

Los Pequeños Pepper

Publication of Los Pequeños de Cristo

May 2007



What Are Fr. Rohr and CAC Up to Now?

...And why doesn't the Archbishop stop him?

Page 4

Auxilium Christianorum

A new association for the Church Militant

Page 7

The Exorbitant Price of Embryonic Stem Cell Research

The Bishops of Kansas explain the problem.

Page 8



Cover: Our Lady of the May

Los Pequeños Pepper

Newsletter of Los Pequeños de Cristo

May 2007

Volume 9, Number 5

What Are Fr. Rohr and CAC Up to Now?

New Age is in “good standing” in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

Page 4

Auxilium Christianorum

This may be exactly what you’re looking for...

Page 7

The Exorbitant Price of Embryonic Stem Cell Research

We really can’t afford it.

Page 8

Magnificat: The Flowering Glory

Meditations for May – the month of Mary

Page 10

Where Are the Shepherds?

Save the chickens, yes. Save Catholic morality, no.

Page 12

April Fools

Letters to the Editor

Page 13

Around the World, Around the Nation, Around the Archdiocese

Page 14

Pop-pop Teaches about the Rosary

Page 15

April Calendar

Page 15

Newsletter of Los Pequeños de Cristo
Stephanie Block-editor, Carol Suhr-copy editor
Correspondence to *The Pequeños Pepper* may be addressed to:
325 Ellen St. NW
Los Lunas, NM 87031
Phone: 505-866-0977 or email: www.lospequenos.org
The Pequeños Pepper is published monthly

We are an Archdiocesan-wide Catholic lay organization committed to a charitable defense of the Catholic Faith by means of education, communication, and prayer. We are devoted to the Roman Catholic Magisterium, the Holy Father, and to the bishops and clergy in union with him. Our members believe what the Church believes and we promote what the Church teaches. To this end, we believe that no individual, whether cleric or lay person, has the right to alter the substance of the gospel message or moral truths which have been inerrantly and infallibly held by the Catholic Church since Her founding.

What Are Fr. Richard Rohr and CAC Up To Now?

By Stephanie Block

In 2003, the Catholic lay organization *Los Pequeños de Cristo* presented a dossier to the Archbishop of Santa Fe, Michael Sheehan, concerning Fr. Richard Rohr and the Center for Action and Contemplation (CAC) that he founded in New Mexico. It was concerned, among other things, with the New Age and *Call to Action* distortions coming from Fr. Rohr and the Center. (The dossier may be viewed at www.lospequenos.org.)

Four years later, the situation continues. Despite recent *Pepper* coverage (3-07) of Rohr's officiating at the sacrilegious "St. Thomas Mass," the Archdiocese of Santa Fe continues to recognize Father as a "priest in good standing," and to permit his CAC all the privileges of a Catholic institution – such as the right to advertise its so-called "19th Annual Way of the Cross," which commemorates "The Passion of the Earth," in the Archdiocese's *Catholic Communicator* (3-25-07). An examination of Fr. Rohr and the CAC's activities since 2003 in promoting New Age spirituality and *Call to Action* involvement is timely.

New Age Activities

New Age spirituality is particularly seductive when it apes Christian language or adapts Christian elements for its own uses. The blend of novel and familiar offers a stimulating kick of a "spiritual experience."

Fr. Rohr and the CAC provide a number of these experiences.

THE LABYRINTH: The website for the CAC (www.cacradicalgrace.org/resources) describes a Meditation Garden at the Center that includes a labyrinth. A short photo-essay there shows the labyrinth being built and, in 2005 the CAC held a Summer Solstice Celebration that included a labyrinth walk in the CAC garden. A brochure has been prepared by CAC to assist the meditation of its labyrinth walkers. It contains seven "messages," including "There is no one, correct lesson or message [to life]," "Life is change and transformation and repentance," "...life is not about 'doing' it right. It's about 'doing' it."

THE ENNEAGRAM: The Vatican's recent statement, "Christ the Bearer of the Water of Life," identifies the Enneagram as New Age. Books offered at CAC's bookstore include Richard Rohr's *Enneagram: A Christian Perspective*; audio tapes by Rohr titled *Enneagram: The Discernment of Spirits* (CD or DVD) and *Enneagram Evening* (CD).

ZEN MEDITATION: CAC holds "regularly scheduled times of contemplative prayer and silence in the Center's Zen-like prayer room." [*The Lay Contemplative* website, www.laycontemplative.org, description of CAC] In "A Brief History of the CAC" at CAC's website, one reads: "One of the expressions of the radical nature of our work was our extensive inclusivity, bridging gaps within the spiritual and justice communities, building a rhythm of contemplative prayer and Zen meditation into our days, and even more fundamentally, believing that external behavior should be connected to and supported by inner guidance."



Fr. Richard Rohr

CENTERING PRAYER: Materials sold at the CAC bookstore include a book titled *Contemplation in Action*, among whose contributors are M. Basil Pennington and Abbot Thomas Keating, proponents of “centering prayer” – a syncretistic blend of eastern technique with Christian elements. The CAC website invites guests to its chapel to join its community Centering Prayer: “We sit together twice a day, Monday-Friday, at 7:40 am and 4:30 pm.”

NEW COSMOLOGY: Catholic cosmology teaches that there is one God Who is the Creator and sustainer of the universe. There is a hierarchy of beings within the universe. Those of His creatures graced with intellect and free-will have the joy of knowing, loving, and serving Him.

The so-called “new cosmology” teaches that there is an intelligent, self-organizing, living Universe. There is no hierarchy of beings – everything is sacred. Humanity has come to a critical juncture when it must either recognize its fraternal relationship to the universe or perish.

The Sophia Center at Holy Names University in Oakland, California was founded to disseminate the “new cosmology,” splintering from Matthew Fox’s Institute of Culture and Creation Spirituality in 1996. Faculty at the Sophia Center includes *Call to Action* speakers Jim Conlon (the Center’s director), radical feminists Rosemary Radford Ruether and Miriam Therese Winter, apologist for the “new cosmology” Brian Swimme, John Shea, and Fr. Richard Rohr. (Recently, Rohr was a panelist for an April 2007 “Forum on Women and Spirituality” at the University of New Mexico which had Ruether as a keynote speaker.)

SYNCRETISM: In April 2004, Fr. Rohr delivered an address as part of the World Community for Christian Meditation (WCCM) *Way of Peace* initiative. He returned to speak at the WCCM’s 2005 John Main Seminar, held in Los Angeles. WCCM promotional material asks:

Is there a connection between contemplation and the economic, political and social issues of our times which are so often the occasion for violence and conflict? The wisdom of the religious traditions has always sought a ‘still point in the turning world’ that would provide a vantage point to evaluate, love and serve the world and its needs. Meditation gives us such a ‘still point’ in its recurring tradition of ‘now’ teaching. But is this teaching meant to relate us to the world’s needs or remove us from them? Can stillness become right action that overflows into justice? The Greek philosopher Archimedes said that he could move the world if he had a lever and a place to stand. If meditation gives us a ‘place to stand,’ what is our lever? How is our way of responding to the needs of society different from that of the typical activist or the typical conservative or liberal? Does ‘the hidden wisdom of God’ of which St. Paul speaks show us the way? These are the issues Fr. Richard Rohr will explore with us within a context of lectures, open dialogue, prayer, silence and meditation.

This “still point” is not understood as Christian prayer to God but is believed to be a “wisdom” generically provided by all religious traditions and consistent with eastern prayer techniques and philosophy.

“MALE SPIRITUALITY:” *Men As Learners and Elders* (M.A.L.Es) is a program that was developed in 2002 by the CAC “to carry out the vision of creating a school for male spiritual development by expanding the scope of Men’s *Rites of*



Center for Action and Contemplation

Passage programs throughout the country and abroad. One of the goals of M.A.L.Es is to form an extended network of initiated men and leaders who have an ecumenical vision of Gospel based male initiation.” Initiated into *what*?

There has been a great deal written about Rohr’s *Rites of Passage* and some of its troubling aspects. The bottom line, however, is that this is not an initiation into Christian thought but into Fr Rohr’s worldview. For example, on the *Men as Learners and Elders* website, there are articles by Rohr that articulate the values he is evangelizing. One, “Response to the Presidential Election” (undated), is concerned about the moral values that were and were not discussed during the 2004 US presidential campaign. Rohr writes that citizens:

...want absolutes and a reference point so bad, we actually manufacture some, whether they are, in fact, absolutes at all. The Bible has made it very clear that the only absolute is God himself, and not any moral stance, nation, country, church, or explanation. Neither abortion nor homosexuality were ever a litmus test for Christian belief for the first 2000 years of the church! Only the Creed. Jesus never once talked about either of them. If any moral position was held absolute for the first 300 years, it was this: Christians would be non-violent, and would take care of the poor. Jesus talked plenty about both of these (That is historical and Biblical record).

Such comments betray Rohr’s blindness to the personhood of the forty-four million violently aborted people in the United States since *Roe v Wade* and his ignorance of both scripture and Church history. Further, there is a sad irony that a priest who claims to care for the poor (and has contrasted that care to those who oppose abortion) makes his living through retreats that can only be afforded by the well-off. *Rites of Passage* retreats cost about \$400 (not including transportation or accommodations). If one is not found to be “ready” for this experience (a good initiation-experience candidate must be “spiritually searching...have probably done some men’s work already, and are not in a major reaction against God, grace or transformation”), the seeker is referred to Rohr’s books and tapes which can be purchased from the CAC bookstore.

Call to Action Connections

Call to Action is a coalition of dissident organizations whose purpose is to change Catholic moral teaching – notably that about abortion, contraception, and homosexual behavior – democratize the Church structure and politicize its members.

CAC has been associated with *Call to Action* for years, and continues to be. For instance, it maintains a web link to *Call to Action*, identifying it as one of its “Colleagues in the Struggle.”

(http://www.cacradicalgrace.org/getconnected/partners_links.html). CAC, for its part, is listed as a *Call to Action* “Church Renewal Group.”

The June 30, 2006 - July 2, 2006 CAC Conference, “Prophets Then, Prophets Now,” featured Sr. Joan Chittister, a frequent speaker at *Call to Action* conferences and a proponent of women priests, once going so far as to play chief “celebrant” at a CTA “eucharist.” A September 2006 CAC hosted Conference in Pasadena, California called “Politics and Spirituality: Outer Witness, Inner Faith” had *Call to Action* as one of its sponsors. Fr. John Dear, another *Call to Action* speaker, is scheduled to give a “Prophets Now” Conference at CAC on September 29, 2007. Materials sold at the CAC bookstore contain the works of *Call to Action* speakers Daniel Berrigan, Edwina Gately, and Christine Schenk – who, over the years, have also spoken at the Center.

Whether or not Fr. Rohr and the Center for Action and Contemplation are in complete agreement with *Call to Action* on every position, it is apparent that Father and his Center are supportive of CTA’s work and the problematic positions held by many of its members. ☚



**Sr. Joan Chittister, OSB
and Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM**

Photo taken from the Center for Action and Contemplation website, depicting the June 30 – July 2, 2006 “Prophets Then, Prophets Now” Summer Conference.

In 2002, Chittister defied a Vatican order against speaking at the June 2001 Women’s Ordination Worldwide Conference in Dublin. She is a member of *Call to Action*’s speakers bureau.

Auxilium Christianorum

New association seeks prayer warriors

There are three categories of membership in the Church, often called the Church Triumphant (the members of the Church in heaven), the Church Suffering (the members of the Church in purgatory), and the Church Militant (members of the Church living on earth).

The Church Militant gets its name from the fact that its members are engaged – like it or not - in spiritual warfare. Saint Paul writes: “...our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places.” (Ephesians 6:12)

Auxilium Christianorum is an association of Catholics that was recently founded to assist its members in living the reality of their state. Despite St. Paul’s exhortation, many Catholics do not take seriously their obligation to wage war against the demonic forces.

This assistance has two principle thrusts. The first is to pray for the priest-exorcists associated with the *Auxilium Christianorum*. The second is to pray for the protection of all members of the Association - other priests, laity, their families, and their friends – so that they are not adversely affected by the demonic.

The specific prayers used by members of the Association and a complete list of guidelines for membership are available at its website. Besides the effort to lead a habitual life of sanctifying grace and to avoid all intentional venial sin, members are asked to perfect their life of prayer and meditation.

Members are particularly cautioned to strive for meekness and humility in relationship to their neighbor, never striking out in anger or vindication but seeking to root out any demonic influence according to their state in life. This involves using binding prayers according to authentic Catholic principle and to avoid any form of superstition.

Anyone interested in the work of *Auxilium Christianorum* is invited to visit its website at www.auxiliumchristianorum.org. ☩



St. Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our defense against the wickedness
and snares of the Devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,
and do thou,
O Prince of the heavenly hosts,
by the power of God,
thrust into hell Satan,
and all the evil spirits,
who prowl about the world
seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.

The Exorbitant Price of Embryonic Stem Cell Research

By the Bishops of Kansas

Introduction

In 2006, voters in Missouri approved an amendment to their state constitution prohibiting the legislature from regulating or limiting research in which human embryos are created and destroyed to provide stem cells for research. This amendment disregards the most fundamental human right of those who are most defenseless – their right to life.

Shortly after the results of the Missouri vote were announced, Governor Sebelius publicly referred to the new amendment as “a step forward to at least ensure in Missouri that research can continue.” She went on to say that she thinks “there is a lot of interest in looking at that kind of language here in Kansas.”

Concerned at such a prospect, we want to offer Catholics and all people of good will in Kansas the following explanation of the issues at stake in human cloning and embryonic stem cell research. It may provide some clarity amidst the confusion.

What is a stem cell? Stem cells are primitive human cells that, when they divide, can form a variety of more specialized cells. For example, just one type of stem cell in our bone marrow works to replace all the different types of blood cells (white, red, etc.) when we need them.

Adult stem cell research.

Human stem cells hold great promise for the development of therapies to regenerate damaged organs, and to heal people who are suffering from terrible diseases. Most scientific research uses cells obtained from adult tissue, blood from the umbilical cord, and other sources that pose no moral problems. Versatile stem cells have been found in bone marrow, blood, muscle, fat, nerves, amniotic fluid, and even the pulp of baby teeth. Many successful therapies have been developed using these adult stem cells.

We Catholics applaud the vast array of scientific research that is conducted ethically and that respects the dignity of the human person. We strongly support stem cell research using adult and umbilical cord stem cells.

Embryonic stem cell research.

Some scientists, however, are interested in doing research using stem cells obtained by killing human embryos when they are about one week old. These embryos are obtained from one of two sources.

In vitro fertilization.

Embryonic stem cell research commonly involves harvesting cells from human embryos created in a laboratory by “in vitro” fertilization. The embryos created are frozen and stored for future use. For various reasons, not all the embryos are used. Some people consider these “leftover” embryos as a potential resource for scientific research. This is a morally unacceptable process on many grounds, and the cell harvesting process itself destroys the living embryo.

Human cloning.

Embryonic stem cells might also be harvested from embryos created by cloning, also known as “somatic cell nuclear transfer” (the same process used to create Dolly the sheep). In human cloning, the nucleus from an adult donor cell is inserted into a donated egg cell from which the nucleus has been removed. The inserted nucleus provides the necessary DNA for the new cell to function and divide. The resulting human embryo is allowed to grow for several days, then destroyed to obtain stem cells for experimentation.

Some would distinguish between “therapeutic” cloning and “reproductive” cloning, but the



Unlike embryonic stem cells, which are obtained only by destroying human embryos, stem cells extracted from placentas that now are routinely discarded after birth could be a non-controversial alternative to embryonic stem cells.

process is the same in both cases. The only difference is what is done with the new embryo created by the cloning process: implant it in a woman's womb to attempt a live birth; or destroy it to harvest its stem cells. Thus far, however, despite many years of experimentation by scientists all over the world, all attempts to use human cloning for either "so-called" therapeutic or reproductive purposes have failed.

Serious moral problems: destruction of human life.

Some hold there is no moral problem with harvesting cells from embryos because they claim that the embryo only holds the potential for human life and is not actually human. But the human embryo is not something other than human; human stem cells can only be harvested from a human being. It is just that this human being was killed instead of allowing it to develop normally. Regardless of whether the human embryo is obtained from "in vitro" fertilization or human cloning, human life is destroyed for the sake of scientific research, in the search for (as yet purely hypothetical) medical therapies. This is a crime against life. It is never morally permissible to destroy one human life, even if it is done in the hope of benefiting other human beings. Laws intended to sanction embryonic stem cell research are immoral because they give legal protection to the violation of the most fundamental of all human rights.

Serious moral problems: pragmatism.

Embryonic stem cell research focuses on the advance of science and the potential of curing diseases, but to the detriment of human life and dignity. Some even say this is a small price to pay for the economic development of Kansas: if we do not permit and promote embryonic stem cell research, they say, we stand to lose the economic benefits promised by the biotechnology industry (a similar argument was used by proponents of slavery, who said that certain states could not survive economically without this despicable institution). Such claims are baseless, as other states and countries that ban human cloning have taken a leadership role in the development of biotechnology. The primary question is whether embryonic stem cell research can be pursued without harming another human being, and our own humanity in the process. The answer to this question is quite clearly "no."

Some proponents also argue that if the frozen embryo is going to be killed anyway, what can be wrong with using them for the benefit of others. This line of reasoning is flawed. A death-row prisoner, a terminally ill patient, and indeed each living person will die one day, but that does not entitle another to kill human life at will for the purposes of scientific experimentation. What is more, in the case of frozen embryos, they would survive if someone had not decided to give them over to be killed for research purposes, instead of implanting them in their mother's womb.

Serious moral problems: victimizing women.

Women, too, are victimized by the promotion of embryonic stem cell research. The process of cloning human embryos for research requires a huge number of female eggs. There is a certain amount of inconvenience, pain and substantial health risk associated with the process for harvesting eggs. For this reason, it is likely that only women driven by need (typically the poor, including ethnic minority women, students, and women from developing countries) would donate the eggs needed for experimentation. Advance in research and finding cures for disease would be achieved at the expense not only of human beings at their earliest stage of development, but also of women in desperate circumstances.

Conclusion.

Each of us was once an embryo. This affirmation is based on a clear grasp of the most basic biology, not on religious faith. Once human life begins (which always occurs at fertilization, or at an event that mimics fertilization, like cloning), this new living being is a member of the human race who is worthy of respect and protection from harm threatened by embryonic stem cell research. The human embryo has such a claim on all of us.

As Catholics, our opposition to embryonic stem cell research is also confirmed and strengthened by our faith. We believe that God became man in the womb of the Virgin Mary, going through all the stages of prenatal human development. This religious truth elevates the dignity of human nature above that of even the angels and sanctifies human life from its beginning at conception to natural death. And if that were not enough, the sacrificial death of Jesus on the cross communicates the height and depth, the length and breadth of the love God has for each of us. Jesus, the Son of God, gave himself up to death, shedding his last drop of blood, because each individual human life created by God is of incalculable worth.

How can we value so little what God values so much? ☩

Joseph F. Naumann, *Archbishop of Kansas City in Kansas*
Ronald M. Gilmore, *Bishop of Dodge City*
Paul S. Coakley, *Bishop of Salina*
Michael O. Jackels, *Bishop of Wichita*

Magnificat: The Flowering Glory

By Marie P. Loehr

May is Mary's month . . .
With delight [it] calls to mind
How she did in her stored
Magnify the Lord.

-G.M. Hopkins, S.J., *Poems and
Prose*, Penguin Classics

Germination in plants or maternity in mammals is hidden, secret, invisible, contained, veiled. The tree is contained in the seed, and the seed is buried in the earth, until it sprouts. The baby is hidden in the womb, unseen, except for the bulge in the mother's flesh, which reveals that hidden presence. This is the subtle implication of Wisdom's song in Sirach. Wisdom delights in comparing herself to tree, flower, fruit budding forth, and the perfume that growth and flowering releases. In Wisdom's song we see the veil of leaf and flower, the container, or calyx of the flower, which conceals the fruit in its heart, the invisible perfume released on the air or from the burnt incense.

Wisdom [*Sirach* 24:13-20] speaks:

Like a cedar on Lebanon I am raised aloft,
Like a cypress on Mount Hermon,
Like a palm tree in Engaddi,
Like a rosebush in Jericho,
Like a fair olive tree in the field,
Like a plane tree growing beside the water,
Like cinnamon, or fragrant balm, or precious myrrh, I give forth perfume;
Like galbanum and onycha and sweet spices, like the odor of incense in
the Holy Place.
I spread out my branches like a terebinth, my branches so bright and so
graceful.
I bud forth delights like the vine, my blossoms become fruit fair and rich.
...you will remember me as sweeter than honey, better to have than the
honeycomb.



Canticle of Canticles

In the *Canticle of Canticles* the Bride is a rose of Sharon, a lily of the valley, a hill of myrrh, a mountain of incense, bearing pomegranates, nard, saffron, calamus and cinnamon, myrrh and aloes, all choice fruits and finest spices, dripping honey . . . clusters of dates and grapes, an excellent wine. Above all, she is "a garden enclosed." All of these images of leaf, flower, fruit and fullness have been applied first to the Spirit who IS the flowering glory of the Trinity - its bond and gift of Love personified, to Mary Theotokos who is the flowering glory of God's Creation as Immaculate Conception and Theotokos, to the Church who is the flowering glory of redemption and salvation, virginal Bride, veiled, fecund Mother, revealed.

All these images describe the flowering glory of the season of Spring, especially the month of May in cooler climates. They describe what we see, as bare fruit trees blossom with leaf and flower. This is the glory of the tree, its veil and its revelation. During the barren winter, the tree is simply root hidden in earth, stark trunk and bare branch against the clouded gray skies.

In spring, the sap rises, rain falls, and the glory of the tree - its flowering, its crown or corona of leaf and petal - literally springs forth. The bare tree is now veiled in this cloud of glory: glory being both weight and light, mass and energy. At

the same time this crowning cloud of glory is a revelation, revealing the tree in all its fecundity - its wood provides shelter, its leaves provide shade, its flowers provide beauty and decoration, its fruit is food and oil and wine, its bark is often medicinal...

All this is revealed in the flowering glory of trees and vines and other plants in the spring.

Our Lady, too, is a flowering glory. In this she is the icon of the Spirit. The Spirit is the flowering glory of the Trinity, that Love which crowns the intimate consubstantiality of the Trinity's covenant, communion, and creativity. That Love flowers forth in God, from God. In the Apocalypse that concludes the New Testament the Woman clothed with the sun, a crown of twelve stars on her head, is the Virgin Mother filled with and clothed in the Spirit, Mary Theotokos, the Mother of God revealed.

This flowering glory is first veil, then revelation.

We see this first in Eve's creation. God works in and through Adam's sleep - Adam's cooperation - to draw forth Eve. Eve is not created separately from Adam, from the dust of the ground as he was. She is hidden in him, until God draws her forth, Adam's interior life made flesh from his spirit-filled flesh, bone of his bone, close to his heart. She is drawn from the veil of his flesh, from the container of his life, where she had been hidden in God's wisdom. So the Bride in the *Canticle* is hidden behind the lattice, "a garden enclosed" - which may signify both her self-enclosed virginal womb and her enclosure in the Bridegroom's heart.

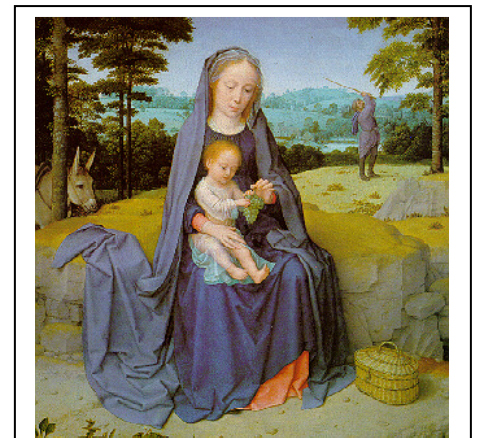
Mary, too, is hidden in this way, a garden enclosed. She is hidden from us in many ways, but she also hides the Infant Christ for his nourishment and nurture: in her womb, in her arms, in her protection and guidance to his adulthood, in the depths of her surrender to God, in drinking to the dregs of his suffering and death, in preparing him for burial--washing his torn and bloody body, hiding its wounds in the linen grave wrappings, seeing him closed in the tomb. Scripture tantalizes us with glimpses of her presence, the fragrance of her infrequent speech, her concealment and enclosure behind the veil of Bethlehem, Egypt, Nazareth, Capharnaum, Golgotha, the Cenacle at Pentecost. She is also a container - living Ark and Temple, tabernacle for his fetal flesh, and personal incarnation of his Church as Body, Bride, and Mother.

The old May hymns, used for crowning Mary as Queen of heaven, Queen of angels, Queen of our hearts, always sang of flowers:

Bring flowers of the fairest, bring flowers of the rarest, from garden and woodland, and hillside and dale. Our full hearts are swelling, our glad voices telling the praise of the loveliest Rose of the vale! O Mary, we crown thee with blossoms today, queen of the angels, Queen of the May.

The flowers remind us of the cloud of glory, the *shekinah*, its light and weight - the flowering glory who is God. The crown reminds us that Mary is full of grace, clothed with the sun, crowned with stars--but also crowned not only with our roses, but also with their thorns in *communio* with her Son's crown of thorns. Eve's eating, and Adam's eating with her, brought sin and its desert wastes into this world and Creation. Mary's *fiat* to God brings the wastes to new flowering in the fullness of grace and time, the oasis of redemption. In Mary the seed is sown that will bear the fruit of salvation, which is the Eucharist on which we feast in order to put on Christ, to flower and bear fruit in our own lives, in and with and through God.

Our Lady's coronation veils her in the glory of her virginity, and reveals the glory of her motherhood. She flowers forth the Son - "whose beauty is past change. Praise Him!" ☩



The Rest on the Flight into Egypt
Gerard David (1460-1523)

Where Are The Shepherds?

By Valerie Lubitz,
President of *Los Pequeños de Cristo*

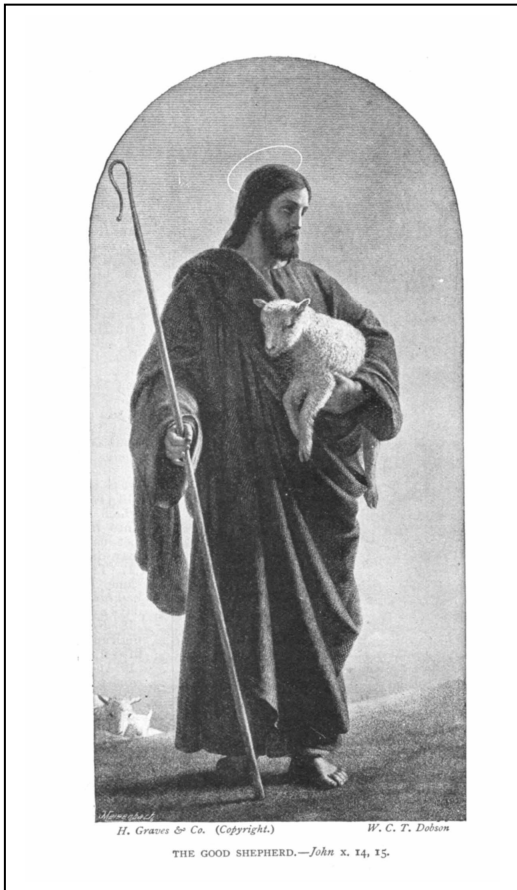
In recent weeks, people of good will from across New Mexico scrambled to stop a proposed Domestic Partnership Bill. Once again, New Mexicans were subjected to a threat against the moral underpinnings of society and the sacredness of family – both in its structure and very definition. ***Where are the Shepherds?***

I find it interesting that the March issue of *People of God*, the Archdiocese of Santa Fe's newspaper, featured an article (page 18) from the USCCB on the sanctity of marriage. It seems disingenuous that this would appear in the paper when not one word was publicly uttered by any of the three New Mexico bishops during the legislative attack against marriage.

They were quick enough to speak boldly when the issue was cock-fighting! Oh, my goodness, yes! While they gamely instructed their Catholic Conference lobbyist to defend the rights of New Mexico chickens, they had no "horse in the race" when it came to defending the Church's position on homosexual domestic partnership "rights." ***Where are the shepherds?***

As one finds all over the country, the New Mexico Legislature is beset by activists who want to advance a homosexual agenda, to mandate sex education with homosexual components – not to mention the distribution of contraception to children – and to profit from the ghoulish business of embryonic stem cell research (to which, in fairness, the Catholic Conference did object in a 1-25-07 Press Release). Catholics need to resist these perversions – and they need strong leadership. ***Where are the shepherds?***

We would die if we could observe with our natural eyes the supernatural war that is being waged around us. The cost of losing this war is measured by lost souls. So, I urge every reader to do two things: First, remember that our blessed Lord told us that this would happen. Don't give up or get discouraged. Second, get on your knees and pray, particularly for the three men who have been appointed by the Holy Father to shepherd us. ☩



April Fools

Gentle Reader: The Pepper tried a little humor last month and it turns out life is stranger than fiction...or, in this case, simply weirder. Look what came in the mail:

Dear Editor: The following was in my email just days after reading the *Pepper*: - LS

Danboro, PA - March 28, 2007 – Pewsitter.com, a unique recently launched Catholic web site combines the concept of a news aggregator site, like DrudgeReport.com with that of a user-driven content site, like Yahoo's You Witness News web site, to give the lay Catholic faithful a powerful, new voice within the Church.

Pewsitter represents a new paradigm within the Church. It provides a mouthpiece for faithful Catholics to report news of positive developments as well as abuses within their local parishes and communities. Once submitted and verified, Pewsitter will promulgate this information to the universal Church, with the objective of bringing about positive change within the Church and the culture at large

"The concept behind the site is to enlist an army of "pewsitters" to be the eyes and ears for this new site", stated Pewsitter's founder, James Todd. "For far too long, faithful Catholics have witnessed abuse after abuse within the Church and have been powerless to do anything about it. No more! By submitting newsworthy items to Pewsitter, the laity can help shape and influence the Church and be a powerful force for positive change."

Pewsitter's initial focus will be national and international news on its home page. The mid term objective is to feature the Catholic news of the day within each of the 189 Catholic dioceses throughout the U.S. Interested volunteers should contact Pewsitter about assisting with this endeavor.

Contact: James Todd, Pewsitter.com, 215-766-2887, info@pewsitter.com

We checked out the above web address. This is for real. – Editor

Dear Editor: Your April Fools *Pepper* may have invented CHASM [Catholics Honoring Atheists and Spiritual Minorities - a fictitious support group for youth who have rejected Christ] but look at this group: CHRIST in Harvey, New Brunswick, Canada. CHRIST stands for Christian Humanists and Rationalists - Integrating Skepticism with Theology. - GA

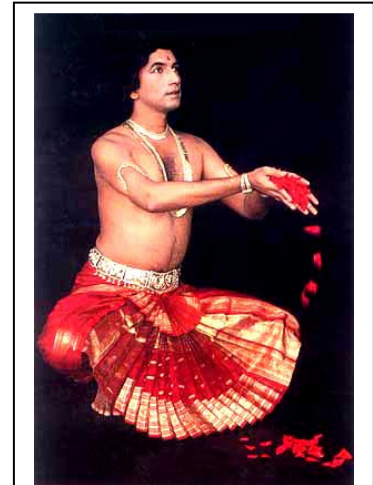
This one, too, is genuine. We found them listed among the Sojourners network of progressive organizations. – Editor

Editor: My husband and I are having an argument. He says the photo you published [in the April *Pepper*] of the Hindu-dancing priest is a spoof but I think I saw this somewhere...who's right? -PL

Tell your husband that he owes you dinner at the Taj Mahal (a restaurant in Albuquerque with excellent Indian cuisine). Barboza, who has left the priesthood, developed a dance synthesis of traditional Indian dance movement with innovative hand gestures. –Editor

Dear Editor: We can be grateful that our Catholic teaching gives us firm guidance on priorities. As long as it is more dangerous to reside in the womb than to be sent to Iraq, we know how to direct our energy. Abortion & gay marriage are serious insult to our Creator. We mourn the loss of our young men, but we must stop the war against our own pre-born children first. The seamless garment of Social Justice has some Catholics confused. Effect follows cause. - MTH ☩

This last note doesn't pertain to the April Pepper but it's timely. - Editor



Dr. Francis Barboza, an ex-priest, performs many Indian-style dances, among them Preethinrityeswar, a ballet "in which Jesus has been depicted as the Lord of Dance of love. He is both dancer and dance guru(teacher). He leads his people in and through dance. Preethinrityeswar is the synthesis of Christianity and Indian Dance. The divine altar where man, nature and God meet in the rhapsody of love."

Videos of Dr. Barboza's work may be obtained at: www.drbarboza.com

Around the Nation

Around the World

Notification on the Works of Fr. Jon Sobrino, S.J.: After years of examination, the writing of liberationist Father Jon Sobrino, SJ has been determined to contain numerous “erroneous or dangerous propositions” having “notable discrepancies with the faith of the Church.” The Vatican’s *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* has published an official “notification” against these works.

These problematic propositions of Fr. Sobrino concern various methodological presuppositions and challenges to the Divinity of Jesus, his Incarnation as the Son of God, the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God, the Self-consciousness of Jesus, and the salvific value of his Death.

Father Sobrino is one of the foremost proponents of liberation theology.

Catholic Bishops Repudiate Marquette Professor's Pro-Abortion Views: Daniel Maguire, a former priest and current professor of religious ethics at the Catholic Marquette University in Milwaukee, has authored a document titled “The Moderate Roman Catholic Position on Contraception and Abortion,” claiming that the Catholic church has always had a “pluralistic” position on contraception and abortion. In an unusual demonstration of episcopal authority, the USCCB Committee on Doctrine denounced Maguire’s assertions as “irresponsible” and an erroneous interpretation of church doctrine.

Into Great Silence: A nearly three-hour documentary by German director Philip Groning on life inside the Grande Chartreuse - a Carthusian monastery in the French Alps - has had unexpected commercial success and will be released in May at US theatres. It is an unusual film in that it contains no language - no interviews, commentaries or music, except for the monks’ chanting.

Groning spent six months living with the monks, taking part in daily life there, and living like the others while he filmed. “[I] took part in this incredible balance between seclusion and community,” he said. “Basically, a ‘normal’ film always works with language – and language overlays time. I think that the most profound experience a viewer can make when watching a film is to get a feel for time.... In a film about silence – a ‘silent’ film – this experience of time is swept up to the surface. Nothing detracts from it and this, in turn, is directly connected to the way the monks live: in an absolutely rigid temporal structure that lays down when something has to be done and the rules according to which it has to be done.”

Into Great Silence will be shown May 11 at *The Screen* in Santa Fe: 1600 St. Michael’s Drive. Phone 505.473.6494

Around the Archdiocese

The **Dominican Ecclesial Institute** (D+E+I) *Lumen Ecclesiae* Award for 2007 went to **Dr. Ben Baran**, an ex-priest who teaches Bible studies all over the Archdiocese. In Spring 2007, he will have taught at the Aquinas Newman Center, Sangre de Cristo Parish, St. Charles Parish, Risen Savior Parish, St. Bernadette Parish, St. Jude Parish, and Holy Rosary Parish.

Dr. Baran is also one of the “prophets” broadcast on the Church of the One God radio program (KSFR, 90.7 FM – Saturday afternoons, 12:30 PM MST). His two talks are archived at the church’s website: www.chuchoftheonogod.org, a religious effort to address “living problems” such as substance abuse and relationship difficulties, promote the use of Reiki and connection to a Higher Power (the Creator), and disseminate belief that all religions provide a guide to learning the lessons (virtues) that the Higher Power intends for its children.

What did Dr. Baran have to say on the Church of the One God radio program? When asked by “Reverend” Phil if there isn’t a great deal of similarity between the Dead Sea Scrolls and Jesus’ preaching, Dr. Baran replies: “You’re presupposing you *know* what Jesus preached. The only evidence we have is from the Gospels. See? We have to get rid of that naivete, that the Gospel is a recording. There’s a long development before we get to the Gospels, so there’s a quest for the Jesus of history.”

Now, according to the “naïve” Pope Pius IX (*Syllabus of Errors* -1864), it’s a modernist heresy to view Scripture as historically unreliable because of the years between what it records (about the Christ of faith, as proclaimed by the Church) and what took place (the so-called Jesus of history).

According to the “naïve” Pope Benedict XVI, in a document written when he was still Cardinal Ratzinger, this intellectual separation of the Christ of faith from the Jesus of history results in shattering “the historical credibility of the Gospels” and attempting to discredit the Church’s teaching authority. [*Liberation Theology, Preliminary Notes*]

Well, *no one* will accuse the Dominican Ecclesial Institute of naivete. ☚

Pop-Pop Teaches about the Rosary

By Joe Pritchard

“Do you remember the story I told you about St. Catherine Labore and the Miraculous Medal?”

“Yes, Pop-Pop. See, I’m still wearing the medal. When Catherine was a child, her mother died and she knelt before the statue of Mary and said: ‘Now, you will be my mother.’”

“I’m impressed you remembered so much.”

“I’m having a problem, though...”

“What’s that?”

“Well, do you remember I told you about my friend Shannon who goes to a Baptist church? She said Catholics make a bigger deal about Mary than they do about Jesus.”

“Yeah, I have some friends who say the same sort of thing. They’re wrong, of course.”

“OK, but then why do we say the Rosary? It has thousands of prayers to Mary and only a few *Our Fathers*.”

“Now, there aren’t *thousands*...that’s a bit of an exaggeration. But we do say lots of *Hail Marys* in each Rosary, that’s true. Much of the *Hail Mary* prayer is taken from the angel’s greeting to Mary, in the Bible.”

“It can’t be! Shannon says Catholics don’t learn the Bible.”

“Can I show you?”

“Sure. Here...”

“All right, now read this. The first part is from the story of Jesus’ birth, right at the beginning of the book of Luke: ‘Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.’ The next part, ‘Blessed are you and blessed is the fruit of your womb,’ comes a bit later, from Elizabeth to Mary.”

“Wow, Shannon won’t believe this.”

“When we say this Bible prayer to Mary in the Rosary, we’re going through the whole story of Jesus life, one Mystery after another. Do you know the Mysteries?”

“You mean like the Annunciation and the Nativity and the Crucifixion?”

“Right. Each part of the Rosary recalls an aspect of Jesus’ life, so the *Hail Mary* prayer leads us to thinking about Jesus. She’s a good mother – to him and to you.”

“To me?”

“Of course! You know that your Mom is always watching over you. She is so concerned about you that she even comes to check up on you while you’re asleep.”

“Yes...”

“It seems that you can’t get to sleep until she tucks you in after we say prayers.”

“It’s dark in my room.”

“Sure. That could make anybody nervous. Well, Mary was concerned about Jesus, too, when he was little, and he loved her the way you love your Mom. When he died, he wanted his disciple John to take care of her and for her to take care of him. That’s in the Bible, too. Well, Catholics see her as becoming a Mother to all the disciples – to all of us, actually.”

“Which is why we ask her to ‘pray for us now and at the hour of our death’?”

“Bingo!”

“Pop-pop...Do you think she’d pray for me at the hour of my bedtime, too?”

“You bet!” ☞

May Calendar

Los Pequeños Monthly Meeting

May 25, 2007

Call (505) 293-8006 for information.

Pro-life Prayer:

Planned Parenthood Abortuary

701 San Mateo Blvd.

Holy Innocents Chapel:

(505) 266-4100

Times: Daily 8 AM – 3 PM

Tuesdays at Noon

Mass at the Holy Innocents Chapel

Fr. Stephen Imbarrato

For more information, call

(505) 266-4100



A

**Los Pequeños Pepper
gift subscription is
only \$10.**

**Back issues of The Pepper are
archived at:**

www.lospequeños.org