1 March 1996

VOICES ISSN 1066-8136, is published quarterly by **Women for Faith & Family**, P.O. Box 8326, St. Louis, MO 63132, ph. & fax (314) 863-8385. Helen Hull Hitchcock, President, Sherry Tyree, Vice-President, Susan J. Benofy, Treasurer, Jocelyn Johnson, Secretary. Copyright © 1996, Women for Faith & Family. All rights reserved. Second-class postage paid at New Hope, Kentucky. **Women for Faith & Family** is a non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Missouri, established in 1984 to help provide Catholic women a means of expressing unity with the teachings of the Catholic Church, deepening their understanding of the Catholic faith, and transmitting it to others. **VOICES** provides information on events and issues of concern to all Catholics, especially to Catholic women, their families and/or religious communities.

TAX-EXEMPT DONATIONS, INQUIRIES AND CHANGES OF ADDRESS may be mailed to **Women for Faith & Family**, P.O. Box 8326, St. Louis, MO 63132. Editorial mail should be addressed to **VOICES c/o WFF**, P.O. Box 8326, St. Louis, MO 63132.

Cardinal Ratzinger Accepts 1995 Faith and Family Award

Vatican City, October 25, 1995

Dear Mrs. Hitchcock,

Thank you for your kind letter asking me to be the recipient of the "Faith and Family Award" given by the organization Women for Faith & Family. I am pleased to accept this gracious honour.

As you are aware from previous correspondence, the demands of my schedule make it impossible for me to take part in the annual conference of Women for Faith and Family next month. Because of this, His Excellency Archbishop Agostino Cacciavillan, Pro-Nuncio in the United States, has most graciously agreed to receive the award on my behalf.

Allow me to take this opportunity to extend my sincere greetings to all who will participate in this year's conference. The theme which has been chosen, "The Role of Women in the New Evangelization" is particularly appropriate in light of the international attention which recently has been given to questions of women and the family. May you be guided by the prayer and example of Mary, Mother of God and image of the Church, as you reflect upon the great dignity of women in the plan of God, and as you seek to come to a deeper understanding of the responsibility of women in bringing the Gospel of Christ to the world.

With kind regards and prayerful best wishes, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger



Cardinal Ratzinger

Letters from Bishops

autumn of 1995, the feminine mind and spirit are essential for the well-being of culture and for the development of families. The work of evangelization resonates very well with the feminine gifts of listening to the Word of the Lord and contemplating in a reflective way on the mystery of what God is saying in our lives. After the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, all women have special gifts and charisms to share in the announcing of the Good News.

Quoting directly from our Holy Father, he reminds us that we must "Turn our gaze trustingly to the Blessed Virgin. Like the other women of her time, she bore the burden of an age when little room was allowed them. Yet the Son of God did not hesitate, in some ways, to learn from her! May Mary obtain for all the women in the world a full awareness of their potential and their role at the service of culture which is ever more truly human and in conformity with God's plan."

With prayerful best wishes for the success of your conference and bringing the message back home to your respective diocese and workplaces, I remain

Sincerely yours in the Lord,

Adam Cardinal Maida

Archbishop of Detroit

I am writing to offer a few words of support and a promise of prayers for Women for Faith & Family as you gather for your 11th annual conference in Arlington. I am grateful for your

invitation to be part of the gathering but I am not able to attend.

I am deeply grateful for all that Women for Faith & Family has done for the Church over these past years. And of course I am deeply grateful for your presence and the generous and kind words of support when we gather at our Bishops' Conference Meetings in November and June.

Please extend my greetings to all who gather for the conference. My prayer is that we will all come to love the Church as Christ loved the Church.

May God give you peace and every blessing.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.

Bishop of Rapid City

Thank you very much for your thoughtful letter! It is good to know that the theme for your forthcoming conference is "The Role of Women in the New Evangelization."

Your vision of the New Evangelization, rooted firmly in the teachings of our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, is a source of hope and an authentic means of renewal in the life of the Church.

Be assured of my prayers for the success of your efforts. Remember me, please, in your own prayers. May the Lord bless you and keep you. May I remain

Faithfully yours in Christ,

+Roberto Gonzalez

Coadjutor Bishop of Corpus Christi

Continued on page 7

Women study role in the "New Evangelization"

by Jocelyn Johnson

MANY NEW FACES WERE SEEN, and old friends greeted, at the eleventh annual Women for Faith & Family Conference, held November 3-5, 1995.

Titled "Crossing the Threshold of Hope: Women and the New Evangelization", the conference convened in Arlington, Virginia. Men and women from across the country accepted the hospitality of Arlington **Bishop John Keating** and the Family Life Office of the Diocese of Arlington, in order to listen to exceptional speakers and to worship together. **Sherry Tyree** was conference chairman.

Archbishop Agostino Cacciavillan, papal pro-nuncio to the United States, presented a message of greeting on behalf of the Holy See, and an Apostolic blessing for the conference from Pope John Paul II at the opening session. (This message will appear in the next issue.)

Archbishop Cacciavillan also accepted WFF's 1995 Faith and Family Award on behalf of **Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger**, Prefect of the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. WFF's award expressed gratitude to the cardinal for his example of devotion to Christ, to His Holy Church and to the family, and for his courageous and intelligent defense of the Catholic faith.

On Saturday **Cardinal James Hickey** of Washington welcomed the conference and extended his own good wishes. The cardinal, who had come from a meeting of the Conference of Major Superiors of Women Religious, was accompanied by his auxiliary, **Bishop William Lori**.

Arlington **Bishop John Keating**, spoke about transmitting the faith over the nearly-2000 years since the first Pentecost in his panel presentation on the "Urgent Need for the Gospel".

Bishop Keating said that many times the faith was handed on one person at a time, and had to survive persecution, barbarity, heresy, tragedy and travail with great risk to the bearers of the Truth. The gospel message was carried forth through the spoken word, the printed word, art and architecture, in the liturgy, in personal prayer, in the pulpit, the classroom, through ties of blood, and in the simplest encounter as well as

through high technology.

The bishop noted that women are called to share in the great evangelization which will be unleashed, as the Holy Father tells us, in the third millenium. Faith, he said, is the human response of acceptance to what has been revealed. It has been handed on by Tradition - by the apostles, through the institution they established at the prompting of the Holy Spirit - as well as through divinely inspired Scripture.

The *Magisterium* (teaching authority of the Church) is essential, Bishop Keating stated, in handing on the faith. He emphasized that two actions are involved in this task: proclamation and witness. Proclamation of the Good News itself is the public profession of our faith. Examples are the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. Witness is the manner in which we live our lives. It is expressed by people to others in their concern for the poor and the ill. It is action, not just talk. The two aspects of evangelization—proclamation and witness—work together and are useless if separated.

Joyce Little: What is Divine Providence?

"Divine Providence" was the subject of the keynote address Friday evening given by **Dr. Joyce A. Little**, professor of theology at the University of St. Thomas in Houston. Dr. Little, a frequent speaker at WFF conferences whose new book, *The Church and the Culture Wars*, had just been released, explored an interesting aspect of how God operates in this world, that is, by Divine Providence, and postulated that when bad things happen people tend to think that God is not a loving God, that He is not powerful, or that there is no God.

It is important to think in terms of how God works "within the system" He created, Dr. Little said. She pointed out that in the Book of Sirach, God left man in the power of his own counsel; God gives man a command but leaves it up to him as to how to respond. He allows us to choose, and therefore to be free. When man misuses his freedom and disobeys, the consequences flow from the act, not from God "zapping" him from on high. In other words, the sin itself carries its own punishment.

As communal beings, Dr. Little said, the things we do for good or ill have effects on other people. The sin of Adam and Eve affected not just themselves but was passed on to the community. Grievous evils, such as atheistic communism, cannot stand forever, and eventually fall by their own weight.

Jocelyn Johnson is secretary of Women for Faith and Family.

Helen Hitchcock: Women at the Threshold...

Exploring the title of Pope John Paul II's book, "Crossing the Threshold of Hope", in the context of confusion in the Church and in the world, and of the role of women in evangelization, WFF director **Helen Hull Hitchcock** examined the concept of "threshold": the sill of a door, an impediment or a dividing line, a level of pain, the line between life and death, or a time of darkness before dawn, or of pain and suffering before death..

Mrs Hitchcock pointed out that being a poet, the Holy Father would have chosen the word 'threshold' carefully, looking at its various facets of meaning, and how this concept is related to the meaning of 'hope'. Adding the word 'hope' to his title causes us to reflect on its meaning, too: hope is the expectation that a desire will be fulfilled. As a theological virtue, she said, hope is a "fearless confidence in God's will, in His unfathomable love for mankind". The Catechism defines hope as "the confident expectation of the Divine blessing and the beatific vision of God". St. Paul wrote frequently of hope, from the darkness of his prison and in the face of certain death. The Old Testament books of Lamentations and Job also speak of hope—significantly, in the midst of near despair.

Mrs. Hitchcock noted that in a perfect world, there would be no reason for hope, because every expectation of good would already be fulfilled. Hope arises only in a context of pain, suffering, discouragement, darkness. We speak of a ray of hope, which comes only in the darkest hour, she observed, and hope gives its most radiant light when it shines into the darkest possible corner of human existence. Thus the Holy Father's call to hope clearly implies that he recognizes the situation of our world today which is desperate, with unprecedented depths of confusion, evil, and spiritual darkness.

At this moment in history, however, we are at a "threshold of hope" as we also approach the threshold of a new millenium.

Only the truth of salvation in Christ can release the world from its misery, slavery and bondage, and bring to it freedom and hope. Mrs. Hitchcock postulated that we, as Christians, are the only bearers of Christ's light, and women, in particular—to which the bearing of new life and particular care for all human life has been entrusted—have a special responsibility to bring this message to a troubled world.

Sr. Timothea Elliott: Women in the New Testament

In "New Testament Women and Evangelization: Models for Today", **Sister M. Timothea Elliott**, professor of Scripture at St. John's Seminary (Dunwoodie), New York, stated that the process of evangelization involves bringing the Good News of salvation by Christ to others. In the New Testament many women were involved in that process. Though there are "too many to recount in one hour", Sister Timothea examined some passages from the Gospel of Luke which showed the writer's concern and sensitivity to the evangelization of women.

In addition, Luke shows that men and women alike are called to discipleship, that they have the same responsibility to build the kingdom, and that Jesus called women as well as men

to be evangelized to full discipleship with Him. Women have an equal role to play in worship and prayer and in the responsibility of building the Church.

History shows, Sister Timothea continued, that women's roles were usually confined to a more private role behind the scenes, while men's roles took place in the public sphere. But Luke uses a theme to show that men and women share in discipleship, and that theme is hospitality — hospitality to the Word of God. Receiving the Word, nurturing it and sharing it. Mary is the first in Luke's Gospel to receive the Word of God and offers the hospitality of her body, soul, and life; she then brings the Word to Elizabeth and John. Luke presents Mary as the perfect disciple - one who receives the Word, believes, offers hospitality to the Word, and brings it forth.

Panel: "Urgent Need for the Gospel"- Catechism and Scripture

Bishop James Keating gave his comments and reflections as part of a panel on Saturday. **Father John Rock, SJ**, of Wheeling Jesuit College Department of Theology, addressed translation issues affecting the Catechism of the Catholic Church and Scripture. Fr. Rock had just completed a six-year appointment at the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Other panelists were Sister Timothea, Joyce Little and Helen Hitchcock.

Father Rock observed that misuse of language can compromise the message it is intended to convey. Many of the new methods of translating, including so-called "inclusive" language translation, use devices that distort the original meaning of the inspired text.

This happened in the first draft of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. In trying to avoid what some consider to be "sexist" or "non-inclusive" language, the translation simply became incorrect. The purpose of a translation is to transmit meaning clearly. Emphasis on so-called "inclusive" language limits a translator's ability to transmit the meaning of the text, and ignores the deeper issue of truth.

Fr. Rock also noted that many translators forget that the inspired authors of the Scripture intentionally chose to use some

Continued on next page

**MARK YOUR
CALENDAR NOW!**

**WFF Conference
November 8—10, 1996**

Meet us in St. Louis!

WFF conference report — *continued*

words to convey their message, and rejected others. It is also easy for a translator to lose the poetic sense of the original, Fr. Rock noted.

In spite of these difficulties and confusion about principles of translation of Scripture, however, Father Rock emphasized that the Word of God has an indelible power and dignity. In genuinely and faithfully defending the Word of God, the Church will be given the power to transmit the Word in the fullness and integrity of its meaning.

Donna Steichen sees "Hope among the Ruins"

A banquet followed Saturday Vespers celebrated by **Fr. James A. Viall of Cleveland**. Author **Donna Steichen** gave the banquet address, noting the failure of evangelization today as evidenced by such things as a New York Times poll that shows only 30% of adult Catholics believe in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and that only 51% go to Mass weekly.

The current crisis in the Church has arisen because the mid-level Church bureaucratic establishment had their own view of the "spirit of Vatican II", and believed that a "new church" built from their blueprint would bring about a new kind of Christianity—less rule-bound, more spontaneous, more loving, generous and peaceful, needing no laws. Instead of bringing about the expected "renewal", their efforts often contributed to today's social and ecclesial decline.

Mrs. Steichen sees encouraging signs, however, in the many good Catholic publications, the strength of the pro-life movement within the Church, the increase in homeschooling among Catholic families, a greater awareness of "natural family planning", and in the abundance of grassroots movements, such as Perpetual Adoration societies, which are taking hold in parishes. She sees reform coming by way of the family, the "domestic church" in which women play a large role.

Reports on Beijing, Liturgy

On Sunday morning, **Gerri Laird**, of the Arlington Family Life Office and the Couple to Couple League, reported on the United Nations Conference on Women, held last fall in Beijing, which she attended. She outlined the partially successful plan of action undertaken by pro-life, pro-family organizations to influence the language of the document that came out of the conference. She also noted that the Vatican's role in Beijing was significant, despite obvious bias of organizers, and the activity of the Vatican delegation was often mis-reported in media accounts of the conference.

Father Jerry Pokorsky, a priest of the diocese of Arlington and director of CREDO, an association of priests committed to fidelity in translation used for Catholic worship, told about the organization's work and its efforts to provide positive solutions to the problems of translation of the Roman Missal and Scripture. He gave the group an update on the status of the new wave of revisions and re-translations of the books used for

Mass which has been in process in the National Conference of Catholic Bishops for several years.

WFF conference participants joined parishoners at a sung Mass at St. Lawrence the Martyr Church, Alexandria.. **Fr. Franklyn M. McAfee**, pastor, was the principal celebrant and homilist. A highlight was the excellent St. Lawrence choir.

Reports on WFF Chapters from **Pat Feighan** of Cleveland **Jeanne Brown** of Rockford, and **Mary Vestecka** described the activities of the Lincoln Diocesan Council of Catholic Women.

Ecumenical Symposium: A World "Entrusted to Women"—What must we do?

The conference concluded Sunday afternoon with an ecumenical symposium and "open mike" session featuring a panel of women addressing important issues affecting the Christian faith and the involvement of women in its transmission.

Diane Knippers, an Episcopalian who is director of the Institute on Religion and Democracy, began by thanking the Holy See for its work at the Beijing Conference, and for the Catholic Church's holding the line on Christian values. She believes that the 1990's will see neo-paganism and goddess-worship invading the churches—along with with an emphasis on the primacy of individual rights, autonomy and power being sought by both men and women—all of which are incompatible with the authentic Christian message.

Terry Schlossberg, director of Presbyterians Pro-life, observed that the deconstruction of Scripture is among the most serious problems confronting Christians today. Mainline denominations are in decline due to members' acceptance of false doctrines, she observed. "Evangelical" denominations, too, are divided on many issues, Mrs. Schlossberg noted, and it is as yet unclear if they will be able to withstand the heresies and immoralities endemic in the culture which deeply erode Christian teaching. She said a process is needed to catechize themselves and to restore the documents that define who they are, what they believe and what they resolve to do.

Faye Short of the "RENEW Women's Network" of the United Methodist Church, stated that this women's movement is supported by the Good News organization (for United Methodists), as well as the Institute on Religion and Democracy. The Methodist women's RENEW, like Women for Faith and Family, is a grassroots movement, ministering to those women who wish to be faithful to the traditional creed of the United Methodist Church.

Bernadine J. Kreider, Director of the Baltimore Province, of the National Council of Catholic Women, and **Helen Hull Hitchcock**, Women for Faith & Family's director, addressed problems affecting the women in Catholic Church and their hopes for remedying them.

All addresses given at the 1995 WFF Conference are available on audiotape from **St. Joseph Communications**, PO Box 720, W. Covina, CA 91793. Phone: 800 526-2151. (Tape-order form on page 15.)

Letters from Bishops *continued from page 3*

Many thanks for the announcement you sent about the annual conference to be held in Arlington, Virginia, in early November. Although I won't be able to be with you, I am very pleased to know you will be reflecting on the Pope's call for a New Evangelization. With this as your theme, the panel including women from the Protestant faith communities is a wonderful initiative. Efforts such as yours will help us become what the Holy Father has asked us to be: an evangelizing Church for the year 2000. You and those at the conference will be in my prayers.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
+Francis E. George, O.M.I.
Bishop of Yakima

In writing to you may I extend my warm greetings to all who gather for the Eleventh Annual Conference for Women for Faith and Family. You have chosen an important topic, "Women and the New Evangelization." The Holy Father in his recent letter to women has spoken movingly on the role of women in promoting the mission of the Church.

May God be with you and your deliberations and strengthen communion in the Church.

Sincerely in the Lord,
Most Reverend Alfred C. Hughes
Bishop of Baton Rouge

Mary, the Mother of God, and Mary Magdalene are both marvelous role models for Women in the New Evangelization. Mary, bearing the WORD of Salvation was the first Christian evangelist as she visited Elizabeth. The WORD was heard by the Baptist, while still in his mother's womb. Mary Magdalene was the first evangelist of the Resurrection, appointed by Jesus Himself!

May Women for Faith and Family continue to relay to their families and the world the Good News, first carried by the 2 Marys, so that the vision of Pope John Paul II of a new Springtime of Christianity may be realized in the new millennium!

With cordial best wishes, and with a plea and a promise of continued mutual prayers always, I remain

Sincerely yours in the Sacred Heart,
Most Reverend Roger L. Kaffer
Auxiliary Bishop of Joliet

I very much appreciate the information you conveyed to all of us about the conference on The Role of Women in the New Evangelization that will take place this coming November in Arlington.

You invited the Bishops to send a brief message to the participants, encouraging our beloved ladies in their task of

evangelization. This is my insignificant cooperation:

What we receive from our mother by word or example remains instilled in our soul and our whole person forever and sustains us through the storms we must face in life.

Mothers are the best evangelizers because they touch the deep roots of their children's hearts.

May the Lord help all women to be more aware of the very important and unique role they must play in the field of evangelization in the Church.

I ask the Blessed Mother to assist all of you, mothers, in evangelizing, firstly, your own families.

Unfortunately I will not be able to attend the conference. We will try to send some delegates.

Sincerely yours in Christ,
Joseph J. Madera, M.Sp.S
AMS Vicar for Pastoral Support

I am very pleased that the eleventh annual conference of Women for Faith & Family is coming to the East. There is no doubt that your love for the Church and your enthusiasm for the work of the Gospel needs to be heard here in our part of the country as well. I am pleased that you have brought your conference to a discussion of Women in the New Evangelization. I have always felt that women are the greatest missionaries and it follows therefore that they ought to be the greatest evangelizers in the new moment of the Church as we prepare for the third millennium.

May the Lord bless you and all those who will gather in Arlington this November to discuss this vital subject, so close to the heart of the Holy Father and so important to the life and the future of the Church.

My blessings are with you as you gather together. I pray for the success of your conference and ask the folks who gather to remember me and the Church of Newark in their own prayers too.

With every good wish, I am
Faithfully yours in Christ,
Most Reverend Theodore E. McCarrick
Archbishop of Newark

It is a pleasure and an honor once again to send you and all those gathered for the annual Women for Faith and Family Conference my heartfelt best wishes and a promise of my support.

Just about everyone knows of the importance of women in the Church and our world today. Perhaps never before has the role of women been more discussed and studied than in our own day. It is crucial, therefore, that women of faith and women who understand and cherish family values make their voices heard amidst all the clamor and nonsense we hear all around us. More

Continued on page 15

1996 WFF Conference Alb



From top left:

1. Archbishop Agostino Cacciavillan accepts Faith and Family award on behalf of Cardinal Ratzinger from WFF president, Helen Hull Hitchcock.
2. Archbishop Cacciavillan and Pat Feighan, president of WFF Cleveland, listen to opening address.
3. Donna Steichen (center) at Saturday banquet.
4. Panel on Scripture and Catechetics: l. to r., Sr. Timothea Elliott, Fr. John Rock, SJ, Bishop James Keating, Dr. Joyce Little.
5. Sr. Timothea takes a question.





6. Recessional after Mass at St. Lawrence the Martyr, Alexandria; Fr. Franklyn McAfee, pastor.
7. Bob and Gerri Laird, of Arlington Diocesan Family Life Office.
8. Cardinal Hickey and Helen Hitchcock greet participants.
9. Fr. Jerry Pokorsky, Arlington
10. Ecumenical panel prepares to take questions: l. to r., Terry Schlossberg, Faye Short, Diane Knippers, B.J. Kreider.
11. Dr. Joyce Little emphasizes a point.



Crossing the Threshold...

By Helen Hull Hitchcock

Women for Faith and Family Director Helen Hull Hitchcock addressed the annual conference on Women at the Threshold, taking her title from Pope John Paul II's book, Crossing the Threshold of Hope. The introduction to her talk was an account of her conversion to Catholicism. We reprint an edited version of this introduction here in the hopes our readers will find it as compelling as did the St. Louis staff.

I GREET YOU ON BEHALF OF MY HUSBAND, JIM. He would like to be here but *somebody* has to mind the store. He is James Hitchcock, as some of you may know who have read his books from time to time. He is a history professor at St. Louis University. Many of you have heard him speak at these and other conferences. I just want to mention that I wouldn't be here if he had not been the Catholic that he is. Even then it took many years of marriage to James Hitchcock for me to finally understand why I needed to be a Catholic. Thanks be to God I finally did.

A lot of you who were born into the Catholic faith may not realize that there is a Protestant tradition, and this tradition was a very hard "threshold" for me to cross. I was not opposed to Catholic teachings; as a matter of fact, I even came to believe some of the most difficult ones for Protestants, namely the Marian doctrines. However, being a Protestant, I didn't think they were *necessary* to believe; they weren't a matter of faith. I didn't understand, in a word, the true meaning of authority in the Church.

MY THRESHOLD WAS CROSSED at about the time the Catholic bishops announced they were going to write a pastoral letter on women's issues. I had been writing for several years a monthly column for the *National Catholic Register*. Because I am a woman, I suppose, they sent me all the feminist theologians' books to review. So I learned much about the challenge of feminism to the Church. We had the same problems in my Anglo-Catholic (Episcopal) church—and I also knew what was happening within the Catholic Church. I knew the divisions, the problems of dissent. I could see the disarray in the Catholic Church. I thought, why trade one mess for another mess?

Jim and I used to go to each other's churches — always, from the time we were married. He went to mine and I went to his each Sunday. All of our children were baptized in the Catholic Church with an Anglican priest present. We were married in the Catholic Church, so it would have seemed logical for me to have become a Catholic then. But in retrospect, I think perhaps it was Providential — I think that the time I spent in "invincible ignorance" outside the Church, for all those many

years, gave me, and also my husband, a perspective we may not have had, had I done the normal thing and become a Catholic then.

Last night I mentioned that I had known Fr. Viall long before I became a Catholic. This was because the foundational meetings of the *Consortium Perfectae Caritatis* were held in St. Louis and my husband was involved in that with Fr. Viall. Several other Catholic movements were started by my husband, collaborating with others—the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, *Communio* magazine among them—and many, many meetings took place in our living room. So I met all these people.

Although I was not myself a Catholic, I was in full good will towards this. I was hopeful about it. I still didn't become a Catholic; I don't know why not. The only thing I can think of is that by my being actively involved in a different denomination, we were able to see from a double perspective the danger the Church is in now.

Frankly, I was not much attracted by the post-conciliar Catholic liturgy. I *was* attracted by the traditional "Catholic" liturgy in my parish—a "high church" parish whose liturgy resembled the traditional Catholic Mass, except it was in English. (I was a member of the Altar Guild, etc.)

However, I had to leave the Episcopal church some time before I became Catholic. I had to leave my parish in spite of the good liturgy, the good singing, the, excellent choir—because one day somebody happened to tell me that both the choir director and the wife of one of the priests at this parish worked full time at the infamous Reproductive Health Services. I was absolutely flabbergasted and stunned and I could never go back to that parish again.

Soon after that, the Episcopal Church in the United States accepted abortion, ordination of women to the priesthood and tossed out the 450-year-old Book of Common Prayer which had really held the tradition of the church together.

At about the same time a man who was well-known for having written books denying the divinity of Christ was elected bishop by an Episcopal diocese, approved by the body of

Continued on page 14



Publications review...

Women for Faith and Family is often asked for names of reliable periodicals. Following is an alphabetical list of magazines, newspapers and newsletters we receive, with brief comments and subscription information.

Adoremus Bulletin. *New.* A monthly newspaper published by a new organization for Catholic clergy and laity, Adoremus—Society for the Renewal of the Sacred Liturgy and edited by Helen Hull Hitchcock. AB provides accurate information and commentary on matters affecting Catholic worship and a “Readers’ forum” for discussion of liturgical concerns. Annual Subscription: \$15.00. Address: P.O. Box 5858, Arlington, VA 22205. Phone: (703) 241-5858

The Butterfly is a 4-page newsletter with informative and inspirational material for older people. Written and published by Sister Lois Conarchy, S.L. and Sister Simone Inkel, S.L. Address: Ministry to the Elderly and Sick, Sisters of Loretto, P.O. Box 116, St. Meinrad, IN 47577.

Catalyst: the Journal of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, which defends “the right of Catholics to participate in American life without defamation or discrimination.” Published 10 times a year. Annual membership dues \$25, (senior citizen \$20, and student \$15). Address Publications Office, 6324 W. North Avenue, Wauwatosa, WI 53213. Phone (414) 476-8911

Catholic Dossier: Issues in the Round. *New.* A bi-monthly magazine edited by Ralph McInerny featuring serious essays by prominent Catholic scholars and thinkers, each issue is devoted to a single theme, such as homosexuality, religion and politics, feminism. “The idea is to reacquaint the Catholic with the concrete cultural context within which his faith can flourish—the Catholic culture that has defined the West but now is under great assault...” Annual subscription, \$24.95. Address: P.O. Box 1639, Snohomish, WA 98291. Phone: 1-800-651-1531.

Catholic Eye. James P. McFadden’s saucy monthly newsletter which looks at the world of Catholicism, American politics, the American press, the Vatican—all from the viewpoint of an orthodox Catholic. Not the least bit politically correct. Annual subscription \$34.95. Address: National Committee of Catholic Laymen, Inc., 150 East 35th Street, New York, N.Y. 10016.

The Catholic Faith. *New.* Promotes “the authoritative teaching of the Church as found in *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*.” Edited by Fr. John Hardon, SJ, it explains Church doctrine and contains solid advice on the spiritual life, evangelization and teaching the faith. Annual subscription (six

issues) \$24.95. Address: P.O. Box 160, Snohomish, WA 98291-0160. Phone: 1(800)651-1531

Catholic Insight. A journal published in Canada by the Life Ethics Information Centre offers news and commentary on issues of concern to Catholics. News items reflect primarily events in Canada, but many articles deal with issues of concern to Catholics in the U.S. Subscriptions \$19.00 Canada, \$21.00 US & foreign. Address PO Box 625 Adelaide Station, 36 Adelaide St. East, Toronto, Canada. Phone: (416) 368-4558. Fax: (416) 368-8575.

Catholic International “The Documentary Window On The World”, a monthly magazine published by the Augustinians of the Assumption, offers Catholic news from 22 countries and the Vatican. Subscriptions \$49.95 per year. Address: 101 Barry Road, Worcester, MA 01609-1178. Phone: 1(800)577-0909.

The Catholic World Report is a Catholic news magazine published in cooperation with the international news agency *I Media* in Rome. CWR features national and international news and commentary, illustrated. It is published by Joseph Fessio, SJ and edited by Philip F. Lawler. Subscriptions are \$39.95 per year (monthly except for a combined August/September). Address: P.O. Box 1549, Snohomish, WA 98291. Phone: (800) 651-1531.

Communio—International Catholic Review, an international quarterly theological journal founded in 1972 by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Hans Urs von Balthasar, James Hitchcock, John Sheets, SJ, and others, to explore the cultural and theological aspects of the Catholic faith. Recent themes include Catholic theology and gender, New Evangelization and Western Culture. Editor, David Schindler. Annual subscription: U.S. \$23.00, foreign \$29.00. Address: Communio, P.O. Box 4557, Washington, DC 20017-0557.

Communique is a 4-page bi-weekly newsletter published by Judie Brown, American Life League. Mrs. Brown updates readers on life issues with news clippings compiled from around the world. Subscriptions are \$16.95 per year. Phone: (703) 659-4171. Fax: (703) 659-2586.

Crisis is a magazine published by Ralph McInerny and Michael Novak, and edited by Deal Hudson, which offers timely articles, roundtables, book reviews and columns on contemporary social, political and religious issues. Annual subscriptions (monthly except July/August) are \$29.95. Address: P.O. Box 10559, Washington, D.C. 20005. Phone: 1-800-852-9962. E-mail: crisis@catholic.net.

Christifidelis (“To Defend Catholic Truth And Uphold Catholic Rights”), newsletter of **The Saint Joseph Foundation** founded in 1984 by Charles Wilson to provide canonical information,

Continued on page 12

Publications review — Continued from page 11

advice, assistance. Free to supporters. Address: 11107 Wurzbach, #601B, San Antonio, Texas 78230-2570. Phone (210)697-0717. Fax (210)699-9439.

CCL Family Foundations is the newsletter of the Couple to Couple League founded in 1971 by Catholics John F. and Sheila Kippley, "dedicated to building healthy families through natural family planning." It includes clear scientific articles, Medwatch, and precise information. It is published six times a year. Annual subscriptions \$28.00. Address: P.O. Box 111184, Cincinnati, Ohio 45211. Phone: (513) 471-2000.

Fellowship of Catholic Scholars Newsletter, a journal published by the FCS, an organization of Catholic scholars founded in 1977 in response to a general trend within American Catholicism towards dissent from Church teachings. The comprehensive quarterly features scholarly articles, essays, reviews which support the teachings of the Church on issues of current concern. Address: Box 495, Notre Dame, IN 46556.

First Things, a journal of The Institute on Religion and Public Life offers in-depth commentary from an ecumenical perspective in its ten issues annually. Articles, essays and letters cover the impact of politics on religion. A popular feature is "The Public Square", Fr. Richard John Neuhaus' trenchant comments on the passing scene. Editor-in-Chief, Fr. Neuhaus; Editor, John Neuchterlein. Annual subscription: \$29.00. Address: PO Box 3000, Dep't FT, Danville, NJ 07834.

Homiletic & Pastoral Review, edited by Kenneth Baker, S.J. is primarily produced for clergy, but has many lay subscribers. Regular features include ideas for homilies, questions and answers, book reviews and editorials. HPR is published monthly except for a combined August/September issue. Annual subscriptions are \$24.00. Address: 86 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y. 10024. Phone: (212) 799-2600.

Human Life Review is a 21 year old quarterly journal "devoted to educating minds and hearts about the evil of abortion" and more recently infanticide, assisted suicide and euthanasia. In-depth articles and appendices from a wide variety of sources. Editor, J.P. McFadden (publisher of Catholic Eye) Annual subscription \$20.00. Address: Room 840, 150 E. 35th St., New York, N.Y. 10016.

Inside the Vatican, edited in Rome by Robert Moynihan, provides a comprehensive report on Vatican affairs ten times a year, with occasional special supplements and essays on Catholic culture. It is lavishly illustrated with photographs of Roman churches and art. Annual subscription \$49.95. Address: 3050 Gap Knob Rd., New Hope, KY 40052. Phone: (800) 789-9494. Fax: (502) 325-3091.

Mindszenty Report is the 4-page monthly newsletter of the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation, with an emphasis on provid-

ing "educational information on the evils of Communism and other threats to our faith, family and country". Eleanor Schlafly, Publisher, John D. Boland, Editor. Annual subscriptions \$16.00. Address: P.O. Box 11321, St. Louis, MO 63105

National Catholic Register is a weekly newspaper under new ownership of the Legionnaires of Christ. New front-page format, new writers in addition to the familiar ones, and promise to make this familiar paper interesting. Annual subscription \$49.95. Address: PO Box 5158, Hamden, CT 06518-5158.

Our Sunday Visitor is a weekly newspaper founded in 1912. Today OSV, which is distributed in many parishes on Sundays, reports on a wide variety of topics. Regular features include numerous editorials, briefings on Catholic world news, interviews. OSV also publishes books and pamphlets. Annual subscription: \$36.00. Address: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., Huntington, IN, 46750. Phone: (800) 521-0600.

Religious Life is a newsletter published 10 times a year by The Institute on Religious Life, an organization founded in 1974 to "serve religious communities by fostering a more effective understanding and practice of the Church's teaching on religious life." Annual subscription: \$10.00. Address: Institute on Religious Life, P.O. Box 41007, Chicago, IL 60641-0007

This Rock published eleven times a year by Catholic Answers is a magazine explaining Church teachings which are frequently challenged by non-Catholics and anti-Catholics. Excellent for anyone who engages in dialogue with non-Catholics, and especially to converts. Editor, Karl Keating. Annual subscription: \$ 24.00. Address: PO Box 17490, San Diego, CA 92177. Phone (619) 541-1131. Fax: (619) 541-1154.

Touchstone, A Journal of Ecumenical Orthodoxy, is a quarterly which focuses on theological and cultural questions of concern to Christians today. Writers are Catholic, Evangelical Protestant, Eastern Orthodox. Editor, James Kushiner. Annual subscription: \$18.00. Address: The Fellowship of St. James, 3300 W. Cullom Ave., Chicago, IL 60618-1218.

The Wanderer is a weekly newspaper founded Oct. 7, 1867 and edited by A. J. Matt. It features Pope John Paul II's weekly general audience addresses, news and features. Its articles and essays and columns frequently focus on current controversies in the Church. Annual subscription: \$40.00; six months \$25.00. Address: 201 Ohio Street, St. Paul, MN 55107. Phone (612) 224-5733.

Do you know a pastor, seminarian, or newly ordained priest who would welcome a subscription to VOICES?

Send name(s) to WFF; PO Box 8326, St. Louis, MO 63132 (Donation appreciated but not required.)

From the Mailroom...

A RECENT DONATION to Women for Faith and Family was accompanied by this pithy note: "Thanks for doing what I can't do and what has to be done. Sincerely, H.R.K."

We receive many such thoughtful notes each year. WFF's staff of eight volunteers is happy to keep doing "what has to be done" and we are inspired by what you write us. Here are samples we thought you would like to read too.

.We so desperately need ladies like you to let those of us who respect God's law and the teaching magisterium that we aren't alone...I'm praying so hard — and I'm sure thousands more like me — that the forces of Good will overcome the forces of Evil in China! May God Bless you and your work.

In Christ's Love, E.B.

How great to hear a bit of good news. I truly do feel sorry for those women who have forgotten their womanhood but am amazed at how they manage to strike fear into bishops' hearts...these women do not want 'equality' in the Church (and everywhere else for that matter) they are determined, and seem to be succeeding, to gain 'control.' But our Faith tells us to ride it out. With real women like you at the helm we'll make it through.

Thanks for everything, M.I.F.

I am too far away to stuff envelopes and lick stamps—but I'm certainly with you in spirit, united in prayer for your work. It is so important for the Church & for families—and sanity. With prayers for Lent and a joyous Easter for you, Helen, and all of your volunteers. Keep up your good fight.

Love in Christ, C

Thank you very much for the current Voices. As always it is wonderful. I'm sorry I can't send you a donation, but I am enclosing \$2 in the hope that you can send a copy to my pastor. Thank you and God bless you. You are in my prayers. God has given you exceptional gifts, talents and you are using them for His honor and glory.

Sincerely, Mrs. B.F.S.

Today I received a phone call from a parish member who sits on the board of our Catholic Action Commission. She was apprising me of their current plans for October, 1995. They are going to contact parish D.R.E.s (that's where I come in) to help in preparation for this week-long educational endeavor. She has suggested that since its focus is non-violence, abortion, of course, will be included. She was told, "No," that comes under a different committee.

I'm writing to ask you for any materials or ideas that I might offer to counter the secular humanist agenda they are trying to promulgate. With your help, I can offer substantive arguments and alternatives for implementation.

I thank you for all the hard work you do on behalf of our Holy Father and our Holy Catholic Church. I distribute Affirmations whenever possible.

Sincerely, M.K.M.

From a former staff member:

I have a new little boy, Paul David, born in January. He is a delight!

I don't get into town very often, but am easily in touch via fax, phone or modem. Let me know if ever there is anything I can do. ...

God bless you all as you fight the good fight.

Fondly, L.G.

Hope this note finds you well. I've realized that through my moves, I must have gotten off of WFF's mailing list! Is there any way I can get back on? I miss receiving *Voices*. God has blessed me with a wonderful husband and now with a beautiful son. I love being a woman. God bless you and WFF.

R.D.

Dear Women for Faith & Family! I like this I.D. Says it like it is, un-nuanced, clear as a bell.

It is hard for me to put down *Voices* once I start it, I like the style! Keeps me going —

I thank you for the Athanasian Creed, I'd never read it before, I'll have to copy it & hand it out! It's profound.

There was a lot of information I didn't hear about till *Voices* told me. Very helpful, for me to know who's doing what. ...

Enclosed is a small donation.

Mrs. D.F.

Congratulations to all of you for your great work for the Church. You are all super. The Church is proud of you.

Thank you so much for sending me your publication. I appreciate the wonderful apostolic spirit.

Sincerely, Sr. W.B.

Special gifts to Women for Faith & Family

In Memoriam

Leon B. Seck from Rita Fitzgibbons
Mr. and Mrs. T.J. Hayes from Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Boyajian
Willard E. Jones, Jr. from Joanne Hogan
Dallas and Myrtle Murphy from Mildred Murphy
Floy Burnett Geiger Yates from Barbara Purcell
Eileen D. Lash from M. Katherine Murray
Carmine D. Diorio, M.D. from Amy Diorio
The Mother, Father and Brother of Mary Ann Scofield



Requiescant in pace, et lux perpetua luceat eis.

Crossing the Threshold *continued from page 10*

bishops in the U.S., and consecrated to the episcopacy. There was something radically wrong with this, I thought. So I not only had to leave my parish, but the Episcopal Church as well.

I was in a sense homeless. Still it didn't occur to me to become a Catholic then. I became involved with the "continuing Anglican" movement, which was an attempt by former Episcopalians in a similar situation to re-establish that church. A special indult from the Holy See permitted these "Anglo-catholics", under special restricted circumstances, the Sacraments of the Catholic Church. I have no doubt the actual grace I was able to receive because of this act of generosity on the part of the Holy Father was the real source of my strength to "cross this threshold."

BUT HOW IT HAPPENED WAS THIS: when the bishops announced they were going to write a pastoral on women's issues, I thought "I've got to get some Catholic women alerted to this situation. *Somebody's got to do something. The Church is in trouble. We cannot exist without the Catholic Church.* If the Catholic Church is undermined in the same way the rest of the churches are being undermined, there will be nothing left. *Somebody's got to do something.*" So I began calling some people to alert them to the urgency of the problem. The bishops said they wanted to hear from women, and I was worried that the women they would probably hear would not represent most women I knew. Several Catholic friends were equally worried — especially women I knew who were involved in the pro-life movement. But it was one of those things: for some reason or other nobody was able to take this on at the time, and I was really eager to get something done about it.

One night when Jim was out of town and the kids were in bed I sat down to compose a statement that all Christian women could sign—something that would in essence say "Here I am, I am a woman, and I do not believe Christianity oppresses

women. I stand for the essential teachings of the Christian faith." But for some reason, when I actually began to write this statement, I overcame my difficulty with the Catholic Church's claim to authority. I suddenly realized I could not affirm anything about the Christian faith as certainly true without the authority of the Church. So what I actually wrote, the *Affirmation for Catholic Women*, was not exactly what I had set out to write.

WHEN MY HUSBAND CAME BACK, I showed him the draft expressing fidelity to the teachings of the Catholic Church and asked him, "What do you think of this?" He knew I was concerned about the "women problem" and he was concerned, too. He said it was really good. "But what are you going to do with it?" he asked. I said "I was hoping you would have some suggestions — maybe call some of the Catholic women we know and maybe they would want to do something with it..." (I didn't know very many Catholic women at the time.)

Then I said, "You also know what this means, don't you? It means I have to become a Catholic as quickly as possible." He was astonished—after all those years! And at the time I was senior warden and organist for my "continuing Anglican" parish, and he was actually concerned about what they would do if I left. But I entered the Catholic Church as soon as I could.

NOW, I COME from an evangelical Protestant family. I have two first cousins who are married to Protestant ministers or doing missionary work. My parents and brother are Methodists; my sister is a Presbyterian; my aunt is a Lutheran; my grandfather was a Congregationalist minister and he was the spiritual core of our family and my spiritual mentor as long as he lived. I have one cousin who became a Catholic recently — a widow with two little girls. We are the first Catholics in our branch of the family since the Reformation. There *is* such a thing as the Protestant tradition!

Our oldest daughter, Alexandra, became interested in genealogy after she got married and moved away from home. She discovered some interesting things in our ancestry — and perhaps many of you would too, if you go back that many generations. She found that one of our ancestors is St. Margaret of Scotland — which was a nice thing to discover because my mother's birthday is on that feast day. Among others is a Quaker martyr, Mary Dyer, a friend of Ann Hutchinson. Many of my Protestant forbearers were people of deep faith. So I have often thought of my ancestors and what they would think of my becoming a Catholic.

Somebody once asked me if my parents objected to my being Catholic, and if it wasn't a problem for them since all my family have been Protestant for so many generations. I quipped that my faithful Christian ancestors all "know better now." But I do rather think it is due to their devotion and their intercession that I was finally able to overcome my difficulties with the Church and to cross this threshold.



Letters from Bishops *continued from page 7*

power to you.

With kindest personal regards and every best wish, I am,
Sincerely yours in Christ,
Most Reverend James C. Timlin, D.D.
Bishop of Scranton

As you gather in Arlington, Virginia, for your Eleventh Annual Conference, I am pleased to have this opportunity of extending to you my greetings and sincere best wishes.

The theme of your Conference, related to the "New Evangelization" is most appropriate and timely. Recall that in his recent "Letter to Women", our Holy Father Pope John Paul II wrote: "It is thus my hope, dear sisters, that you will reflect carefully on what it means to speak of the 'genius of women' ..in order to let this genius be more fully expressed in the life of society as a whole, as well as in the life of the Church."

At this time of opportunity and challenge for our society and our Church, your leadership, your persistent voice of fidelity, is indeed a source of evangelization. In many ways you have proclaimed the message of Christ in our Church and our world, and for that valuable contribution, I join many others in saying "thank you."

Please be assured of a special remembrance in my prayers. May our Heavenly Father bless your gathering and all of your endeavors with much grace and peace.

Sincerely yours,
Most Reverend Thomas J. Tobin
Auxiliary Bishop of Pittsburgh
(now Bishop of Youngstown)

Please extend my greetings to all in attendance at the eleventh annual Women for Faith and Family conference.

I am happy that Arlington is the setting for this conference. I am sure that after my years of training, they will treat you all very well.

The theme is very important and the presenters very impressive. Be assured of my prayers to the Holy Spirit that a successful conference will lead to even better things. The Church needs you.

Dear Women for Faith and Family,

I agree with the bishops—the Church needs you! You can count my help...

___ Prayers for WFF
___ Donation of \$100 \$75 \$50 \$35 \$_____
___ My donation is \$35. or more, please send me a complimentary "Family Sourcebook".
___ I prefer Lent/Easter ___ Advent/Christmas ___
___ My gift is a memorial to:

___ Please send me a free packet of WFF material.

NAME: _____

NOTE: If name/address different from label on back, please print clearly on separate sheet and affix this coupon. Thank-you!

The best thing I can suggest to insure that future is to encourage your members to look into a course or two from the Catholic Home Study Institute. As we say, "Knowledge isn't virtue but it is a big first step!"

God bless you all,
Thomas J. Welsh
Bishop of Allentown

Welcome WFF-Rockford

A new chapter of Women for Faith & Family has been formed in Rockford, Illinois. Sponsored by the Most Reverend Thomas G. Doran, Bishop of Rockford, and Monsignor David Kagan, the group is being organized by Jeanne Brown with assistance from Pat Houck.

Sherry Tyree, WFF vice-president, was a featured speaker at the new chapter's first meeting, held September 30, 1995 at the Cathedral of St. Peter in Rockford. It included the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, celebrated by Bishop Doran, with the remainder of the day's events held in the Cathedral Center. Msgr. Kagan and Msgr. Thomas Brady also addressed the group after the welcoming remarks from the bishop.

The Rockford diocesan paper, *The Observer*, has publicized the organization, and recently the chapter produced a newsletter which will make available to diocesan women timely information on liturgy, catechesis, Scripture, as well as a column from Bishop Doran.

Anyone in the Rockford diocese wishing to join should contact Jeanne Brown, Women for Faith & Family, Rockford Chancery, 1245 N. Court St., Rockford, IL 61103.

WFF Conference Tapes 1995

St. Joseph Communications - PO Box 720, West Covina CA 91793

CIRCLE TAPES DESIRED

1. Joyce Little: Divine Providence, The Church and the New Evangelization
2. Helen Hitchcock: Women at the Threshold
3. Sr. Timothea Elliott: New Testament Women
4. Bishop Keating, Fr. John Rock (panel): "Urgent Need for the Gospel"
5. Donna Steichen: Hope Among the Ruins
6. Gerri Laird: The Missionary Challenge to Catholic Women
7. Fr. Jerry Pokorsky: Worship & the Evangelical Mission of the Church
8. Ecumenical Symposium (panel): Evangelization Entrusted to Women
D. Knippers, T. Schlossberg, F. Short, B. Kreider, H. Hitchcock

Individual Cassettes \$6.00 — Complete set of talks \$40.00
(Add \$4.00 Shipping and Handling -California residents add 8.25% sales tax)
Make checks payable to **St. Joseph Communications**.

___ #TAPES TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$ _____

VISA / MC# _____ Exp. _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

Vatican letter — continued from page 1

duty in this field or agreed to delegate it to others, because of the difficulty and their own lack of preparation.

"In such a situation, many Catholic parents turn to the Church to take up the task of providing guidance and suggestions for educating their children, especially in the phase of childhood and adolescence. At times, parents themselves have brought up their difficulties when they are confronted by teaching given at school and thus brought into the home by their children. The Pontifical Council for the Family has received repeated and pressing requests to provide guidelines in support of parents in this delicate area of education."

[¶ 1]

THE VIRTUE OF CHASTITY is dealt with at some length: chastity in the single life, in marriage, and in religious life. "Chastity includes an apprenticeship in self-mastery which is a training in human freedom. The alternative is clear: either man governs his passions and finds peace, or he lets himself be dominated by them and becomes unhappy." [¶ 1B, from *Catechism*] In educating children for chastity, a process that should begin early in life through the example of the parents in their married love, parents can seek assistance in this task but other educators "can only take the place of parents for serious reasons of physical or moral incapacity." [¶ 23, from *Letter to Families*]

Throughout the entire education of one's children, "the role of parents...is of such importance that it is almost impossible to find an adequate substitute." Parents "possess a fundamental competency in this area: they are educators because they are parents." If parents need outside assistance, such help should be directed at them rather than at the children, the letter says.

The notion of subsidiarity is introduced and applied to the education of children. The principle indicates the need of giving assistance to the parents, but "finds its intrinsic and absolute limit in their [the parents'] prevailing right and their

actual capabilities."

Subsidiarity recognizes that parents are not capable of satisfying every aspect of the process of raising their children, but such assistance complements parental love and "confirms its fundamental nature." The other participants in the educational process "are only able to carry out their responsibilities in the name of the parents, with their (parental) consent and, to a certain degree with their authorization." [¶ 23, from *Letter to Families*]

THE LAST HALF OF THE DOCUMENT presents an overview of

the information considered necessary to educate children in love and sexuality. Emphasis is placed on the fact that each child is unique and therefore needs individualized formation. Moral dimensions are given that must accompany the information imparted, and the importance of making it age-appropriate, which varies from child to child. Stages of development are outlined and the type of information acceptable in each phase is stressed while methods of presentation, as well as methods and ideologies to avoid, are discussed.

Each section of the letter emphasizes that parents must be in control of the information given to their children and that assistance may be sought in these endeavors, but may never be forced upon the parents.

Prayer to St. Michael

St. Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our protection against the
wickedness and snares of the devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly
pray, and do thou, O prince of the
heavenly host, by the power of
God,
thrust into Hell Satan, and all evil
spirits who prowl about the world
seeking the ruin of souls.

Amen

THE DOCUMENT ENDS with a statement urging parents to have confidence in their rights and duties regarding the education of their children, seeking help from the Holy Spirit and protection of Mary our Mother, as well as St. Joseph, following his example of fidelity and purity of heart.

Many parents—especially those who have encountered difficulties in discussing these issues with school officials, pastors, and even some bishops—will find both encouragement and consolation in this re-affirmation of their own responsibilities towards their children, and their right to expect authentic and appropriate Catholic teaching in Catholic schools.



voices

Women for Faith & Family

P.O. Box 8326, St. Louis, MO 63132

Non-profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
Women for Faith
& Family

Address Correction Requested