

Los Pequeños Pepper

Publication of Los Pequeños de Cristo

December 2003



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Newsletter of Los Pequeños de Cristo
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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.

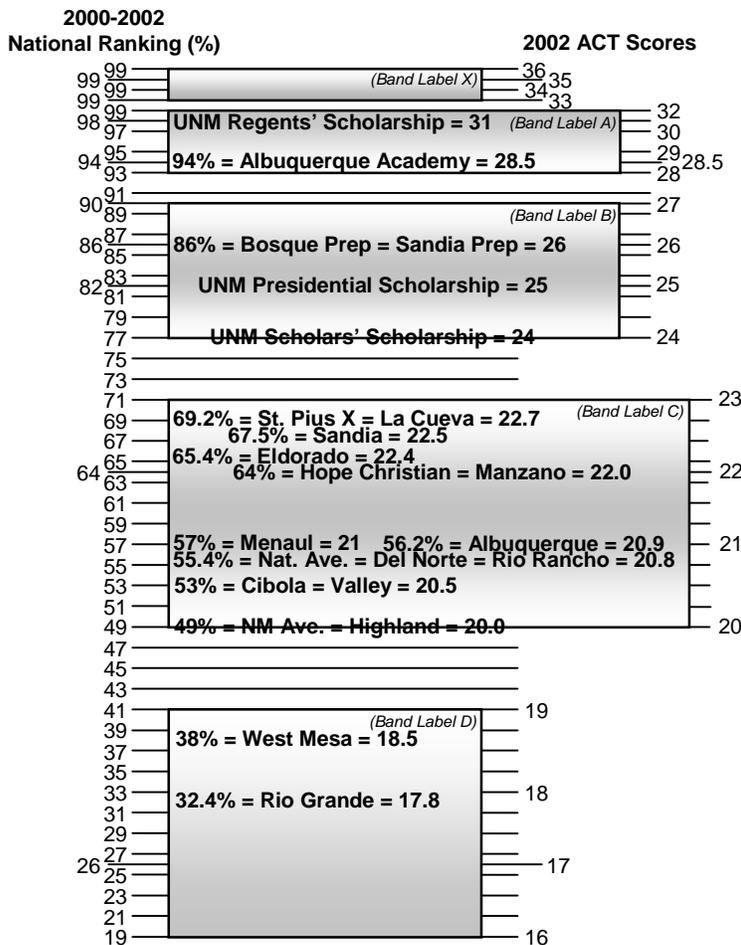
St. Pius X High School ACT Assessment

Scores Could Be Better

By John Gaona

The American College Test Assessment, or “ACT” as it is commonly called, is a national college admission examination that consists of tests in English, Mathematics, Reading, and Science. The ACT Assessment tests are curriculum based. The ACT Assessment is not an aptitude or an IQ test. Instead, the questions on the ACT are directly related to what a student has learned in his high school courses.

The Principal of St. Pius X High School (SPX) has said that students at SPX receive an excellent education. In this article, several local schools including SPX are evaluated against the ACT curriculum evaluation. There are two goals here, the first is to inform parents of ACT performance in the Albuquerque area and the second is to determine if the principal of St. Pius X is correct.



In the graphs to the left, National High School Rankings (%) are offered down the left-side. The 2002 ACT Scores are offered down the right-side. The National High School Ranking is obtained at <http://www.act.org/aap/scores/norms1.html>.

The University of New Mexico Regents, Presidential, and Scholars scholarship minimum ACT requirements are included for reference.

ACT differentiates between curriculum “sophistication” using **Standards for Transition**. The Standards show how skills can progress becoming increasingly advanced from score range to score range. Standards for Transition are provided for six score ranges for the ACT Assessment, i.e., 13–15 (not shown), 16–19 (Band Label D), 20–23 (Band Label C), 24–27 (Band Label B), 28–32 (Band Label A), and 33–36 (Band Label X).

Standards for Transition ranges are a key part of the ACT educational evaluation. After 40 years of research, the ACT Assessment incorporates a very sophisticated structure for curriculum evaluation and development. After all, the ACT program is not just for evaluation. The program is also able to help schools advance. ACT’s mechanism for advancement of schools is called the **Pathways for Transition** specific for each scoring range.

LOOKING MORE CLOSELY

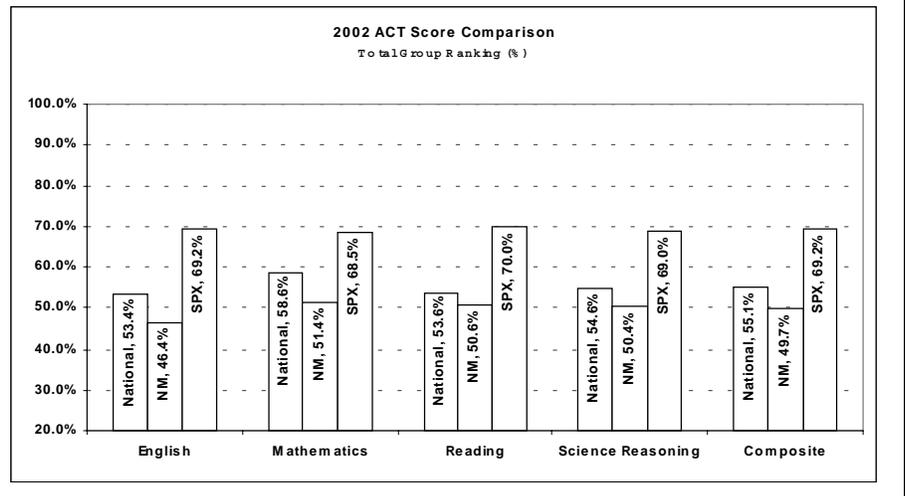
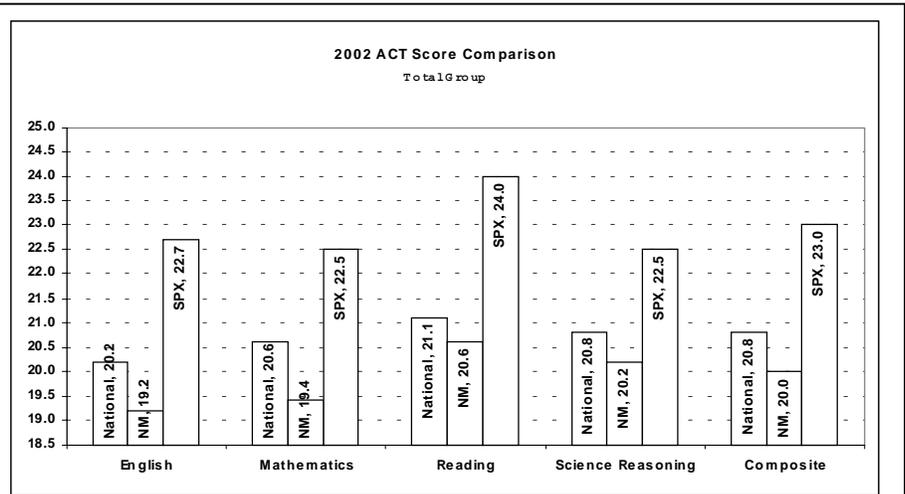
ACT scores vary with the percentage of seniors taking the assessment. The scores tend to increase as income increases, and usually, students from lower income families are under-represented in the number of students who take the assessment. Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) scores are based upon regular and college preparatory curriculums, and APS reports a significant difference of 2 ACT points between their two curriculums. The Albuquerque Academy (AA) controls its curriculum from grades 6 thru 12. The Archdiocesan Catholic School System (in which St. Pius X participates) controls its curriculum from grades K thru 12. Public school children are required to enter SPX, AA, Bosque Prep, Sandia Prep, and Hope Christian via entrance exam.

Albuquerque Academy's (band A) score is two entire curriculums above SPX (band C). This is a remarkable achievement considering that AA does not have control over any student's curriculum until grade 6, whereas SPX has a number of student who have come to it through the Archdiocesan school system. The expectation that the education presented at SPX is similar to AA is not valid as demonstrated by the ACT Assessment tool. Bosque Prep (band B) and Sandia Prep (band B) are both one curriculum above SPX (band C), again a significant difference. The SPX curriculum is, rather, similar to Hope Christian, Manzano, and northeast heights APS schools (all upper-band C). Unfortunately, SPX students capable of band A or band B performance may not be able to reach their full potential in SPX's band C program and valuable hard-to-get scholarships that require band A or band B scores for consideration may end up out of reach for some SPX students.

In conclusion, ACT scores from Albuquerque area schools were presented. SPX's performance on the ACT assessment test was unexpected and disappointing, i.e., considering tuition plus extras are approaching \$7,000. **SPX ACT scores should be better!**

CLARIFICATION

The upper graph was (upper right) in the SPX Parent Link newsletter and the bottom graph (lower right) provides the same information in ACT National Ranking (%) form. The difference is striking. The graph presented in the SPX Parent Link Newsletter gives the visual impression of a much higher ranking than is actually the case. For a parent to accurately "read" the Parent Link graph, he must understand that the ACT score range doesn't stop at 25.0, as implied, but at 36.0.



The following chart provides an overview of the Standards of Transition tool. The six Score Ranges are offered on the vertical axis. The Strands representing English (6), Math (9), Reading (8), and Science Reasoning (3) disciplines are offered on the horizontal axis. There are too many Strands (26 in all) to show on one page so only one from each discipline is shown for the sake of brevity. Curriculum “sophistication” increases from score range 13-15 to score range 16-19 to score range 20-23, etc.

[What conclusion might one draw from looking at this?] †

Transition Scoring Ranges	English	Mathematics	Reading	Science Reasoning
	Topic Development in Terms of Purpose and Focus (1 of 6 strands)	Basic Operations & Applications (1 of 9 strands)	Main Ideas (1 of 8 strands)	Interpretation of Data (1 of 3 strands)
13-15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Perform one-operation computation with whole numbers and decimals. - Solve problems in one or two steps using whole numbers. - Perform common conversions (e.g., inches to feet or hours to minutes). - Find equivalent values of coins. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draw simple conclusions about people and events in uncomplicated literary narratives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Select a single piece of textual (non-numerical) information from a table. - Select the highest/lowest value from a specified column or row in a table. - Select a single data point from a simple table, graph, or diagram.
16-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the basic purpose or role of a specified phrase or sentence. - Delete obviously irrelevant material from an essay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solve routine one-step arithmetic problems (using whole numbers, fractions, and decimals) such as single-step percent and calculate a simple average of whole numbers. - Solve some routine two-step arithmetic problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draw simple conclusions about the main points and people in uncomplicated passages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Select data from a simple table, graph, or diagram (e.g., a table or graph with two or three variables; a food web). - Identify basic features from a table or graph (e.g., headings, units of measurement, axis labels). - Understand basic scientific terminology. - Find basic information in a brief body of text. - Identify a direct relationship between variables in a simple table, graph, or diagram.
20-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the main theme or topic of a straightforward piece of writing. - Determine relevancy when presented with a variety of sentence-level details. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solve routine two-step or three-step arithmetic problems involving concepts such as rate and proportion, tax added, percentage off, computing an average with negative integers, and computing with a given average. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draw simple conclusions using details that support the main points of more challenging passages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compare data from a simple table, graph, or diagram. - Determine whether a relationship exists between two variables. - Identify an inverse relationship between variables in a simple table, graph, or diagram. - Translate information (data or text) into graphic form. - Select data from a complex table, graph, or diagram (e.g., a table or graph with more than three variables).
24-27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify the focus of a simple essay, applying the knowledge to add a sentence that sharpens that focus or to determine if an essay has met a specified goal. - Delete material primarily because it disturbs the flow and development of the paragraph. - Add a sentence to introduce or summarize the essay and to accomplish a fairly straightforward purpose such as illustrating a given statement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solve multi-step arithmetic problems that involve planning or converting units of measure (e.g., feet per second to miles per hour). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify a clear main idea in any paragraph or paragraphs in uncomplicated passages. - Infer the main idea of some paragraphs in more challenging passages. - Summarize basic events and ideas in more challenging passages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compare data from a complex table, graph, or diagram. - Interpolate between data points in a table or graph. - Identify or use a simple mathematical relationship that exists between data. - Identify a direct or inverse relationship between variables in a complex table, graph, or diagram. - Compare or combine data from two simple data sets. - Combine new, simple information (data or text) with given information (data or text).
28-32	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify both the focus and purpose of a fairly involved essay, applying that knowledge to determine the rhetorical effect of a new or existing sentence, or the need to add supporting detail or delete plausible but irrelevant material. - Add a sentence to accomplish a subtle purpose such as emphasis and to express meaning through connotation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solve word problems containing several rates, proportions, or percentages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infer the main idea of a passage, paragraph, or paragraphs in more challenging passages. - Summarize events and ideas in virtually any passage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify or use a complex mathematical relationship that exists between data. - Extrapolate from data points in a table or graph. - Compare or combine given text with data from tables, graphs, or diagrams.
33-36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Determine whether a complex essay has accomplished a specific purpose. - Add a phrase or sentence to accomplish a complex purpose, often expressed in terms of the main focus of the essay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Solve complex arithmetic problems involving percent of increase or decrease and problems requiring integration of several concepts from pre-algebra and/or pre-geometry (e.g., comparing percentages or averages, using several ratios, and finding ratios in geometry settings). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify main ideas of passages and paragraphs in complex passages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compare or combine data from two complex data sets. - Combine new, complex information (data or text) with given information (data or text).

Standards of Transition by Strand (only 4 out of 26 strands shown) and Score Range

Seeing Stars: Astrology and the Enneagram

By Marie P. Loehr

... behold, Magi came from the East to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East and have come to worship him. . . .

--Matthew 2: 1-12

Were the Magi three kings, three wise men, or simply – as modern translations would have it--astrologers? Matthew states in his Gospel that the Magi brought kingly gifts to the newborn Christ. So we may infer they were more than mere astrologers. Members of a priestly caste, they would have status, rank, and secular power. That they read the stars indicates that they possess occult knowledge and power – their temporal wisdom.



The wise men are truly wise – not because they have pursued occult arts and expertise in divination, but because they are honest men. By their craft, they discover The Star. They realize it portends the Savior promised in many ancient prophecies, Jewish and pagan. Thus, they leave behind their power, their position, their country in order to seek him, worship him, give him gold for a king, frankincense for a priest, myrrh for a prophet. When they finally leave Bethlehem, they do not read the stars for direction. An angel of God guides them, which signifies the change of their minds and hearts in Christ.

If the Magi, whom we infer practice astrology and occult arts, appear in the Gospels, don't the Gospels then give us leeway to explore astrology and the single star figure of the enneagram?

NOT ON YOUR LIFE!

Astrology divides the night sky into a circle of zodiac cycles. This zodiac is drawn with twelve houses, representing specific constellations of stars, as they shift with the seasons. Each house is ruled by a planet, named for a pagan god. By calculating star positions, planetary aspects, and the date, time and place of birth, astrologers claim to discern all personality traits that rule a person, as well as map out the effect of the stars on a person's actions. Astrologers do not deny free will. They need free will as a scapegoat when their predictions fail. But the very fact of seeking to predict the future makes astrology one of the arts of divination. Divination attempts to see the future to control it. Man attempts to usurp the power of pure spirit, refuses to trust God, and prefers his own sin-damaged intellectual systems. These are sins of pride and denial of God's will.

Worse, astrology is a surrender to invisible spirits and their manipulations. When the ancients spoke of the stars, they saw them as "the mansions of the gods." Christians understand these "gods" as the fallen angels. These present themselves as false gods for humanity's mistaken worship; they are devils who "go about the world seeking the ruin of souls." So, when we speak of houses of the zodiac, we actually speak of these "mansions of the gods." It is not stars who influence us by subtle cosmic interactions. It is, rather, fallen angels that influence us through an artificial, pagan schemata.

One of the most popular, stealth techniques of New Age theosophy has been the enneagram. Its roots can be traced to astrology, sacred geometry, and even the hexagrams of the divinatory "I Ching," through its dissemination in the West by Georges Gurdjieff.

Adherents to the enneagram who follow Gurdjieff make no bones about "the *great power* [italics mine] in the world that wishes more of this secret to be revealed to those who are hungry for it." [A.G.E. Blake, Preface, *Enneagram Studies*, by J.G. Bennett] J.G. Bennett says that "In certain parts of Asia it is used as an instrument of divination, *ie*, for interpreting the pattern of events to come." Gurdjieff himself claims that

A Bibliogram of New Age Paganism and Occult Practices

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Read at your own risk, always referring back to Catholic sources.

in a certain World Brotherhood, the enneagram is “the repository of their most important secret knowledge.” All this marks it as a man-made, or demonically inspired, tool of the occult.

Bennett presents many definitions of the enneagram and its function. The following three reveal that the enneagram is no mere psychological tool.

1] It enables our thought processes (he says) to conform themselves to the shape of the world and to that of our own being.

2] It enables us to see when and how events conform to cosmic laws, so we know what is possible and what is impossible in human affairs.

3] It teaches us to achieve triadic perception and mentation, *i.e.*, escape the linear and sequential boundaries of a body limited by space and time.

All three of these are implied in Original Sin – its initial temptation and desire to “be as gods, knowing good and evil.” To “be as gods” in ancient terms means to be freed from body, space and time, knowing essence directly by intuition and interior rapport rather than by deduction and analysis. Thus the enneagram is far more than a diagram for psychological growth. It seeks to dip into forbidden knowledge.

St. Paul warns us that we are at war with “principalities and powers,” fallen spirits. Both Gurdjieff and Oscar Ichazo, who developed the enneagram further in the 1960s and 1970s, speak of receiving information from spirits with such scientific or exotic names as Metatron or the Green Qu’tub. Its origins are in the revelations of spirit guides, which are necessarily demonic. ***It is not only a tool for divination. It is the practice of idolatry.*** [See *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* for Church teaching on idolatry, divination, magic and superstition.]

Like other New Age techniques, the enneagram and astrology focus us entirely on ourselves. Enneagram and zodiac are mirrors for psychological projection. They lead us deeper into our egos – not to find the Kingdom of God within us, as Christ teaches, but to seek our “selves” for affirmation and gratification. These practices lead us to wallow in self, to follow the dead end of personal fulfillment, with no factual scientific or theological basis at all. We must know ourselves – but through focussing on Christ and Mary and the saints – not arbitrary personality “types,” diagrams, or spirit guides.

We know ourselves in Christ through the sacraments. We are adopted, we are forgiven, we are fed, we are comforted, we are served, we are healed, we are espoused to Christ as members of his Mystical Body, the Church. Psychological development? Look to the daily examination of conscience the Church has always taught. More comfortable with quantifiable numbers? Measure self against the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit, the Ten Commandments, the Eight Beatitudes, the six commandments of the Church, the four cardinal virtues, the three theological virtues, the two Great Commandments, and Mary. Have we worked to root out the seven deadly sins in ourselves? How well do we practice the antidote to those sins: the seven corporal and seven spiritual works of mercy?

Do graphics motivate us? The triangle stands for God’s Trinity, the circle for His unity. Must a six-pointed star guide us? The Star of Bethlehem is also the Star of David, which rests over the House of David, Bethlehem. Dependent on nine catchwords for self-knowledge? Try nine virtues--faith, hope, charity, poverty, chastity, obedience, knowing, loving, serving.

What of the twelve astrological houses and their gods? We need no lesser, false gods. We have the nine choirs of angels, the communion of saints, and the House of Gold who is Mary. We have the house of the Church, Christ’s Mystical Body. We have the house of its tabernacle that holds the Real Presence of Christ. We have the house of his Body in the Eucharist. St. John says in Chapter One of his Gospel, “the Word became flesh and” (literally) “pitched his tent among us.” Who would sell *this* royal birthright for the mess of pottage that is New Age occult? Christ is our House. Mary is the Star that guides us home. That is perfect wisdom and peace. †

The Continuing Story of Terri Schiavo

Terri Schiavo lives; euthanasia advocates continue their battle

The last several months have unfolded an unbelievable series of events in the life of disabled Terri Schindler Schiavo.

In mid October, her husband and legal guardian, insisting that she was in a vegetative state, gave the order to disconnect a feeding tube that has provided her with sustenance for the past 13 years. That she is vegetative has been hotly contested, however.

In a signed affidavit, one therapist wrote: "In December of 2002, I confronted Ms. Schindler with the 'truth' and told her that unless she helped me in returning her from the comatose state that she was in that she was going to die a horrid death. I explained in detail that they would remove the single tube that was providing her nutrition and she would slowly die of starvation. At this point, it was reported by her father that she sat up...and became teary eyed."

According to the therapist, who worked with Terri by telephone, in contradiction of her husband's orders that she receive no rehabilitative care, Terri was able to move her hand, her arm and leg on command. She couldn't speak, but she generally followed instructions. "The bottom line is she is not vegetative, the way the husband and the side the court has gone with want to portray her...She definitely has some brain damage and severe problems, but she is not a vegetable."

For 10 years, Terri Schiavo's parents have been fighting with their son-in-law over the lack of care and therapy Schiavo provided for their daughter, who suffered massive brain damage when she collapsed at her home 13 years ago under mysterious circumstances. Terri's parents, Robert and Mary Schindler suspect their daughter was physically abused. "Initially, Terri was talking. She was reacting and there were doctors way back when that said she could recover. And he stopped everything," Mr. Schindler said. "She has literally been in prison for four years. She's not permitted to go outside. She has no stimulation. She has a wheelchair that's broken that the husband will not fix."

On October 14, 2003, the court ordered Terri Schiavo's death by starvation and dehydration. She was denied Last Rites. For the next seven days, a fierce battle raged around the case. Pro-lifers, led by Operation Rescue's Terry Randal, held prayer vigils day and night. They flooded media, courts, legislators, and bishops' offices with email, faxes, and phone calls.

The result was an eleventh hour reprieve after intervention by the Florida Legislature and Gov. Jeb Bush. The consequent "Terri's Law" required the appointment of an independent guardian, investigation into claims by Terri Schiavo's parents that her husband abused and neglected her, and most importantly the reinsertion of Terri's feeding tube.

A lawsuit has appealed this legislative intervention on the grounds that it unconstitutionally violates the separation-of-powers principle of government, as well as Terri's right to privacy. ¶



Life Law

Is the country at long last moving away from its pro-abortion position?

According to Cynthia Gorney, a University of California at Berkeley professor of journalism and author of “Articles of Faith: A Frontline History of the Abortion Wars,” the recent **partial-birth abortion ban** was “the biggest victory that the abortion opponents have had in a long time.”

Pro-lifers are hoping that this is just the beginning. Several bills that would either curtail abortion or confer personhood on fetuses are wending their way through Congress. **Laci and Conner’s Law**, also known as the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, will punish attacks on a fetus separately from attacks on a pregnant woman. (It’s named after Laci Peterson, the murdered California woman, and her unborn son, Conner.)

Laci and Conner’s Law has 133 co-sponsors in the House and is expected to be signed into law next year. According to the text of the bill, it is meant “to protect unborn children from assault and murder” and applies at “any stage of development.” Though it makes an explicit exception for abortion, within the rhetoric of a law that defines killing a fetus as murder the exception seems absurd – and that’s the point.

“**Holly’s Law**,” after Holly Patterson, an 18-year-old who died in September, a week after taking RU-486, seeks suspension of the FDA’s approval of the abortion-producing drug. **The Child Custody Protection Act**, which would punish any adult accompanying a minor across state lines for an abortion, is another priority of the pro-life movement. Meanwhile, statewide restrictions, including **parental involvement laws, mandatory waiting periods and regulations governing everything** from the landscaping on clinic lawns to the temperature air conditioners must be set to. Last year, the Department of Health and Human Services amended the **State Children’s Health Insurance Program to cover fetuses**, but not the women who carry them. The program gives fetuses rights independently of their mothers and left pro-abortion advocates in the uncomfortable position of protesting a law that would at least indirectly provide prenatal care to women who might not otherwise have it. The first U.S. **abortion-breast cancer (ABC) lawsuit** was settled in October, for an abortionist’s failure to warn clients about the physical and emotional risks of abortion.

Last year **funding was cut** for the United Nations Population Fund based on its involvement with coerced abortions in China. That act led to **cutbacks in reproductive health services worldwide**, from Vietnam to Bangladesh to Kenya. There has also been a reinstatement of the so-called **Global Gag Rule**, which denies American aid to family planning agencies that encourage pregnant women to abort.

Even if most Americans are pro-choice, studies show they remain ambivalent about abortion. They support mandatory parental involvement and restrictions on late-term procedures and oppose government funding for abortion. The Center for the Advancement of Women poll shows that while only 17 percent of women want to ban abortion, half believe it should be more strictly limited. Pro-lifers are attempting, piece by piece, to create fetal personhood that they can use to argue that Roe was wrongly decided because a fetus is a person entitled to all the rights of a person.

Is this likely? The partial-birth abortion ban is unlikely to survive a Supreme Court challenge unless there is a replacement of a pro-abortion justice in the near future. In 2000, the Nebraska Partial Birth Abortion Ban was struck down by because it didn’t provide exceptions for the health of the mother and didn’t contain a precise definition of the procedure it purported to ban – a crucial point because “partial birth abortion” is not a medical term. The law Bush just signed has identical flaws.

Pro-aborts see the victory in other terms, as well. With the Partial Birth Abortion Ban, says one, “what they’ve done is to get a public legislative body to say this is too disgusting. The big secret about all this is if this thing stands up, it means there are certain forms of abortion that we think are too disgusting to be legal. If you buy that argument, you’ve basically gotten rid of abortion down to about 14 weeks. If you have a problem with pulling out an intact fetus that has been suctioned by the brain, you’re going to have a bigger problem with pulling out arms and legs that aren’t attached to anything.”

One can hope. †

Even if most Americans are pro-choice, studies show they remain ambivalent about abortion.

A Plea from a Pro-Life Activist

By Don Schauerte

WHAT I HAVE TO SAY IS NOT WHAT ANYONE WOULD LIKE TO HEAR but someone must sound the alarm. The United States of America is on its way to destruction. If you love your country and your family, you must act now if you hope to prevent it from happening.

For over 30 years, we Catholics have listened to pro-life talks. Some have even participated in pro-life rallies and gone to the "March for Life" in Washington, D.C.; yet abortion in this country is still legal.

The bottom line is we're not serious about ending this evil practice. Of all the sins against God, none is more repulsive than the killing of God's innocent little ones.

A nation that condones this evil act can justly expect God's wrath. Even the Muslims with all their faults do not permit abortion.

We Catholics are more interested in comfort. We like having a new car, a nice house, and other material things. The thought of innocent babies being brutally murdered with the protection of our own courts and politicians seldom enters our minds. Half of our Catholic voters vote for pro-abortion candidates.

Soon, all our material possessions will be taken away. We also may lose our lives and the lives of those we love. Why would God allow this to happen to us? We are for the most part good, Church-going people.

In this country we still have free speech. We can voice our objection to the killing of innocent babies without the fear of going to jail.

Sixty years ago Hitler was killing Jews, Christians, and handicapped people in Germany, and, if you spoke up against this madness, you too would wind up in the gas chamber.

We have the freedom to speak out against this evil; but if we don't exercise this freedom, we will lose it, and then it will be too late.

The least we can do is to write to our elected representatives and express our views, and then vote for pro-life candidates. Then, too, we can visit the abortion chambers and hold signs that will expose these places for what they are. The Rosary is a powerful weapon when it is said at these chambers of horror.

Shine your light on the darkness of these evil places. If we do not end legal abortion in this country, we will lose our worldly possessions and maybe even our lives. God is merciful, but he is also just, and he will judge our nation if we don't do something now.

In the past century millions of people around the world have been killed because of the evil of Goddess Communism while America has been spared because we were a God-fearing nation. Unfortunately, in the past 30 or 40 years, this has been changing, and today every kind of sin including abortion is not only protected but looked up to by evil men whose goal is to destroy America.

We Catholics must act now before it's too late. †

Don Schauerte is a tireless Albuquerque pro-life prayer warrior.



December Calendar

December 12: In place of the regular LPC monthly meeting, an Advent potluck & talk on Our Lady of Guadalupe. Call (505) 293-8006 for information. All welcome.

December 4: Theology on Tap at Dickey's BBQ. The talk will be: "Tapping into the *Our Father*: Looking at the Lord's Prayer Through a New Lens." Location: Dickey's BBQ; phone (505)243-5201 for information.

December 17: Gospel of Life Apostolate at San Clemente

December 28: **Holy Innocents**

January 4: **Janet Smith**

Upcoming...

February 13, 2004: Pope Teaches Conference – Fr. Terry Brennan speaking *Et Unim Sint*, a recent papal document on ecumenism. At the University of New Mexico Continuing Education Building, 6:30 p.m. Rosary, 7:00 p.m. talk. Call (505) 293-8006 for more information.

WHY PRO-LIFERS MUST OPPOSE CONTRACEPTION

By Fr. Frank Pavone National Director, Priests for Life

There are two basic truths that each person has to admit in this life:

1. There is a God.
2. It isn't me.

To understand these lessons is to understand why abortion is wrong. Only God has absolute dominion over human life. "None of us lives as his own master and none of us dies as his own master" (Rom. 14:7).

This is also the reason that contraception is wrong. We know that human life begins at conception. But God's dominion over human life does not begin at conception. It begins in eternity.

"God chose us in Him before the world began" (Eph. 1:4).

"Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you" (Jer.1 :5)

We exist in time because God chose us from eternity. A human decision to prevent our conception is a trespass on God's dominion over human life.

It is not, of course, the same type of trespass as abortion (unless the so-called contraceptive" actually is abortifacient). Abortion destroys a human life. Contraception distorts the meaning of human sexuality. Both offend God because they fail to acknowledge Him as Lord of the entire process of human reproduction and life!

It is perfectly legitimate to acknowledge that there are circumstances in which a couple should not have a child. There can be medical, social, financial, psychological, or other reasons for this. To acknowledge God's dominion does not mean to act imprudently. Methods of natural family planning are legitimate. In planning one's family, however, one may never destroy the meaning of sexual union on one's own initiative. In natural family planning, using the body's cycles of infertile days, God closes the door to life. In contraception, we close the door. We have no authority to do so. †



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In Defense of the Church's Teaching on the Eucharist

Father Ron Stone Presents Ecclesia de Eucharistia, JPII's Encyclical on the Eucharist in Its Relationship to the Church

By Mike Curtin

At his November 14th lecture on Pope John Paul II's Encyclical, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, Fr. Ron Stone echoed the Holy Father's desire to uphold the sacredness of the Blessed Sacrament in light of theological confusion of the times. Fr. Stone clarified that "confusion is never in God; it is always in man's understanding of God."

Fr. Stone mentioned that from the beginning, the Church has defended her teachings on the Eucharist. With regards to those teachings, Fr. Stone commented that it is "the duty of every Catholic to bring others to the fullness of the Truth." The Pope's Encyclical states, "the Catholic faithful . . . while respecting the religious convictions of . . . separated brethren, must refrain from receiving the communion distributed in their celebrations, so as not to condone an ambiguity about the nature of the Eucharist and, consequently, to fail in their duty to bear clear witness to the truth." (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, No. 30)

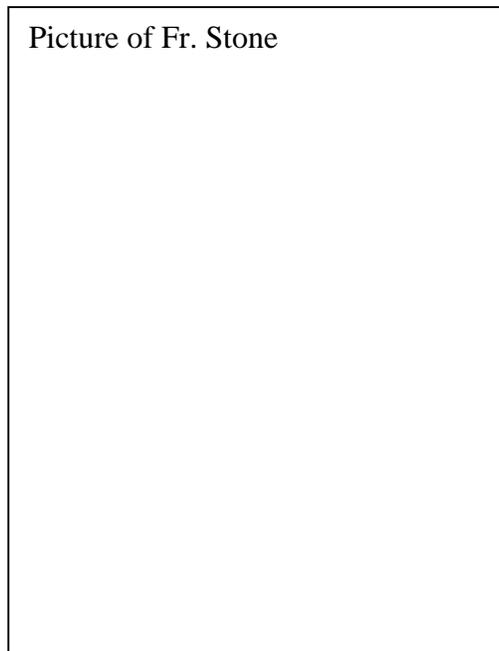
An over-simplified understanding of the significance of the Eucharist is a problem. Over-simplification has led not only to erroneous inter-communion but also to the mindset that one is entitled to receive the Eucharist. "It is not a right to receive, it is a gift that one must be worthy to receive" Fr. Stone said. The Pope's Encyclical emphasizes the close connection between the Eucharist and Penance. "If a Christian's conscience is burdened by serious sin, then the path of penance through the sacrament of Reconciliation becomes necessary for full participation in the Eucharistic Sacrifice." (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, No. 37)

Fr. Stone identified the common attitude that many want to go to the Last Supper but no one wants to go to Calvary. "Christianity brings with it the sufferings of Christ," he said. *Ecclesia de Eucharistia* cites the teaching of the Second Vatican Council connecting the Sacrifice of Christ with the sufferings of the faithful. "Taking part in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, which is the source and summit of the whole Christian life, they offer the divine victim to God, and offer themselves along with it." (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, No. 13)

Fr Stone mentioned that "love demands presence" and went on to explain the three comings of Christ: His Birth, His Second Coming, and His Presence on the altar at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The third is the most unrecognized, yet Christ said, "I will be with you always until the end of time." His continual Presence in the Eucharist is but one sign of His sacrificial love.

Fr. Stone is the pastor of La Santisima Trinidad Parish in Arroyo Seco, NM. †

Picture of Fr. Stone



Pax Christi USA

You'll find fliers promoting Pax Christi all over the Archdiocese. Is it really about "peace?"

By Stephanie Block

Pax Christi is an international Catholic "peace" movement, begun in Europe in 1945. It has numerous, autonomous national "sections," of which Pax Christi USA is one. While the two organizations are related, they have distinct histories and it is the U.S. organization that is of particular concern.

Pax Christi is among **Call to Action's** "church renewal groups...which support the spirit of Call to Action's 1990 'Call for Reform in the Catholic Church.'" In 1997, Call to Action gave its annual award to Pax Christi USA. National Coordinator Nancy Small spoke at the 1999 CTA Conference. At the 2000 Conference, Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, founding president of Pax Christi USA, gave the seminar "New Paradigms for Peace Making in the 21st Century." He was a speaker at the 2001 CTA Conferences in Philadelphia and Los Angeles.

While claiming to be a "peace" movement, Pax Christi USA (again, as distinct from Pax Christi International) has consistently supported Marxist movements, even those that were violent. Pax Christi was among the groups that lobbied President Clinton for the freedom of 16 FALN (Armed Forces of National Liberation) terrorists, whose bombing attacks during the 1970s and early 1980s killed six and wounded 70 others. Bishop Gumbleton collaborated with the Quixotic Center to raise \$27 million for the Sandinista (Marxist) regime of Nicaragua.

Nevertheless, when Pax Christi USA finds it convenient, it is radically pacifist. Eileen Egan, Co-founder of Pax Christi USA, "called the Catholic Church to abandon the just war theory and return to the nonviolent roots of the early Christian church."

Pax Christi USA has a solid history of "liberationism," that distorted theology decried by the Vatican. A Pax Christi "Litany of Mary of Nazareth" addresses Mary as "Mother of the liberator....Unwed mother/ Mother of a political prisoner...Oppressed woman/ Liberator of the oppressed/ Marginalized woman....political refugee..." Keynote speaker for the Pax Christi USA national Assembly in 2000 was Ched Myers, a Call to Action speaker on such topics as "Reclaiming the Bible as 'People's Book,'" and "Popular Education."

As a liberationist organization, Pax Christi USA is designed to address structural transformation of society. Its statement of purpose says that it "strives to create a world that reflects the Peace of Christ" beginning in personal life and extending "to communities of reflection and action to transform structures of society."

Its 1999-2000 resource catalogue featured a number of books that have as their objective the reinterpretation of scriptures, a typical problem of liberationism. Among the Pax Christi publications are Edwina Gateley's [A Warm, Moist Salty God](#). The catalogue description says: "As a young and eager missionary teacher, Edwina Gateley tells the story of how she was surprised to find that God had arrived in Africa before her. Moreover, God was not the patriarchal, white Englishman she'd learned about in school. To the Maasai women, for instance, God is warm, moist salty – and often female. Here Edwina exhorts us to expand our faith..." One also finds there Doris Donnelly's [Taking Account of the Queen of Peace](#). "...[T]his booklet is a re-thinking and re-imagining of Mary, highlighting the influence of the feminine face of God."

Typical of liberationism, Pax Christi USA is defiant of Church authority. Upon being told that Cardinal Obando of Nicaragua did not share his views about the situation in Nicaragua, Pax Christi founding president, Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, was recorded in a televised broadcast as saying: "You don't have to tell me who is the Church of Nicaragua. It's not Cardinal Obando. The Church are (sic) the people. That's who the Church is."



Bishop Thomas Gumbleton, founding president of Pax Christi USA

Pax Christi New Mexico has a number of local groups. In Albuquerque, there are groups at Holy Rosary Parish, the Newman Center, and Pius X High School, in Santa Fe at Santa Maria de la Paz, and in Cimarron a group is headed by Fr. John Dear, himself a Call to Action speaker.

On December 13, Pax Christi New Mexico will be hosting Fr. Daniel Berrigan, S.J. for “An Advent Day of Recollection on Isaiah and the Advent Journey to Peace” at Santa Maria de la Paz.

Berrigan was a member of the radical war protesters, The Weathermen, during the Vietnamese War. He wrote to the organization in 1972: “We are not killers, as America would stigmatize us, and indeed as America perversely longs us to be. We are something far different. We are teachers of the people, who have come on a new vision of things. We struggle to embody that vision, day after day, to make it a reality among those we live with, so that people are literally disarmed by knowing us.”

Berrigan and his younger brother, Phil (also a priest), were the first Roman Catholic priests to serve federal sentences for burning draft cards in 1968. In 1980 he and his brother joined the first “Plowshares” action, hammering an unarmed nuclear nosecone at the G.E. plant in King of Prussia, PA and splashing blood on government documents.

“Dan and I went to prison because we believe that Christianity and revolution are synonymous,” Philip wrote in *Fighting the Lambs War* (p. 106). Church officials exiled Daniel for four months to Latin America in 1965 for comments he made in support of a young man who lit himself on fire to protest the Vietnamese War. ☩

The Catechism of the Catholic Church enumerates the conditions for legitimate defense by military force, that is for waging a “just war,” include:

- *The damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation is lasting, grave, and certain;*
- *All other means of putting an end to hostilities have proven impractical or ineffective;*
- *There are serious prospects of success;*
- *The use of arms must not produce evils greater than the evil to be eliminated;*

(CCC #2309)

