

Bad attitudes toward childbearing contribute to the pro-abortion cause

by Anne Schmiesing

Pro-abortionists have always found that it pays to link their cause to advocacy for women's health. The argument for abortion was first framed around protecting the life and health of the mother. Prior to 1973, women gained legal access to abortion through laws allowing abortion only to save a woman's life. Later, in the infamous *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* decisions, abortion was allowed to preserve the (broadly defined) health of the mother, making abortion legal on demand.

Now an innovative pro-abortion argument is capitalizing on the notion that pregnancy is injurious to women. Eileen McDonagh, Northeastern University political science professor, sets out this argument in her recent book, *Breaking the Abortion Deadlock: From Choice to Consent*.¹ Her argument is thorough, and even valid in part, but unsound since her basic premises are fatally flawed.

Her first key premise is that pregnancy is not caused by sexual intercourse, as traditionally thought. Rather, the immediate cause is the fertilized ovum—a claim she bases on the fact

that, through in vitro fertilization, life can be conceived outside of the womb and later placed in the womb where the fertilized ovum implants itself.² It is at the time of implantation that pregnancy begins, she argues.

McDonagh's second premise is that by implanting itself in the womb, the zygote massively intrudes on the woman's body and, therefore, a pregnancy constitutes grave injury to the woman if imposed on her by the zygote without her consent.

Her conclusion is that if the fertil-

ized ovum, whom she admits may be a living human being, massively intrudes upon a woman, abortion is justified in self-defense. In other words, to the degree that the fertilized ovum is legally considered a person and is protected, he should also be held accountable for any injury he imposes on his mother.

The notion that even a normal pregnancy is very dangerous is damaging to the pro-life cause; it is not only used by many pro-abortionists to try to justify abortion, but it also plays into the

See Abortion on page 8

The root of our troubles?

The link between contraception and the Ezzo parenting method

by Dan and Kay Cummins

Faithful Catholics today recognize the destructive effects of contraception and decry the devaluing of human life brought on by an irresponsible approach to sex. The Pope has preached on these subjects quite powerfully in his encyclicals, and his language and tone suggest that they are among the

"crisis issues" that will determine whether our civilization ceases to be a "culture of death" and becomes instead a source of life for the body and the soul.

But what is at the origins of our society's love affair with contraception? Why is it so difficult even to imagine an American society that would refuse to practice contraception on moral grounds, when only forty years ago many married couples would have been ashamed to admit that they used artificial methods? How did they become so acceptable to us?

The truth is that contraception was originally promoted as a way to lessen

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QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, AND CONTINUING CONVERSATIONS



They're ba-a-ack

I am glad that a little footnote of mine could serve as the inspiration for such an interesting article by Michael Healy, who, in the last issue of the *Concourse*, defended in detail the probability of Tolkien's Middle Earth.¹ The intimate knowledge of Tolkien that Mr. Healy shared is fascinating, and unveils the complexity and genius of the great mind who introduced the world to Bilbo Baggins. However, I must persist in my original claim that the real existence of creatures like those created by Tolkien's imagination is incompatible with our Faith.

At the end of his article, Mr. Healy readily admitted that he does not per-

sonally believe there are aliens or elves loosed in the cosmos, but he does not think that Catholic doctrine excludes the possibility of their existence, nor of their salvation through Christ if they were to exist. Truly I am with him in the proposal of expedient evangelization and catechesis of non-human sentient life forms, should we be introduced, but I remain unconvinced that anticipation of such an event is warranted.

I draw your attention to the unfortunate fact that by Adam's sin all of creation fell from grace. According to St. Paul, "All of creation is in bondage to decay," (Rom. 8:20). Obviously, "all of creation" extends beyond our earth and into the farthest recesses of the universe; therefore any planet where aliens could exist is also "in bondage to decay," as is our own. A non-human sentient race, existing in our space and time,² born *without* original sin would not be compatible with a fallen creation; a non-human sentient race born *with* original sin would not be just, for it is the race of men alone who brought the downfall of creation.

As this applies to Tolkien, I will concede that any of his characters springing directly from Adam and Eve (such as the pigmy hobbits) could exist as long as they retained their entire humanity. But any race that claimed separate origins, or mixed origins (such as

elves or orcs) could not, precisely because there is evidence, as Mr. Healy sufficiently proved, to believe that Tolkien intended his Middle Earth to be our Earth in the distant past.

In light of the discussion on this topic, I would now like to modify my original footnote to read thus: "I regret to note my theory rules out the possibility of the real existence of *most of* the inhabitants of Tolkien's Middle-Earth,"—but (again) I see no way around it.

Justine Schmiesing
Class of '94

¹ Perhaps it would be appropriate for Mr. Healy to invite me to accompany him to the Grand Concourse Restaurant in gratitude for my help in his winning the annual *Concourse* grand prize (see page 16).

² "Our space and time" would not include angels or other beings for whom God might choose to create another space and time.

Student Life Office's image tarnished by failure to respond to thoughtful criticism

Last Fall Katie van Schaijik wrote and published an interesting article concerning household life at the

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THE UNIVERSITY CONCOURSE

An Independent Journal of Opinion

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We welcome submissions from faculty, students, administrators, staff, alumni, parents, trustees, benefactors and friends, on any topic of interest to a general university readership, provided they are courteously expressed and framed with a view to advancing the welfare of FUS and/or Catholic culture at large.

We recommend opinions be kept to fewer than 1,500 words.

Contributions should be submitted on a 3.5" disk, either to *The University Concourse*, Box 27, University Boulevard, Steubenville, OH 43952, or sent to e-mail address: "concour@clover.net"

Please include your full name, phone-number and e-mail address, if you have one.

We will consider printing submissions anonymously or under a pen-name; however, in general we wish to encourage open, "face to face" discussion. In either case, the editors require the full name and phone-number of the author of each opinion.

The Challenge of Ephesians 5:21-33

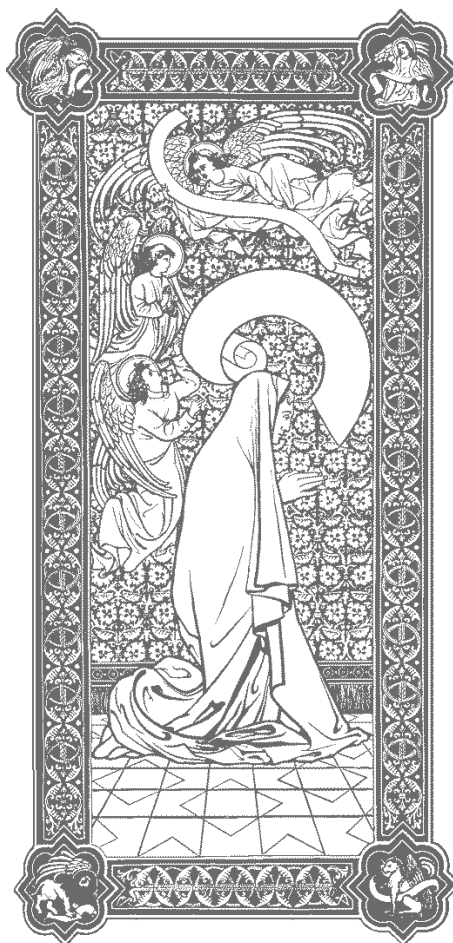
by Alicia Hernon

SUBMIT TO EACH OTHER OUT OF REVERENCE TO CHRIST...WIVES SHOULD SUBMIT TO THEIR HUSBANDS AS TO THE LORD....THE HUSBAND IS THE HEAD OF HIS WIFE...HUSBANDS LOVE YOUR WIVES...HE WHO LOVES his wife loves himself...each one of you should love his wife as himself and the wife should respect her husband.”

Recently I was at a wedding where this reading was proclaimed. I was caught up in the beauty of it until I started to wonder how those in the congregation might be taking it. The passage is powerful, and a woman of any depth is challenged to reconcile it with her beliefs and her life. I'm sure there were many different responses. Some women refuse to accept what the Lord says on many subjects, including this one, and therefore dismiss it; some believe that the Lord meant no more than that a wife should be devoted to her husband, not that she should actually bend her will to his. On the other end of the spectrum, some women may use this verse as an excuse to never confront their husbands on issues that are truly of importance to them. Others actually believe God meant what He said and are not threatened by it.

I firmly believe that this question of submission is a very important one for women to come to grips with, for in this passage and those following God is setting up a framework of order for the family and, therefore, society. When this framework is ignored, or destroyed by womanly pride, chaos is the result. More personally, if wives misunderstand or disobey this teaching, how can they expect to be in harmony with God or with their husbands?

The real question is, of course, what did the Lord mean in this passage? I by no means have the authority or the knowledge to tell the seeker the mind of God, but I would like to point out



how application of one aspect of this passage fits very well with the general makeup of men and women which can help them work together towards the goal of heaven.

The Holy Father points out that we understand a wife's submission only when we understand the principle of "mutual submission." In his encyclical *On the Dignity and Vocation of Women*, he writes: "...All the reasons in favor of the 'subjection' of woman to man in marriage must be understood in the sense of a 'mutual subjection' of both 'out of reverence for Christ.'"

For husbands and wives to truly discover the richness of God's plan for

marriage, and for my article to not be misunderstood, it must be noted that "mutual submission" is the cornerstone of the family order. For husband and wife both to grow they must submit to each other, though I believe this submission means something different to the husband than it does to the wife. In this article I will only expound on a wife's submission to her husband, though how a husband submits to his wife is equally important.

I have found in my marriage, as most do, that many decisions a couple makes involve a compromise. But what about the times when no compromise can be reached? I propose that these are the times that a wife should bend her will to that of her husband, knowing that leading the family is a task that the Lord has assigned to him, not one that the husband has necessarily chosen for himself.

By saying that the husband is the head of his wife, God is giving him an important and daunting responsibility. Not only must he make decisions in these situations, but he is accountable to God for their outcome. He is the one with the work to do and he bears the responsibility if something goes wrong. Ultimately, the husband is to lead his family to heaven. I do not envy my husband this pressure!

Is this some kind of insult to a woman's intelligence or analytical ability? Are her ideas inferior? Is she less valuable in the relationship? Of course not! God has simply not made women to be the heads of their families; He has given husbands a special grace for that role that He has not given to wives. Instead, women have a different, equally important role to play.

As I said, being a leader can be a difficult task, and it is one which some men have given up because of their own weakness or because of a lack of support from their wives who may try to be the leader themselves. For a man to successfully complete the task God has given him, he needs his wife behind him.

Submission also is a way for women to be truly fulfilled in their marriages. Many women are looking for a knight in shining armor who will come and sweep them away, promising protection and love all of their days. Deep down that's honestly what many want, and there is nothing wrong with this. The problem is, all the knights are men in their forties who have been married twenty years. How did they get like that? When men get married, many are overwhelmed, or soon are, with the realization that they need to take care of this woman, emotionally, financially, and so on—not to mention any children that come along. They are frightened, and don't feel like knights in shining armor, even though they would like to be. What can transform a man is a woman who says with confidence, "I know you can do it. I trust you. If you think this is what we should do, I believe you." Even if he fails, even if he is totally wrong, he will learn, if his wife communicates to him that she still trusts him, in spite of his failures. Only then will his fear become confidence, for there is nothing that is more motivating to a man than a woman who believes in him.

On the opposite end, what happens when a woman doesn't communicate confidence in her husband? Or even speaks to him as to a child—telling him what to do, instead of offering suggestions?

Many women may be asking, "What about if I know my ideas are right, and he just won't listen? What if we go down together?" First of all, it is better to be wrong together than right alone. Failures can bring unity to the family if the husband and wife stand as one. Secondly, if he doesn't listen and

fails, the realization of how valuable his wife's insights are may encourage him to listen better the next time. Thirdly, how is a man ever going to believe that his wife has confidence in him unless he sees her take that risk and go against her own instincts to follow him? Most women have the personality and the power to make their husbands submit to them and follow their ideas instead of his own. Doing this is one of the most destructive things a wife can do. Her husband will never learn, or gain the confidence he needs to lead the family. Lastly, since submission to one's husband is a command from God, He will bless a wife's obedience no matter what the outcome of the specific situation is.

These are some ways submission is beneficial to a man, but how does it fit into God's plan for women? I believe the whole aspect of submission in marriage is more of an attitude than an action, and it is the way women are called to submit to the Lord. In daily actions husbands and wives serve the family together; they work as a team, interchanging roles sometimes as needed. But in the heart of every wife should be the utmost admiration and respect for the man with whom she is spending her life. She should look up to him, admire him, encourage him. She should realize that her will is not her own. As a Christian, her will should be the Lord's will. In marriage this is practically lived out by bending to her husband's will. In this way, a husband is a wife's means of salvation.

Also, the purpose of authority in our lives is protection, not limitation. Within the protection of a husband's love and care, a woman can be free to operate in her own sphere without the

pressure of being ultimately responsible for all the decisions made in the family. She takes part in them, but the responsibility doesn't lie on her shoulders, but on those of her husband. Submission also frees a woman from the temptation to be competitive with her husband instead of a complement to him.

On the other hand, the call to submission is a challenge to some women in the opposite way, for it means that she cannot draw into herself and refuse to share her insights and thoughts with her husband. "To submit" also means to put forth or offer, as one submits a report or an application. Wives are required by God to give their insights to their husbands. It is wrong to blindly go along with whatever a husband may

decide without giving input. This is just as dangerous as overriding the husband's God-given authority. God placed men and women together because they think differently, they see things differently, and both views are needed in the family; to lack one is a great detriment, and a husband should not be forced by his wife's silence to lead the family alone.

One thing that women seem to forget when being challenged by Eph 5:21 is that the Lord is referring to husbands and wives, not men and women. I am not required to be submissive to any man on the basis of his masculinity, except for my husband. Misunderstanding on this point has led to distortions, for it is not the role of male and female that gives men responsibility for the women in their lives, it is instead the role of husband and wife. What makes a person a husband or wife is the commitment to each other and to God

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As a
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The gospel and disarmament

by Sister Mary O'Connor, T.O.R.

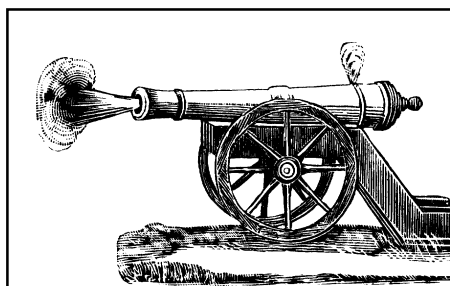
THE STENCH IS HORRIBLE. A SPIRIT OF HOPELESSNESS SEEMS TO BE PREVALENT AS A PERSON WALKS THROUGH A STREET STREWN WITH GARBAGE. THE SIGHT OF STARVING, WASTED, ILL PEOPLE IS everywhere. Pain is on the faces of hungry people. Men and women are picking at the garbage, searching for food. Children are crying and babies are left with no-one to care for them.

Could all this be real? Is it possible in our advanced twentieth century? This is not some horror scene just conjured up within someone's imagination. No, these are the conditions in which people live and die, day in and day out in the slums of India.

Once while meditating on this reality, the familiar words of Jesus jumped out at me: "But, if you give what you have as alms, all will be wiped clean for you." These words were addressed to the Scribes and Pharisees, but how pertinent they are for our wealthy, sometimes arrogant United States of America. We, who as a nation spend so much time, money and energy on devising more powerful war machines, could instead turn these energies and resources to the relief of suffering around the world. Then we would be men and women doing a most heroic act. Our military could become an army of mercy, a powerful force whose members fly or travel by ship into poor countries. We could bring in food, medicine, blankets, and whatever else is needed to sustain life. (We could begin this endeavor right here in our own land.) Then we would be using our nation's "superpower" to save life instead of destroy it.

Much physical training would still be needed because the better your strength and agility, the better you can serve God's people, our brothers and sisters.

Objections arise: "But the military



personnel are not trained to be doctors." This is true. But "whatever you do to these, the least of my people, you do to me." (Matthew 25:40) Any act of kindness is blessed in God's sight.

"You are making no sense! Don't you see that if we spend our military money and might on works such as these, we would have no weapons stored up in case of an attack? Our defense would be weakened. We would be devastated as a nation."

Would we be? Or would we receive singular blessings such as an abundance of crops and favorable weather instead? Might we receive the spiritual benefits of following the gospel thoroughly? Yes, the gospel is absurd. It is impractical and it does not make sense. It is utter foolishness. A generous, courageous act on the part of our military, the absurdity, the foolishness of the gospel needs to be lived in order to heal a broken world. If this were to happen, would we be hated or would our example really make people think and wonder if there is a better way that we have missed all along, even though it is pro-

claimed year after year from church pulpits throughout the nation?

What if we had reached out to the people of Iraq in this manner long before the Gulf War ever started? Maybe the heart of Saddam Hussein might have been stirred to want to know what sort of teaching is motivating such humanitarian outreach. I don't know if he has even heard of the gospel. We would be gospel for him. At the very least, it might "arouse the conscience," of the world as Peter Maurin would say. The members of the United Nations would be led into reflection. "If you give what you have as alms, all will be

wiped clean for you." The gospel is challenging and life-giving. It is a new challenge to live it on a national level.

My purpose here is not to condemn those who have participated in war. I am proposing a radically new approach.

In the face of the dismay, strife, pain and scandal within our nation at this time, we can turn Christ's teaching into action; so far, every other solution has failed. Then the words of Isaiah would become a reality: "They

shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. One nation shall not raise the sword against another nor shall they train for war again." ■

A member of the Franciscan, T.O.R. Sisters of the Sorrowful Mother, Sr. Mary spends much of her time serving the poor in Steubenville.

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Conversations

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University. The piece analyzed problems she sees in household living and their relation to the Student Life Office. As an alumna of an FUS household, and a former household adviser, I found the points she raised to be thought-provoking and worthy of discussion. With the arrival of each successive issue of the *Concourse* I expected to see a reply from some member of the Student Life staff refuting her arguments, defending current practices, or at least offering some explanation that might help mitigate the serious concerns she raised. None came.

Since its inception the *Concourse* has covered diverse topics relating to Catholic culture and the life at Franciscan University ranging from pop music to the liturgy. I have greatly admired those authors who have boldly voiced their views in their particular areas of interest and expertise, despite the personal and professional risks involved in doing so. I think of Dr. Andrew Minto vs. Attorney Mark Fischer on music, Dr. Stephen Miletic debating with Dr. John Crosby on Distance Education, and alumnae wrangling with professors over complicated economics issues. Other distinguished authors have included Dr. Alice von Hildebrand, Fr. Giles Dimmock, O.P.,

Dr. John Holmes, as well as students such as Michael Healy, Jr. All of them real people butting up against real people, daring to voice perhaps unpopular convictions, for the sake of helping us discourse toward truth in sometimes difficult subjects. It is noteworthy that this has been done within the milieu of a small community where “opponents” may be fellow students, friends or colleagues, who may belong to the same parishes and meet face to face frequently.

These writers, by participating in intellectual discussions, have embraced the true spirit of a University that is alive with thinkers, male and female, young and old. I am thinking of a University that is not in the business of producing clones, but rather, releasing persons with fully functioning intellectual capabilities. The formal Mission Statement of our University makes a point of proclaiming its commitment to this sort of strong intellectual formation.

However, by not responding to intelligent and obviously well-meant criticism, the Student Life Office is tempting us to believe that they do not operate in the spirit of a lively University brimming with ideas and discussion but, alas, sadly operates in the flat spirit of “no discourse.” It may be easier to deal with students who are placid, docile and non-questioning (a point raised in the VanSchaijik article),

but we must ask: Is this right for a University? I urge Student Life to the retrieve its image, now tarnished by inappropriate silence, by answering the challenges posed by Katie van Schaijik’s article.

Susan Creel Fischer
Class of ’84

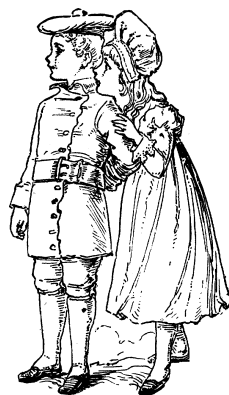
A thought about what might be behind the household problem

The article, “How not to help households” really hit home; I couldn’t agree more with its analysis of the whole situation. Like Mrs. van Schaijik, I have maintained beautiful, long-lasting friendships with members of my household and will cherish the many joyful memories from our college days together. Still, I removed myself from campus after only three semesters, because household life was literally too draining—for all the reasons mentioned in the article. Since graduating in 1989, I have often wondered how student life on campus has evolved. (I had hoped the SLO had eased up on its stringent household requirements.) Old habits die hard, it seems. With this in mind, I would like to offer a personal insight into this issue.

Katie van Schaijik, Matt McGuinness, and Chris Wright all did an excellent job explaining the relationship between the Student Life Office (SLO) and the quality of household life on campus. My question is *why* would the SLO persist in such heavy-handedness? What makes their mode of operation—one that often results in placing unnecessary and burdensome demands on students—seem to them like the appropriate course of action? I suggest that the problem might be in an underlying set of pastoral concepts (inherited from the covenant communities) that are lacking a Catholic fullness, specifically in their depreciation of human nature and their over-emphasis on sin and weakness.

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I believe this was the case when I attended the University; it was inherent in much of the “formation” I received outside the classroom. From teachings that discouraged dating (so we wouldn’t “fall into sin”) to the intense stress on household commitments—the underlying thinking seemed to be: do not trust yourself; you are weak; put your trust in others (the community on campus, your household, advisors or spiritual directors.)

Just the fact that SLO thought it necessary to provide so many extra-sacramental formation programs seems to me to indicate an imbalance. It points to a notion that students need to be protected from themselves (because, with their essentially sinful nature, they are apt to give in to every kind of depravity known or unknown) by bombarding them with a deluge of teachings, retreats, and household meetings.

As I understand it, the SLO’s goal is to help students become strong, moral, Catholic people. This is unequivocally a great and noble goal. But will these means accomplish it? It seems to me the very opposite is more likely to happen. Students will mistrust themselves and become dependent on support structures that won’t be there for them when they graduate.

By quashing students’ self-confidence another negative consequence is set in motion: neurotic introspection and false guilt syndromes. This type of introspection was rampant on campus while I attended, and it tempted students to focus mainly on their weaknesses with regard to “spiritual” matters, with those weaknesses being used as a way of relating to others.

One example of this was the growing “inner healing” movement on campus. While I attended FUS, it seemed everyone needed inner healing for some reason. I knew several people whose “woundedness” became their basic identity. More and more students were encouraged to see professional counselors. It was almost as if seeing a counselor gave students a higher status among their peers. My thoughts are that

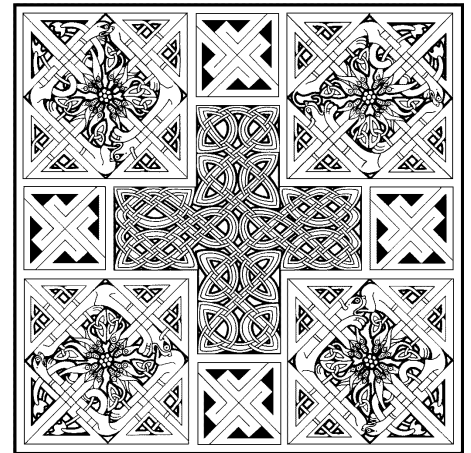
these students had given so much power to their weaknesses they had learned to *fear* sin rather than to *hate* it.

I realize that I am touching on a sensitive area, but I mean no disrespect to those who genuinely needed God’s healing touch. What I criticize is not the quiet workings of the Holy Spirit toward wholeness within the person, but rather a campus culture that emphasizes human weakness, instead of intellectual interests, personal accomplishments or shared Christian values.

I can’t stress enough how destructive this fixation on human frailty was. While household members were staunchly supportive of one another, the amount of emotional baggage shared at regular meetings was overwhelming. The household was meant to provide a supportive, nurturing environment in which to grow in Christian virtue and character, instead it began to resemble an amateur twelve-step program! As coordinator of a household for one year, I often felt anxious and ill equipped to help those in need. And I know our household was not unusual in this respect.

By making these criticisms, however, I do not want to devalue the importance of one’s community. The warm Christian community that surrounds FUS makes evident the fact that no man is an island. I was blessed many times over to have friends close by when going through difficulties, large or small. I am simply pointing out that one also needs to learn how to deal with life’s daily struggles, to certain extent, on one’s own. We need to make our own decisions and grow in the confidence of being able to do so—without demanding the constant affirmation of others. Most importantly, each of us needs to know that, because of Christ’s sacrifice on the Cross, we are *essentially good*, and that we operate in this world through this goodness to grow more in His likeness.

While I am very grateful that I was able to attend FUS, I believe I, like many others, struggled unnecessarily



for the reasons already mentioned. Fortunately, during my final semester, I took a course on the life and philosophy of Pope John Paul II. The understanding I gained in this course dramatically changed my view of myself and of Catholicism—making my faith more human, more real and more joyful than ever before. Suddenly, I felt free from the over-emphasized “flesh-is-weak” teachings that I had slavishly tried to understand and follow in my earlier years at FUS. Reading John Paul II’s *Love and Responsibility* and the encyclical *The Redeemer of Man*, I began to realize that my human nature, though at times weak and sinful, was redeemed by Christ.

Truly, I can’t begin to explain all the ways the teachings of our Holy Father have impacted my life for the good. It all seemed so revolutionary at the time, perhaps because I had followed some not-so-Catholic teachings while on campus—teachings that underestimated the gift humanity is. Certainly, it is right that we confess our sins and do penance; our life in Christ is a pilgrimage, often an uphill battle, and slip-ups are inevitable. Nevertheless, the SLO could help the “journey” by respecting, and therefore calling-out, the intrinsic goodness students and all persons freely possess in Christ. In doing so, students will surely become the morally strong Catholic people the world thirsts for.

Martha (Cotton) Blandford
Class of '89

Abortion

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decisions of many women to abort their babies. It is therefore vitally important that we as pro-lifers expose the falsehood of these claims, and, evenmore, promote a more positive view of pregnancy.

McDonagh, for her purpose of justifying abortion, grossly exaggerates the changes in a woman's body and the dangers of pregnancy, but her argument is even more effective because it falls on the fertile soil of contemporary American culture, in which an attitude of fear toward bearing children (both in pregnancy and childbirth) has been prevalent for many years.

Normal pregnancy is usually accompanied by some discomforts, the kind and degree of which are as varied as the women experiencing them. Some, but not all of the discomfort (e.g. morning sickness), can be tempered or even prevented by good nutritional intake, good hygiene and exercise. This normal discomfort is to be distinguished from dangers of pregnancy. If complications do arise during a pregnancy, then that pregnancy may be considered dangerous, but a normal pregnancy is not dangerous in itself.

Something is considered "dangerous" if the probability of complications is high; pregnancy does not fit into this category. The risks of a normal pregnancy are relatively low. Similarly, eating is not considered dangerous although it carries the risk of choking or food poisoning. Certain health conditions, however, can exist that may increase the risks of eating. The same is the case for pregnancy.

The maternal mortality rate in the United States is very low, less than one death per 10,000 live births.³ And the number of non-fatal complications from hereditary or natural causes are much fewer than one might expect. Some seemingly natural complications can be caused by unnecessary interventions. Were women to understand that such complications are not as common as

they may seem, they would not fear pregnancy and childbirth as much, and abortion supporters would not be able to use the argument that "every pregnancy puts a woman at risk," to justify abortion.

Pregnancy and childbirth are normal and natural processes for a woman. A woman's body is formed to sustain pregnancy. If she is unable to sustain the life conceived within and the pregnancy ends in miscarriage, it is not normal; something has gone wrong. Similarly, if pregnancy causes severe physical problems for the woman, something is wrong.

Unfortunately, many people, including many doctors, do not see pregnancy as a normal process. They treat pregnancy and childbirth as if it were a very dangerous time for both mother and child. If a mother is influenced by this philosophy, she will fear the pregnancy, and her tension may actually cause the very thing she fears—pain and complications.

Fear of childbirth may also lead to many unnecessary interventions in pregnancy and labor, which in turn cause additional complications.⁴ As Diana Korte and Roberta Scaer, authors of *A Good Birth, A Safe Birth* found in their research, there is less chance of complication during pregnancy if a woman and her birth attendant hold "the belief that intervention should be used only when the need is greater than the risk."⁵ Some interventions, however,

are used almost routinely. When society treats even a normal pregnancy as an illness or disease—requiring interventions, medical treatment and even hospitalization—we lend credence to the pro-abortionists' claim that pregnancy constitutes grave injury to a woman, and at the same time exacerbate the fears some women have of childbirth, which may in turn lead them to choose abortion. We contribute to the arguments of people like Professor McDonagh to try to justify abortion. ■

Anne (Lodzinski, '96) Schmiesing is employed as Program Director for Pennsylvanians for Human Life in Philadelphia.

¹ For a good critique of this book see review by Frederica Mathewes-Green in *National Right To Life News*, August 12, 1997.

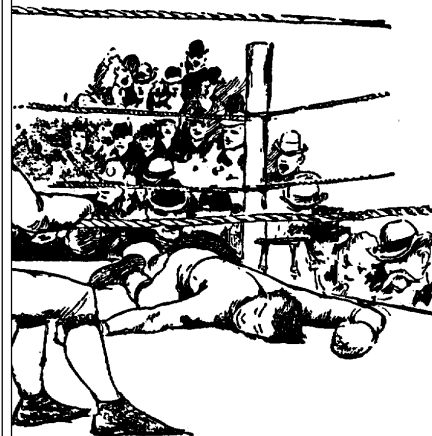
² McDonagh fails to consider that regardless of the means by which one becomes pregnant, an agent distinct from and independent of the fertilized ovum is necessary. No one can become pregnant or bring a zygote into being (enabling it to subsequently "commit the crime" of injuring his mother) without having taken some proactive steps to conceive (except by means of rape or divine intervention).

³ New York: Bantam Books, (1990), 56.

⁴ I in no way mean to imply that all complications are caused by abuses on the part of the mother, prenatal caregiver or birth attendant.

⁵ Korte and Scaer, 59. One example of an intervention that causes complications is the use of a fetal monitor during labor which limits the movement of a woman, increasing the chance of poor positioning of the baby or lack of progress in labor, both of which may lead to an otherwise unnecessary cesarean section.

POSITION OPENING



The *Concourse* is looking for a new business manager for next year, to help us with e-mail correspondence, accounting, subscriptions and campus distribution. The ideal candidate is frequently on campus, has a car and at least moderate computer know-how. (Computer will be provided). Hours are irregular, totaling about 15/per month. Pay is \$50 per issue of the *Concourse*.

If interested, please contact Maria Ellis at e-mail address: concourse@clover.net, or phone 282-5239.

EZZOS

Continued from page 1

the burdens of family life, particularly the burdens of child-rearing. It was meant to help those poor parents who couldn't possibly raise all those kids and still have time to be happy with each other; to enjoy an evening out alone, time with friends, the freedom to travel, etc. With birth control, there would be fewer kids, more sex, more money, more time, more of everything. And the kids would be better off too, for the simple reason that Mom and Dad would be happier, less stressed, more patient and forgiving, wealthier, and more capable of spending time and attention on their children, since there would be only two or three instead of eight or ten. There would also be less divorce, as Mom and Dad would have no reason to abandon such an orderly, predictable, comfortable and care-free lifestyle.

We all know that things did not turn out this way. Contraception has only aggravated the problems it promised to solve. A standard explanation is that it made sex cheap; that men and women both became sexual predators, and that in this sort of atmosphere marriage and commitment made no sense. This is true, but it really only describes what happened after it became widely accepted, and why it has been so difficult to reverse the trend towards a contraceptive mentality. It does not go back to the root of the problem, which involves the question of how the idea of using contraception could have become so popular in the first place. It does not explain why Margaret Sanger was so successful in convincing American so-

ciety to adopt the contraceptive mentality, and it does not explain why so many ordinary and well-meaning Christian couples today embrace contraception as a matter of course, without so much as a second thought.

To know why so many Christian couples seem incapable of seriously questioning contraception, we must discover what it is in their approach to child-rearing that makes contraception seem so appropriate and even necessary.

Appearing on the scene of Christian family life in the last several years is a new child-rearing method promulgated by former Protestant minister Gary Ezzo. His books include *Preparation for Parenting: A Biblical Perspective* (for infants or newborns) or *Babywise* (secular version) and *Growing Kids God's Way* (for toddlers through childhood). In our view, the Ezzo method represents just the sort of approach to family life that makes ordinary and well-meaning couples vulnerable to the contraceptive tidal wave and all the baggage that it carries in its wake. (This includes even some couples who consciously

reject contraception, but are nonetheless being subtly influenced by a contraceptive mentality in child-rearing practices.)

Contrary to Catholic thought, Ezzo argues that God made man and woman completely sufficient unto themselves. In his Bible, men and women do not need children to complete their lives together, and marriage is not primarily ordered toward children. He makes this statement at the very beginning of his book, as a foundation and preparation for all that comes later on in the text: "Notice a very important exclusion:

children were not present with Adam and Eve when God rested from His work of creation. After He had formed the woman, God authoritatively declared that His creation was very good. We believe that statement to be significant. If children were necessary to complete man and woman, God would have created them before making such a declaration. Therefore, the marriage relationship lacks nothing. Woman alone completes man, and man alone completes woman. Thus, the husband and wife form the nucleus of the family unit. Children do not complete the family, they expand it." (*Growing Kids God's Way*, p.62)

Contrast this with the Pope's words in his Agenda for the Third Millennium: "*The Catechism of the Catholic Church* points out that conjugal love 'naturally tends to be fruitful. A child does not come from outside as something added on to the mutual love of the spouses, but springs from the very heart of their mutual giving as its fruit and fulfillment'" (p. 107). Compare Ezzo's attitude with that of the Pope and the whole of Catholic thought, and the immediate difficulty of reconciling Ezzo with a Catholic view of family life becomes painfully clear.

Like a good Calvinist, Ezzo thinks of children as morally depraved and in need of stern discipline right from the very start of life, long before they have reached the age of reason and become capable of willfully engaging in immoral behavior. "A child is not born morally good but with a natural predisposition for moral waywardness." (*Growing Kid's God's Way*, p.18) Even at this very early stage, then, Ezzo devalues the child, and in the process every human person. Thus for Ezzo, the primary question for parents is: how do we dominate our immoral children so as to make our lives more pleasant, convenient or even bearable?

To accomplish his task of enabling parents to more easily control their innately wayward children, Ezzo makes a variety of fairly predictable recommendations, including but not limited

Thus for Ezzo, the primary question for parents is: how do we dominate our immoral children so as to make our lives more pleasant, convenient or even bearable?

to, extremely rigid and potentially dangerous sleeping and feeding schedules,¹ aggressive spanking when “necessary,”² frequent isolation and separation of babies from parents,³ and religious instruction heavily weighted in favor of obedience, discipline and punishment. Some of these recommendations may have resulted in health problems for babies reared by parents using Ezzo. Well-documented cases of failure to thrive have been associated with Ezzo’s method, and a number of medical specialists have become concerned enough to write an open letter to the American Academy of Pediatrics about the problem.⁴

Apart from the medical problems associated with the method, the result of all of these highly questionable methods is a view of family life in which children tend to be seen as dangers and threats whose primary responsibility within the family is to resist their “evil” impulses so as to make and/or keep their parents happy. In the Ezzo family, children have a tremendous obligation and responsibility to serve their parents, while the parents’ responsibilities to the child seem to focus on what is convenient.

The parents’ crucial responsibility to offer the child intimate emotional and psychological affection,⁵ which the child naturally craves and needs in order to become a mature and capable adult, gives way to what Ezzo sees as a prior and far more important need for the presence of a strong moral disciplinarian in the home. He writes: “The duty of parents is to restrain the natural corruption by instilling into the child the self-disciplines of life.” (*Growing Kids God’s Way*, p. 23) This moral discipline, Ezzo implies, is what will give life and peace to the soul of the child, rather than constant affection and a simple willingness to “be there” for our children whenever they need us. And Ezzo does not stop with arguing that the affection and presence of parents will fail to accomplish something that moral discipline alone can achieve, he goes on to imply that the constant affection

and presence of parents is actually a positive threat to the well-being of the child. “If you’re going to work from a biblical mind set, you need to understand how God responded to the cries of His Children. Praise God that the Father did not intervene when His Son cried out on the cross (Matthew 27:46). If He had stopped the process, there would be no redemption for us today. Our Heavenly Father’s non-intervention to His Son’s cry at that moment was the right response, bringing peace to all who trust in Him (Romans 5:1).” (*Preparation for Parenting*, p.122)

Supposedly, the baby who is nurtured and surrounded with affection and intimacy becomes too attached to his parents. A baby too “loved” by his parents might forget that the world is full of suffering and adversity, and even our babies had better learn sooner rather than later that life is hard.

Experience teaches that the Ezzo principles are little more than prejudices, and that children raised in such harsh, disciplinary homes learn very little about charity, honesty, mercy and courage.⁶

All of these prejudices, in varying forms and degrees, might be said to shape and color the environment of an “Ezzo home.” We are aware of the danger of caricature, but the basic tendencies of Ezzo’s theory are clear. In our opinion, it is precisely in the sort of family environment encouraged by Ezzo that contraception becomes so attractive and makes so much sense. If order in the home and a certain distance and severity between parents and children become paramount goals, then why embrace the unpredictability of a house full of kids and the heartbreak of loving kids even when some of them lose their way and bring such pain into our lives? (For even God, the Perfect Parent, loses his children too, by their free will.) And why, if kids are all morally depraved the second they leave the womb, should we embrace their entrance into the world as unconditionally good no matter what the circumstances? Could it be, then, that it is a world-view like

Ezzo’s that is at the root of our current troubles? ■

Dan Cummins recently received his Master’s degree in philosophy from the University of Dallas, and is currently working with Fidelity Investments. Kay (O’Meara, ’88) Cummins is mother to Christian (4) and Olivia (3).

¹ “Your strategy will be made up of three basic activities that repeat themselves throughout the day: feeding time, wake time, and nap time. Please note: The order of events cannot be changed during the day. Feeding must be first; wake time must be second; and nap time is third.” (*Preparation for Parenting*, p. 101)

² “The management responsibilities of the Master’s children include the use of controlled force. Our society calls it spanking; the Bible calls it chastisement. Chastisement means to inflict pain with controlled force on an individual to amend an inner attitude.” (*Preparation for Parenting*, p.209)

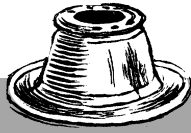
³ “A normal baby may cry as much as three hours total per day, and five to forty-five minutes in any session.” “...leaving the room is often the best response.” (*Preparation for Parenting*, p. 128 and p.126)

⁴ “Letter of Concern to the American Academy of Pediatrics regarding *Preparation for Parenting & On Becoming Babywise*”, Terner, Kathleen, Feb. 1997, 26681 Sotelo, Mission Viejo, CA 92692.

⁵ “In the family, which is a community of persons, special attention must be devoted to the children by developing a profound esteem for their personal dignity, and a great respect and generous concern for their rights. This is true for every child, but it becomes all the more urgent the smaller the child is and the more it is in need of everything...” (*Familiaris Consortio*, Pope John Paul II, p.43)

⁶ St. Francis de Sales gave this advice to St. Jeanne de Chantal in disciplining her son: “Do all of this little by little, slowly, gently as the angels do, by pleasing suggestions and without harshness.” (*Mothers of the Saints*, by Wendy Leifeld, p.146).





Editor's Post Script



■ Last words (for now)

There were so many things I couldn't bear to leave unsaid for the whole summer that I invented a new section, called the Editor's Postscript, which, if the readers think it works, could become an annual feature of the *Concourse*.

Inspired by Richard John Neuhaus' Public Square section of the journal *First Things*, the idea is to allow the editor to make various brief concluding remarks on some of the discussions we've held throughout the year, as well as to throw out some new ideas that might stimulate thinking for next year's discussions.

I hope many of you will write articles over the summer! The more we have the more interesting and fruitful the *Concourse* will be, and the more frequently it can appear next semester. They need not be long. If you have a worthwhile point to make, and if you can make it in a good spirit, the *Concourse* is interested.

■ A suggestion regarding Extraordinary Ministers

Regarding the new Vatican instruction on the liturgy, calling for the elimination of "the habitual use of extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion" at Mass, the Christ the King Chapel administration says, "The Bishop's office has advised us to continue our present practice while these new directives are under study and evaluation..."

Now, I can well understand that a bishop would want to be very sure of exactly what's being required before he imposes sudden changes in ordinary parishes, where few members are very sharply tuned to the Vatican, and where there is likely to be some resistance—particularly if the changes involve restrictions on the role of laymen at Mass. But the situation is very different on our campus. We positively *delight* in doing the will of Rome! We shudder at the thought of *not* doing it.

I have an idea. What if we were to say to the bishop: "Your Excellency, our university has built a considerable reputation on its against-the-cultural-tide submission to the authority of Rome. Not only is our congregation more than willing to comply with papal instructions, they are scandalized and even disturbed in conscience by any seeming reluctance on our part to submit. Would you mind if, while this document is being studied, we adjust our practice to suit its first-face meaning,

in order not to put stumbling blocks in the way of our faithful?"

I bet he wouldn't.

■ Catholic teaching on capital punishment

Noelle Hiester has a knack for nabbing the timely topics. Last year she raised the Extraordinary Ministers issue in the *Concourse* just a few months before the Vatican came out with the new document on the subject. In March she wrote about how Karla Faye Tucker's execution had forced her to reevaluate her pro-capital punishment thinking. In the April issue of *First Things*, Father Neuhaus writes, in response to an inquiry about the Church's official position on the death penalty: "What we may be witnessing here is what Cardinal Newman called the development of doctrine...A conscientious Catholic who supports the use of the death penalty in anything but the most extraordinary circumstances must give due consideration to the fact that the bishops conference, and most likely his own bishop, strongly disagree. He must give most particular consideration to the fact that the Pope disagrees, and may be declaring as doctrine that 'extraordinary circumstances' is defined as circumstances in which there is no other way to protect society. Moreover, such a Catholic must be prepared for the possibility that the Church is moving toward a definitive moral prohibition of capital punishment, in which whole-hearted assent to such teaching is required."

I don't know about you all, but from now on, I'm taking Noelle Hiester's opinions very seriously.

■ A final thought on the household issue

Apropos of my concern that frequent, mandatory, one-on-one meetings between coordinators and RDs were bound to have a chilling effect on household life, a reader recently said to me, "I don't see anything wrong with it; you'd have to show me evidence that the RDs were somehow abusing the confidentiality of the coordinators." Here I point out that a practice can be bad without being abusive. Every mother or father knows that to stand continually over their children's shoulders—telling them what to do and criticizing every mistake the instant it's made—is bad parenting. But we wouldn't call

it child abuse. Similarly, we can criticize Student Life policies without accusing Student Life officials of abusing students. In my opinion, even if no RD ever betrayed coordinator confidentiality; even if they were very careful and never asked intrusive questions about what was going on in particular households; even if they didn't impose punishments on coordinators who didn't show; even if coordinators said they didn't mind the regular meetings, it would still be a bad policy—tending, however gradually, toward the destruction of the household system.

■ What is our mission, really?

A line in Dr. Miletic's October article in favor of Distance Education degrees bothered me. He wrote: "As the Church prepares for the twenty-first century, so do we at Franciscan University prepare for a new Evangelization. Technology and the internet make it possible to fulfill our institutional mission of bringing the gospel to the ends of the earth." Setting aside questions about

whether or to what extent the gospel can be spread through technology, I want to protest the idea that it's Franciscan University's mission to bring the gospel to the ends of the earth.

It is the Church's responsibility to evangelize the world. Each individual and institution *within* the Church has only a specific and limited part to play in this otherwise completely overwhelming mission. FUS' part is to see to the *higher education* of the students entrusted to her care.

I may seem to be quibbling needlessly over terms, but there is something very practical at stake. If we think it's our task to evangelize the whole world, we will spread ourselves far too thin. Instead of concentrating on giving the best possible formation to the students we have, we will think: "How can we get the rudiments out to the greatest number?" If we have the whole world in our sights, what we will chiefly notice about our own students is that they are exceptionally well-off—practically glutted with the Good News. So, rather than striving to provide a deeper, fuller, more excellent and rigorous education for *them*, we will throw our resources and creative energies behind efforts to come up with more efficient and further-reaching means of getting the basic message out to others—people normally beyond the range (intellectually, geographically, financially or otherwise) of an institution like ours.

But, in spreading ourselves too thin, we will make a poor job of our *real* mission. We will wind up short-changing our students—sending them out into the world imperfectly prepared for their own particular tasks within the Church, whether as artists, intellectuals, priests, parents, businessmen, or missionaries.

■ What if Shakspere wasn't Shakespeare?

Last month my parents sent me a copy of Joseph Sobran's new book, *Alias Shakespeare*, defending the thesis that the real author of Shakespeare's works was Edward de Vere, the seventeenth Earl of Oxford. I read it in practically one sitting. It was *riveting*, and (to my mind at least) completely convincing—more than convincing. He made the accepted theory look ludicrous. The reader is left amazed that so pitifully few and slender pieces of "evidence" in favor of the authorship of the actor William Shakspere could, beaverdam-like, have held back such an overwhelming flood of probabilities in favor of Oxford for over three hundred years.

Part of the explanation, according to Sobran, is that Shakespearean scholarship, almost from the outset, has been bound up with the anti-aristocracy, egalitarian ideology of the post-enlightenment period. (We were so enamored of the idea that a regular, middle class guy could have been the greatest literary genius of all time,

Poetry Corner

Everyone's a poet

Your rhymes are too rhymey!
(He snarled in disgust.)
Take them outside
If write them you must.
Your meter's too measured—
Style's always the same.
Alliteration allures you
To play its dumb game.
You're like all the others
Who think they are poets.
The *soul* is the thing—
But you do not know it!
You get hung up in structure,
So this poem will fail.
And if I had my druthers
I'd finish it in blank verse.

—jms

that we failed to investigate whether it was really the case.) Another reason has been the unwillingness of the public to admit the likelihood that the greatest sonnets in the English language were inspired by a homosexual passion.

Stated so starkly in abstract thesis-form like that, the idea is no doubt a stunning blow to many devotees of Shakespeare, but I for one find it consoling in the concrete.

As a student of philosophy with a particular interest in the nature of love (my senior thesis at FUS was on the nature of love in Shakespeare's *Othello*, and I am currently writing a book on Christian courtship) I have found Shakespeare's *plays* an endlessly rich source of wisdom and insight. The sonnets, on the other hand, have been disappointing. More than once, looking for inspiration, or for help in expressing some elusive aspect of the mystery of conjugal love, I have turned to his sonnets, and come away virtually empty-handed (feeling, I might add, a little confused and conflicted about it. Was I missing something? This was *Shakespeare*.)

The experience is completely different reading, for instance, Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Sonnets from the Portuguese*. I can't judge the relative *literary* merit of the two sets of poems—I remain perfectly ready to believe the experts who say Shakespeare's are superior—but, for someone "looking for love," every one of EBB's drips gold. All the truest aspects of a pure romance are beautifully and marvelously revealed in them: the life-giving, salvific power of love; how it ennobles the soul; the bliss it engenders; its rootedness in and directedness toward the deepest selfhood of the person; its bodily expression; its goodness; its living reciprocity; the unity it creates between the lovers; its gift character; the joy and awe and humility and gratitude and courage it inspires in the beloved, and so on. Consider just these few lines from number VIII:

"What can I give thee back, O liberal
And princely giver, who hast brought the gold
And purple of thine heart, unstained, untold,
And laid them on the outside of the wall
For such as I to take or leave withal,
In unexpected largesse?..."

The major themes of Shakespeare's sonnets are completely different, and less inspiring. One is the physical beauty of his "lovely boy" and the regretableness of its inevitable passing. Another is the repeated unfaithfulness of both the poet and his beloved. The sonnets speak much of jealousy, doubt, betrayal, self-loathing, torment, deception and bitter disappointment. Here are a few lines from number XCV:

"How sweet and lovely dost thou make the shame

Which, like a canker in the fragrant rose,
Doth spot the beauty of thy budding name!
O, in what sweets dost thou thy sins inclose!
...O, what a mansion have those vices got
Which for their habitation chose out thee..."

I do not mean to suggest (never mind contend) that Shakespeare's sonnets are not surpassingly great poems. I only say a Christian need not be depressed or scandalized if it turns out to be true that they were inspired mainly by a disordered, same-sex passion.

■ Clinton's sorry legacy

Speaking of Joseph Sobran (and disordered passions), he also recently authored an outstanding op-ed piece, titled, "Bill Clinton's legacy: Recreational sex," which I read in *The Washington Times National Weekly*. He made the point that for all the zigzagging of his foreign policy, and the haphazardness of his domestic agenda, Clinton "has fought with something like conviction for abortion," and otherwise steadily and deliberately lowered the American moral jumpbar, both through his public policies and by his personal example. Sobran concludes: "For all his rattling hypocrisy, Mr. Clinton has found one area where he has been able to adapt his avowed principles to his actual practice. He wants to enact the New Morality into legislation. This is what his presidency will most deserve to be remembered for: his desire to make his own vices normative for the whole nation."

Wouldn't it be wonderful to have the opposite sort of president? We have before, and it's not impossible that we could again some day. Let's pray and work for it.

■ Evolution

An eager reader has been pressing us to feature a discussion on evolution. I tell him I am more than willing—the topic represents such a timely and fascinatingly complex conjunction of theology, philosophy and science—but I myself am not qualified to write on the subject. There have been several articles, papal statements and books written on Darwinism recently, any one of which could serve as a handy starting point for a great *Concourse* conversation. Might there be any science majors or professors out there willing to give it a try?

■ Intimidated? Please don't be.

Some friends of the *Concourse* have suggested that many would-be writers feel intimidated by the high quality of our articles. I appreciate the implied compliment, but I beg our readers not to let this stop them from contributing their ideas to our pages! If your writing skills leave something to be desired, do not despair! Capable editors are standing by ready to help.

■ A gift for the graduates of '98

Heading down the hill after many happy years at FUS is usually a melancholy and at the same time exhilarating experience. You're leaving the nest, but you're also finally testing your wings. If you're feeling part thrilled, part alarmed, part relieved, part sad, part psyched—you're normal. In any case, the *Concourse* can help smooth the transition. Right now your brain is probably aching from the strain of finals, and nothing sounds more appealing than a good, long summer of no *thinking*; but you'd be surprised to hear how much you'll miss the studies next year. You can't take your professors and fellow-students with you, but you can make sure the *Concourse* meets you wherever you're going, and so ensure that a little bit of the lively atmosphere of FUS goes on lifting your spirit and fortifying your mind—making it a little easier to do whatever you're doing with joy and with grace.

Last year we offered the class of '97 a free semester's subscription, as a sort of graduation present. We'd be happy to do the same for this year's class. If you'd like to take us up on the offer, just let us know. Send your name and address to us either at FUS box 27, or e-mail address concoursclover.net.

Warm congratulations to each and every one of you. Go in peace, and under the Mercy. (Can't *wait* to see what you do with your lives!)

■ A point of policy

On more than one occasion readers have submitted articles to us and to *The Troubadour* at the same time. This creates a difficulty for the *Concourse*, whose publishing schedule is less frequent than *The Troubadour's*. Our aim is to offer lively discussions and free flowing, fresh ideas, and we don't like the idea of printing something the entire campus may have already read a few days or weeks earlier. We therefore make it a general policy to print only articles written expressly for the *Concourse*. If you want to publish an opinion, decide ahead of time which publication is the better forum for your particular purpose; if your first choice declines to print it for whatever reason, try the other. But please don't try both at the same time.

■ A point of principle

The editors have heard that some readers are objecting to our occasional practice of printing anonymous articles. The essence of their complaint seems to be this: "Anonymous opinions have no place in Christian discourse. If someone is afraid to put his name to a piece, he has no business publishing it. It does nothing but spread tension and ill will." This is a plausible and by no means uncommon view, but I don't think it's just.

First, if there is tension, I think it is generated more by the *theory* that anonymous opinions are unchristian than by the reality of the few anonymous things we've printed, which are in themselves remarkably inoffensive. And secondly, the theory itself is not just. There are any number of reasons for not wanting to put our name to an article, which have nothing to do with cowardice.

For instance, suppose Father Michael had been reading the *Concourse* and thought he had an important point to make in one of our discussions. He thought that the point would help advance the debate a good way, but he didn't want to throw the weight of his *office* behind it; he wanted the readers to be free to consider it on its own merits, without being unduly influenced by the respect they have for him or his position at the University. To me, that would be a very good reason for printing his contribution anonymously. I can think of dozens of others.

Recall the opening lines of C.S. Lewis' *The Problem of Pain*: "When [my publisher] suggested to me the writing of this book, I asked leave to be allowed to write it anonymously, since, if I were to say what I really thought about pain, I should be forced to make statements of such apparent fortitude that they would become ridiculous if anyone knew who made them. Anonymity was rejected as inconsistent with the series". (Note that it was rejected as inconsistent with the series, *not* as inconsistent with the principles of Christian discourse.) Lewis recognized that there are times when the identity of the writer works as a distraction or a stumbling block to the reception of the truth the article is trying to convey. There are other times when a highly-charged political atmosphere makes it too costly for a person to be candid, though what he has to say may be vitally important for the good of the whole community. At those times, to insist on signatures would be to turn away numberless valuable contributions to important discussions, and thus let politics triumph over truth.

In such cases, and many others, a truth-centered editor, would be falling down on the job, so to say, if she categorically refused to publish articles anonymously.

Finally, I point out that there is a long-standing tradition of anonymity in Christian controversy. (I'd have to look it up to be exact, but I remember having learned that, in fact, there was a time when virtually no Christian writers put their names to their work, because to do so was considered egotistical—what mattered was the *truth content* or the persuasive power of the article itself, not the identity of the author.) The famous Oxford Movement "Tracts for the Times," which were so toweringly influential in their day, were published anonymously, as were Newman's withering "Tamworth Reading Room" letters, in which he publicly excoriated Sir Robert Peel for his religious liberalism. Many of Kierkegaard's books, too, were

published under a pseudonym. Surely we wouldn't want to accuse these Christian controversialists of anything *like* cowardice?

All that being said, I acknowledge freely that anonymity can be problematic, which is why we are careful about what we publish anonymously and why. Our official policy states: "We will consider printing submissions anonymously, or under a pen-name, however, in general we wish to encourage open 'face to face' discussion."

Our aim in every case is to serve truth.

■ A word of thanks

Justine Schmiesing has been a heroine. Not only has she generously continued to provide her excellent professional layout and design skills to the *Concourse*—even when other things were making enormous demands on her time and attention, and no one could have blamed her for giving it up—but on more than one occasion her good cheer and enthusiastic support of the *Concourse* have prevented me from throwing in the towel. I'd think, "If *she's* willing to carry on, with everything *she* has on her plate, who am *I* to complain that it costs too much?"

The other members of the editorial board: David Schmiesing, Mark Fischer and my husband Jules, though less active in the role this year, due to circumstances beyond their control, have nevertheless been a very important support for my work as editor. Just knowing that

three such sensible and intelligent men were available to give me advice and feedback gave me the confidence I needed to make many difficult decisions.

Maria Ellis, who has had a stressful time of it as business manager, also deserves thanks for her vital part in getting the *Concourse* out to our readers. As our Steubenville pointperson, she's the one who handles all the correspondence, accounting, subscriptions and distribution, as well as the occasional disgruntled reader. I don't think she ever once complained.

Several students, alumni, staff and faculty and others have also done more good than they know for the *Concourse* by well-timed appreciative comments. I mention in particular Michael Gaitley, Ben Brown, Katie DeLine, Susan Fischer, Martha Blandford, Gary Bribiescus, Mike Copeland, Ted and Janene Crisman, Regina Schmiedicke, Fr. Augustine, Susan Treacy, Jim and Sally Fourgerousse, Eva Hammetner, and FUS trustees Bob Thomas and Mickey Pohl.

John Crosby's moral support and critical commentary were as unstinting and indispensable as ever.

Nothing stokes the editorial engine like feedback. The positive stuff, of course, is preferred, but even negative feedback does the *Concourse* good. If it doesn't serve to improve the journal, it at least gets my Irish up and running nicely. Please keep it coming!

Thanks for reading.

Kathleen van Schaijik

Submission

Continued from page 4

that they made on their wedding day. That is a covenant between the two that has been made after literally months of discernment. This covenant and grace should calm

the fears of domination or of overwhelming responsibility. Submission and responsibility are lived out in an atmosphere of love and respect where each is seeking the good of the other.

The Scriptures tell us "regard each one as better than yourselves." So each of us should see ourselves as the lowly one, regarding everyone we meet as being better than us in some way. How much more in the married relationship should this be true. The wife should be looking up to her husband, admiring him, respecting his word, assuming that he is right before questioning his decisions. And the husband should see his wife as a source of wisdom and encouragement, realizing that she sees life in a way that he never could on his own, and he is honored to be by her side. Seeing her in this light he is humbled by the thought that she would be submitting to him. What a beautiful relationship this would be, and it is to this that God calls each married couple. ■

Alicia (Doman '94) and Michael Herson ('94) live in Steubenville where Michael works as Assistant Director of Financial Aid for FUS. Their third child was born on March 22.

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Announcing: *The third annual*
Concourse Grand Prize:

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To be awarded to the author of the article (excluding those by staff and board members), which, in the judgment of the editors, best reflects the Concourse ideal of fruitful Christian discourse.

This year's winner is junior philosophy major

Michael Healy

for his issue 5 article: "How hobbits and company might really exist"

Such flabbergasting Tolkien-knowledge as this piece displayed is prize-worthy in itself, but the editors were still more impressed by the article's unique mix of fantasy and philosophy, and the light-hearted thoughtfulness with which the author treated his subject matter.

The following excerpts from the end of his article, will serve to show how deserving it is of this year's prize.

"I think that these arguments demonstrate that according to Tolkien's conception of the Elves they could indeed exist. Proving the possibility of the existence of the Dwarves would in general follow along the same lines, though the strange story of their creation complicates things. Tolkien states in the second chapter of the "Quenta Silmarillion" that the Dwarves believe that they have immortal souls, but that the Elves disagreed. However, since Dwarves can speak and learn and remember and love, I think Tolkien conceived of the Dwarves too as having immortal souls. If he did, it is possible, by these arguments, that they too could exist.

What of the other races of Middle-Earth? To the best of my knowledge, too little is said about the nature of the giants, the monster in the mere outside Moria, the trolls, the Mewlips, or the giant turtles to determine whether they could exist. "Eru, the One, who in Arda is called Ilúvatar" is the One True God. The Ainur, the Valar, and the Maiar are the Angels. Melian, Gandalf, Saruman, Radagast, Tom Bombadil, Goldberry, the Ents, and the two "Blue Wizards" are Maiar who have taken bodily form—that is, they are "angels incarnate." Morgoth, or Melkor, is Satan. Sauron is whatever demon is second to Satan. Balrogs, Dragons, werewolves, vampires, and giant spiders are other demons. Therefore, it is unquestionable that

they all exist on the spiritual plane. Whether they could exist as Tolkien depicts them depends on whether angels and demons could adopt physical forms and dwell among us. Barrow-wights are demonically possessed corpses. The Nazgul are humans who live continuously on earth through demonic magic and whose bodies do not decay. Instead they gradually become more and more insubstantial until, despite the fact that they still have bodies and may yet be slain, they literally look like ghosts. Gollum, of course, is a hobbit who started down their path but never completed it...

I must admit, though, that I personally do not believe that Elves, Dwarves, or Orcs exist. Nor do I believe that there is intelligent life on other planets. Yet this is only because I do not yet see any convincing proof that non-human sentient physical beings exist. I do not think that Catholic doctrine makes the existence of other intelligent life forms impossible. For we cannot fathom the mind of God, and if it has pleased Him to create other intelligent races for us to share this universe, or even this planet, with, we must admit that it is within His power to create them. If He has done so we may never know His reasons for creating them. But we do know that if we meet any non-human sentient life forms we must accept their existence as His will—and we must evangelize them."

HONORABLE MENTION also goes to **Mary Healy** (MA class of '88; no known relation to Michael) for her exceptionally thoughtful and informative Issue 3 reply to a reader inquiry concerning the absence of the Real Presence in the creeds.

Though very different in style and subject matter, each of these articles is an outstanding example of the sort of cultivated Christian conversation the Concourse was designed to foster. Our thanks and congratulations to both writers.