



NEWS

On^{THE}Line

A Publication of Catholic Parents OnLine

WWW.CATHOLICPARENTS.ORG

FALL 2005

VOLUME 6

NUMBER 1

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CPO TV Begins Sixth Season

BY NANCY BARRETT

Catholic Parents OnLine television program will begin an exciting sixth season this fall. Several new programs will air on the local Metro Cable Network Channel 6 on Sunday nights at 9:30. The mysteries surrounding the Doctrines of Purgatory and the Communion of Saints will be explained by Father James Kubicki, National Director of the Apostleship of Prayer. A gifted and experienced Catholic coach and athletic director, Tim Gormley will discuss the ego and God-given talents of the athlete. Students from the University of St. Thomas Catholic Studies Program will present a fascinating retrospective on a semester trip to Rome. CPO will again feature Father Robert Altier speaking on the Virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. The always touching Advent/Christmas program will continue to stir the heart this year as CPO explores Christmas traditions of world cultures.



The hosts for CPO TV, Colleen Perfect & Nancy Barrett

Looking back at some of the 55 programs which have been produced over the past five years, *Catholic Parents OnLine* has remained true to its promise to deal with the issues Catholic parents face while raising their children. In-depth programs on the Sacraments, the Doctrines of Mary, prayer, morality, growth in virtue, Christian sexuality, liturgical seasons, the mysteries of suffering, Natural Family Planning, the sanctity of human life, and the evils of pornography, as well as profiles on motherhood and fatherhood are some of the topics that have been explored.

A regular featured guest of *Catholic Parents OnLine* is the organization's spiritual director, Father Robert Altier. Father Altier may also be heard each Tuesday between 4 and 6 o'clock P.M. on the Drew Mariani Show, 1330 AM on the radio dial. Father's daily homilies may be read and listened to on the web at www.desertvoice.org. His Fundamentals of Catholicism may be found online at www.trueteaching.net.

Last fall *Catholic Parents OnLine* received the award for **Best Faith Based Program** on local cable TV for the third consecutive year. CPO thanks its faithful viewers for tuning in to this program which assists parents in raising their children according to the truths of the Roman Catholic Church. May God continue to bless you and yours.



Father Robert Altier, CPO Spiritual Director & CPO TV volunteer, Amy Campbell



Long-time CPO TV volunteer, Joe Kolles, Audio Technician



Volunteers Phil & Lisa Hoeppner, skillfully working the cameras, & Director Miguel Campbell



Reviews of Religious Education and Sex Ed Series

BY MARILYN GRUTSCH

In response to inquiries from parents regarding the multitude of Religious Education and Sex Ed series that are being used by Catholic schools, we have posted a list on our website of those programs used by each of the Catholic schools in the Twin Cities (still incomplete at this time), as well as reviews of those most commonly used.

We found a very thorough critique of the Benziger series done by a trusted organization called Catholics United for the Faith (CUF). With their permission, we made that available on our website; however, we were unable to find critiques for the other programs. Our next step was to find reliable, qualified people, with a good understanding of the Catholic faith, who would take on the challenge of reviewing other programs. Our criteria was that they be thorough, trustworthy critiques that would point out any errors or omissions regarding following the Catholic Church teachings. We are grateful for those who gave of their time and expertise to help us out. At this point, we have reviews of the following programs:

- *Coming To Faith* (Sadlier)
- *This Is Our Faith* (Silver Burdett)
- *Walking By Faith* (Harcourt)
- *Growing In Love* (Harcourt)
- *Family Life* (Benziger)
- *Faith and Life* (Ignatius)
- *Image of God* (Ignatius)

As you will see from our website, we have given recommendations of the excellent texts, as well as cautions for those that are weak or even dangerous to our children's faith development.

As is strongly stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "Through the grace of the sacrament of Marriage, parents receive the responsibility and privilege of evangelizing their children", and, as we are committed to working with Catholic schools and other programs of education to ensure the authentic teaching and protection of our Catholic faith, we took on the task of providing trustworthy reviews so that parents and educators would be more informed regarding their children's faith formation options.

We are very passionate about this because we, too, are parents and grandparents who have watched the past couple of generations of many of our children tragically walk away from their Catholic faith as a result of poor catechesis. The Catechism tells us that God made us to "know, love, and serve Him in this world so that we could be in Heaven with Him in the next". Much of the catechesis in the past few decades has been focused on moral relativism, political correctness, watered down fluff, and religious indifference, and offers little of substance that would allow full knowledge of God and His Church. How can our children love and serve God if they don't "know" Him?

In an article written by Thomas Szyszkiewicz, "Questioning

the Texts" (article on our website), he states: "Some of the texts found to be inadequate are relativistic in their approach to the Church and to faith...Our young people are not learning that what we know and believe is based on objective truth revealed to us by God..." And in response to the bishops' 2003 review of catechetical texts, he says,

The US bishops' review of catechetical materials has yielded some improvements, but fundamental problems remain unsolved. The review process has greatly improved catechetical texts, in the view of many orthodox Catholic catechists...but two cautionary points need to be kept in mind. First, the bishops' review is a narrowly focused process, which examines the texts only to determine 'if anything is against the Catechism'; the review process does not attempt to assess the methodology of the texts, or to determine whether the educational materials are appropriate to the age groups for which they are marketed. In concrete terms, this means that the review process does not take into account whether the materials adhere to the spirit of the document from the Pontifical Council on the Family called The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality, which cautions against sex education in the classroom. The second caution is that when the bishops' committee gives material

"The US bishops' review of catechetical materials has yielded some improvements, but fundamental problems remain unsolved."

Thomas Szyszkiewicz

the 'in conformity' rating, that does not constitute an endorsement—although publishers frequently hint that is the case. The 'in conformity' classification signifies only that the texts do not contain material that is contrary to the Church teachings as set forth in the Catechism. It does not necessarily mean that the text presents the Church's doctrine effectively.

One could form the analogy of nutrition experts evaluating a food program. At first look, if it included food from the basic foods groups, it could easily be approved as conforming to a nutritional diet. However, if they went deeper to describe that much of the "nutrition" was watered down by processing, addition of preservatives and empty calories, and that pesticides or other chemical were used in growing the food (all of which has an insidious damaging effect on one's health), the final assessment would not be as favorable.

We will continue to keep our website up to date with information that we hope will be helpful in choosing the program that will best educate and prepare our children to be formed in their Catholic faith. In addition to the actual reviews, there are also numerous articles to assist parents and educators in this regard.

How to Combat the Culture of Death:

The Courage to Be Catholic in a Secular Society

BY FREDERICK BLONIGEN

Our beloved Pope John Paul the Great, who made the theme of the dignity of the human person central to his pontificate, coined the expression the “culture of death” in his profound encyclical of 1995, *Evangelium Vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*). Our late Holy Father chose to promulgate this great encyclical on March 25, the solemn feast of the Annunciation (that is, the feast of Christ’s Incarnation in the womb of His Mother Mary) to remind all of us that not only did God create each and every human person in His image and likeness, but God Himself, in the Person of Jesus Christ, became fully man and went through every stage of human existence. Christ was a zygote, an embryo, a fetus and a new born. Think about the unspeakably awesome dignity and holiness the Incarnation gives to man’s nature! God, in assuming our human nature, has elevated us in a way that mere words cannot convey.

In *The Gospel of Life*, Pope John Paul the Great not only condemns such terrible violations of human dignity as abortion and euthanasia but he analyzes the philosophical underpinnings of the pro-death culture. He discusses those characteristics of modern society that have helped to create this “culture of death”. At the very top of the Holy Father’s list of characteristics is the loss of a sense of God. When man forgets God and lives as though God does not exist, he enters a path that can only lead to his destruction.

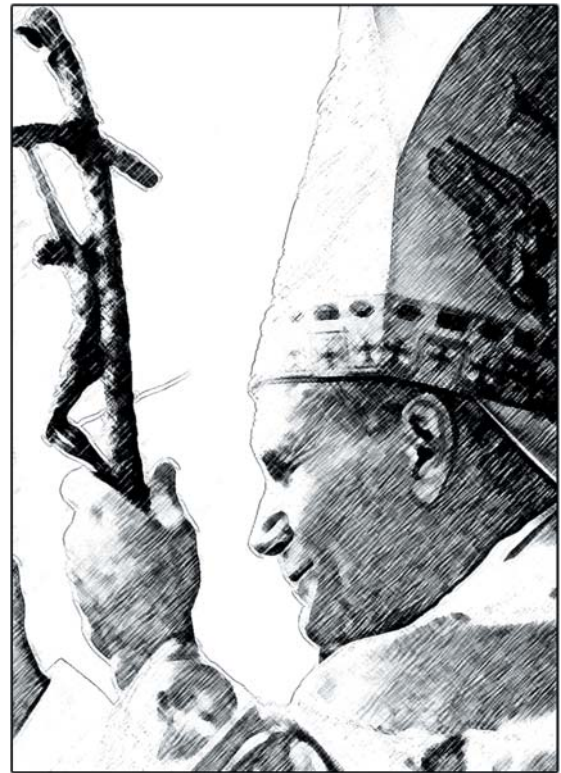
As we look at our own culture and Western society in general we see those very elements that reflect the loss of a sense of God: militant secularism, materialism, radical individualism, moral relativism, hedonism and even nihilism. To be a faithful Catholic in such a culture demands great courage. Who in our time demonstrated greater courage than the late Pope John Paul the Great? Throughout his long pontificate, and indeed throughout his entire life, our late Holy Father truly lived those famous words he spoke almost immediately after his election to the papacy on October 16, 1978, “Be not afraid”. Because of his deep faith in God and his profound devotion to Our Lady, Pope John Paul the Great could live without fear and bear witness to Christ even in a world that in many ways is at war against its God.

With the grace of God, we too can have that same courage as we daily struggle to live out our Catholic faith. The greatest weapon we possess in the present culture war is, of course, Christ and the grace He gives to sanctify us, to make us saints. For that is what we must strive each moment of each day to be: saints. God has called all of us to be saints, to live lives of moral and spiritual perfection. The greatest gift we can give to the Church and this culture and the surest way to defeat Satan and the culture of death is to become saints.

But achieving sainthood is not an easy thing; it requires nothing short of our total commitment to doing God’s will and doing it perfectly. It requires a life of total self-giving love.

If we are to be courageous witnesses for Christ, if we are to grow in holiness and if we are to seek sainthood, the way has

been given to us by God Himself. First, we must be people of prayer, people of deep and fervent prayer. Only prayerful persons can spiritually survive, let alone flourish, in our militantly secular culture. We must be people who make frequent use of the sacra-



ments of the Church, especially the Holy Eucharist and Penance. We cannot be merely *Sunday Catholics*; if we are to convert this secular culture we must be profoundly Eucharistic, that is, we must spend much time in prayer before our Eucharistic Lord where we will receive the grace and strength to truly live out our Catholic faith and lead others to Christ.

When we reflect on the extraordinary life of Pope John Paul the Great, it seems almost impossible to single out any one thing that captures most perfectly the character of this great man. But for many of us the courageous way he accepted the tremendous suffering of his last years and months, probably stands out most. In his last days, especially, Pope John Paul the Great taught all of us how to suffer with dignity. He taught us how to live, and he taught us how to die. He taught us that the greatest evil in life is not suffering but the rejection of the God whose love has conquered all suffering and evil.

So let us pray to our late great Pope John Paul and ask him to intercede for us and help us to be men and women of prayer, of deep faith and of courage as we all do our part daily to bring Christ to the world and the world to Christ.

Star Tribune Refuses to Tell the Truth!

It's no surprise to any of us that the Mpls. Star Tribune newspaper favors erroneous statements submitted by dissidents over authentic Catholic Church teaching. The following article is one CPO submitted in response to an untrue and misleading story published by the "Catholic Pastoral Committee on Sexual Minorities" and which the Star Tribune refused to publish.

To: Minneapolis Star Tribune
From: Catholic Parents OnLine:

It is hard to understand why your newspaper gives so much play to Mr. Bayly and his organization CPCSM. As you are undoubtedly aware, the Catholic Pastoral Committee is not endorsed by the Roman Catholic Church.

This is undoubtedly due to the fact that there is no true Catholic identity to the organization as illustrated by the fact that the organization ignores several essential immutable realities of Catholic Church teaching. One who ignores essential tenets of a religion cannot claim to be a part of it.

The very first sentence in Mr. Bayly's article of May 14, 2005 is entirely misleading and fallacious. The "primacy of conscience" is not a core teaching of the Catholic faith. The conscience does not exist in a vacuum. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that the conscience can remain in ignorance and make erroneous judgments about acts to be performed or already committed. This ignorance can often be imputed to personal responsibility. This is the case when a man "takes little trouble to find out what is true and good, or when conscience is by degrees almost blinded through the habit of committing sin." CCC 1790-1791.

The alleged quotation from "Fr. Ratzinger" we have been told is found in a book by Hans Kung. That is true. However, in the book the quotation is cited to no original source nor is it footnoted.

No one should be deluded by Mr. Bayly's hope that Pope Benedict XVI will avail himself of the "insights and experiences" of those whose consciences have not been formed with the mind of the Church and Christ. There is no wisdom for those with same sex attraction when they act upon that attraction against the natural law, a natural law which should order all consciences based on reason.

There is no place for expressing one's sexuality outside of marriage and there is no sacramentality to such expressions as they are gravely morally wrong. Homosexual acts are acts of "grave depravity"... Under no circumstances can they be

approved. CCC 2357. All baptized persons are called to chastity. CCC 2348.

Thus, persons with same sex attraction are not permitted by the moral law to have "relationships" if those relationships involve sexual activity outside of marriage. We are not here speaking of the distortion of "marriage" which tries to pretend that "marriage" can be other than between a man and woman. CCC. 2335.

Benedict XVI and the Church stand for revealed truth and if truth is hurtful and fearful then it is not the promulgator of truth that should be concerned but the recipient that is made hurtful and fearful. Perhaps, it is time for the recipient to change their way of living to right living in Christ. Respecting the person who struggles with same sex attraction... loving the person and not the behavior..there is a Catholic, truly Catholic organization, that provides support for a life of chastity for persons with same sex attraction. It is called "Courage" found at www.couragerc.net. Look it up and follow its way to true Catholicism.

Mr. Bayly fails to realize that truth does not change and that the teaching authority for truth does not reside in him or those who have chosen to "ignore" their responsibility for forming the conscience according to the mind of Christ and his Church.

Teaching moments in the Church are continuous but the followers of Christ are not the ones who "teach" the Church. Those who try to teach the Church should not be welcomed or celebrated, as the Church possesses the fullness of truth and the teachings of others are frequently, and particularly in this case, false. CCC890.

If Mr. Bayly seeks to avoid traditionalism, natural law and literalism and absolute truth, he definitely is not within the sphere of Catholic thought. Fortunately for us, Christ appointed a hierarchical Church with a Magisterium that cannot change the truth which it passes down and which is thus absolute.

Christ is not abundantly, surprising, gracious or compassionate to those who disobey his clear natural law which is the law of Christ. Persons who act on same sex attraction act contrary to the natural and moral law and no amount of appeal to the right to "conscience" can change that fact. Fortunately, God cannot be open to that which is outside of His Truth as expressed in the natural law and the teachings of His Church. Truth is alive but it does not evolve. It is the same yesterday, today and forever. Truth is not a thing but a person, Jesus Christ.



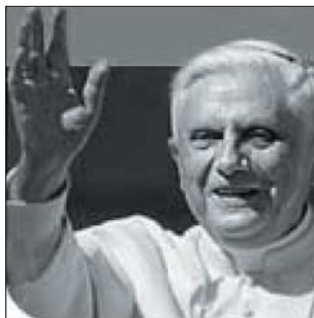
Pope Benedict XVI

BY FR. ROBERT ALTIER
CPO SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

A few months ago the world's press gathered in a place they have for many generations maligned: the Vatican. They carried coverage of the death and funeral of Pope John Paul the Great and also of the Conclave that followed. Perhaps it was much to the surprise of the media that billions of people around the world tuned in to witness these historic events. Perhaps to their greater astonishment, the number of young people who gathered to pray for the deceased Pope and to cheer for our newly elected Pontiff, demonstrated to the whole world that Catholicism is far from dead. It is the young who will provide the growth in the new springtime prophesied by Pope John Paul the Great.

As the leadership of the Church changed hands, the announcement was made that Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger was elected by his fellow Cardinals to take the helm of the Bark of Peter. Those who have been telling us for twenty years that the next Pope will make the radical changes which they had been promoting were sorely disappointed. But it was the young, the ones brought up in the era of dissent and liturgical abuse, who are the most elated of all about the election of this new Pope. It has always given me great joy to see the millions of young people who would flock to see and hear an "old man from Rome who is out of touch." The heralded Woodstock event which the former hippies still talk about as though it was the greatest event in history pales in comparison to any of the youth events surrounding the Holy Father.

Now we have a new Pope: a man of 78 years who the young are already hailing with great excitement. Perhaps these "old men from Rome" are not the ones who are out of touch with the young and with the needs of the world. Perhaps the ones who are really out of touch are those who think the Pope is out of touch. The Cardinals elected a man who is humble and shy. At the same time he is a brilliant theologian. The late Fr. Hans Urs Van Baltasar, Pope John Paul's favorite theologian, gave



Pope Benedict the highest compliment I have heard yet when he said of the then Cardinal Ratzinger: "he does his theology on his knees." This is just what we need. Of all the Cardinals, Pope Benedict was by far the most intelligent. He has authored many books on a variety of subjects. He authored many official documents during his 24 years as Prefect for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Most recently he completed the work involved in preparing a Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church which was released at the beginning of July. He signed the work as the Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation and instituted it as Pope. If anyone wishes to know more about this man, his books are being made available through Ignatius Press.

Pope Benedict has a great love for the Liturgy of the Church. For him, as for the Church, the Mass is the most important aspect of Faith and life. He understands that everything revolves around the action of the Mass and everything, good or evil, flows from the altar. For this reason, he has already asked for all Catholics to learn basic prayers in Latin so that Catholics from all places can pray together in one common language. He has stressed truly sacred music to be used at Mass rather than the guitar and folk music that has become so common. He has stated that unity among Christians, especially working for reunification with the Orthodox, will be central to his Papacy. He has already begun this in some of the liturgical practices which reflect the eastern customs. The Cardinals elected Pope Benedict XVI, I think, to bring about a greater discipline from which will flow a greater unity in prayer, especially at Mass. From this unity in prayer will flow a greater unity of Faith among the People of God. Pope Benedict has said his Pontificate would be short. I think we can expect to see some strong and clear direction in these key areas just mentioned as he works to complete the foundation for the New Springtime of Faith.

ARTHUR A. HERKENHOFF AWARD

Do you know someone who shines in the areas of Faith, family, pro-life involvement, courage, charity and joy?

Catholic Parents OnLine is pleased to announce the Arthur A. Herkenhoff Award to be presented annually to a Catholic person who is fully committed to Faith and family. The Board of Directors of Catholic Parents OnLine seeks the names of individuals who would be worthy of nomination for the Arthur A. Herkenhoff Award. The persons nominated should exhibit the same qualities, principles and values which characterized the life and person of Art Herkenhoff, namely, **Faith, family, pro-life involvement, courage, charity and joy**. This year's award will be presented at the CPO annual Fundraising Luncheon to be held on Saturday, October 29th. **Please submit your nomination by October 1st! You may complete the Online Nomination Form at: www.catholicparents.org or contact us at 952-882-6704 and we'll be happy to mail you the form!**



President's Letter

Dear Friends,

CPO has been very busy this year working to provide resources and reviews of many different religious education series. Parents and teachers are benefiting from this valuable service and they express their thanks...

Your site is a great reference for parents and religious educators to learn more about religion textbooks. Thank you for providing reviews about various catechetical series. I have found it very helpful as we discern which series to use for our CCD program and parish school.

Thank you so much for your article. It truly is inspirational during these times. It couldn't have come at a better time - I was just saying to my husband that I feel like a lone voice in my school. It gives great encouragement for the battle in God's name. Praise God and thank you for your service to Our Lord.

*I am a parent from California and came across your web site which I found to be very valuable and informative. I very much appreciate your efforts. I am willing to volunteer my time to help our diocese make changes necessary to comply with the Pontifical Council for the Family's **The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality: Guidelines for Education Within the Family.***

Thank you for your research and diligence!!!!

Over 200 people attended the 2005 **CPO Lenten Day Retreat!** Our 2006 retreat is scheduled for Sat. April 1st at St. Agnes Parish in St. Paul.

Again, we are very blessed to have Father Robert Altier celebrate holy Mass and give the presentations for the day. You won't want to miss this awesome event. Watch for more details!



*Annual Lenten Retreat with Barrett's homemade soup!
Kurt Virnig, Nancy & Paul Barrett, Anne Rizzo*

BEWARE!

Parents across the nation have been protesting the use of certain mandatory programs, charging it violates their rights and their children's innocence. These new "child-abuse prevention" programs are popping up in parochial schools and parish religious-education programs. Some of these "personal safety" curriculums are called: **Talking about Touching; Child Lures;** and the **VIRTUS** program "**Protecting God's Children**" (for adults). Remember, the Vatican document, **The Truth**

and Meaning of Human Sexuality (TMHS) clearly warns against giving explicit sexual information to young children!

Masses Offered for CPO Benefactors!

We are happy to announce that beginning in July 2005 a holy Mass will now be offered each month for the intentions of the benefactors of *Catholic Parents OnLine*. We are very grateful to all those who continue to support CPO. May our Lord bless and reward you for joining us in our efforts to spread His Kingdom on earth!

God bless you and yours,

Colleen Perfect

Resource lists found on CPO's website: www.catholicparents.org

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info@catholicparents.org

Catholic materials found at Leaflet Missal: www.leafletmissal.org