

Director's Corner

Rev. John F. Harvey, O.S.F.S.

As *Courage* becomes a not-for-profit corporation in the State of New York, we are grateful for all the help and guidance given to its board and to the Chairman of the Board, Duncan Bonnell, and to me, as the Director of *Courage*. We are all grateful to Father Richard Gorman, our lawyer, who, thanks be to God, will continue to take care of the legal matters associated with becoming a corporation. We are very grateful to Bishop Robert Brucato for his wisdom in guiding *Courage* in the process of becoming a not-for-profit corporation in the Archdiocese of New York.

In our recent efforts to raise funds for *Courage* we have been pleased with the generous responses of many of our bishops, of *Courage* and *Encourage* members, and of our many friends. While continuing to receive donations, we now have sufficient funds to take care of our immediate needs. Again, as a result of the November 2006 meeting of the American bishops, *Courage* has had requests from a number of dioceses to help them form a *Courage* unit in their diocese. At the moment, there are approximately 100 *Courage* groups in the United States and 16 in other countries including Canada and Mexico.

As our financial resources increase, *Courage* will be able to expand its staff so that it will be able to fulfill goals previously planned in newsletters of the last few years. An example of such a goal is the need to evaluate the work of *Courage* groups throughout the United States and in other countries. It will also be necessary to continue to work closely with the leaders of *Encourage* in developing programs which reach out to their sons, daughters and spouses who are often alienated from the Church.

In the effort to bring the message of *Courage* to our Catholic brothers and sisters it is a source of joy to realize that in spite of opposition from secular and dissenting Catholic groups, *Courage* and *Encourage* continue to grow in America and in other coun-

tries. Some of the new members of *Courage* came to join us despite the bad reports they heard about *Courage*. They are delighted that they came to the Catholic truth.

Very recently I visited a diocese with a large population of women who call themselves lesbians. In a two-day visit I was deeply impressed by the group of priests and devout women who plan to begin a *Courage* support group in their diocese. They view their efforts as a response to the challenge to proclaim the teaching of the Church in the secular atmosphere of a large liberal State University. One in this group, a young nun therapist, presents occasional lectures for all the students, and the hall is packed with students.

As *Courage* in America concentrates on its primary goal, namely, to teach the meaning of **chastity** in its meetings, more Catholics with same-sex attractions are drawn to Christ. Yes, other matters are discussed: emotional problems are confronted as the group uses the 12 Steps properly. But the central theme--to be chaste because of one's love of Christ--begins to sink into their hearts.

At this moment in the history of *Courage*, we thank God for all that He has done for us. We have become a not-for-profit corporation within the Catholic Church. We are aware of difficulties which we may have to confront in our pornified culture, but we trust that the Lord who has brought us to this day will give us the grace to fulfill our mission to Catholic men and women with same-sex attractions (SSA) and to their parents, friends and relatives.

Bulletin Board

2007 Courage/Encourage Conference

It began with a Thursday afternoon Mass celebrated by His Eminence, Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I., Archbishop of Chicago, in the chapel of the Immaculate Conception overlooking St. Mary's Lake on the campus of the University of St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, Illinois. This was followed by one of many

meals shared by speakers and attendees around large tables in the University cafeteria. Acquaintances and friendships were renewed, new friends were made, and recent pluses and minuses experienced by all those affected by same-sex attraction were shared and discussed. That evening the Reverend John F. Harvey opened the conference with an address on the *Impact of Secularism*. While referencing the Catechism, Fr. Harvey reiterated the intrinsic evil of surrendering to same-sex attraction and the current use of "hate speech" to demonize Catholics and Catholic teachings. Fr. Harvey's new book, [Homosexuality and the Catholic Church](#), is intended to state clearly the nature of same-sex attractions and to confront the issue of homosexual unions and "gay marriage," and how bishops and Catholic politicians are bound to speak clearly about the objective evil of homosexual actions.

Subsequent speakers, daily Mass, and mealtime conversations were a mix of meditations, prayers, facts, and advice that seemed to advance the knowledge and commitment of participants. Peter Rudegeair's talk on gender ranged from the psychological factors and gender expectations to references as wide ranging as Alice Von Hildebrand and G. K. Chesterton to Dr. Edith Stein (St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, O.C.D.).

The Reverend Benedict Groeschel, C.F.R., explained the evolution of psychological thinking in the past century and how that is related to virtue. He explained how virtues are far more than merely nice traits: they have their origin in the grace of God and are meant to help us find salvation. In this context his observations that "religion is a response to God" and that "faith is a gift from God" and that "religion without faith is detestable" provided a plethora of contemplation topics for members of both *Courage* and *Encourage*.

The Reverend Richard McAlear, O.M.I., who characterizes himself as a "low tech priest in a high tech Church," spoke about *The Healing Presence of God*. Mary Magdalen, forgiveness, guilt, and healing (both physical and spiritual) were examined from Scripture references to historical incidents.

As an Oblate of Mary Immaculate focused on healing, his talk meshed admirably with Fr. Groeschel's presentation in that sin and our fallen nature mean getting up repeatedly after each fall in our search for Truth. Our need for God's mercy became so apparent that praying for the virtues of faith and hope as we seek redemption is a 24/7 task for each of us. On Saturday evening Fr. McAlear held a Healing Service that was standing room only.

Finally, the Reverend Don Timone spoke on the plague of pornography. He explained the addictive nature and signs of pornography exposure. Like alcoholics and smokers, relapses and behavioral changes are frequent. The need for Confession and a mentor and prayer and meditation and retreats were discussed at length.

Many workshops were held but as an *Encourage* member I only attended those intended for the friends and relatives of same-sex attracted individuals. Discussions about how to strengthen the *Encourage*/Priest bond in the diocese and how to share resources (new books, speakers, news items, etc.) and how to reach other parents in the diocese worried about or aware of same-sex attraction in their children were examples of the topics flowing through such workshops.

All told, anyone touched in any way by the same-sex attraction phenomenon all around us should attend these conferences. To not do so, only contributes to making the problem worse for everyone.

A Father of a Son

C-MAC Sports Camp East

September 6th - 9th, 2007 in Princeton, New Jersey C-MAC hosted 36 men from across the country in its ninth Sports Camp. Darryl served as SCE director for his third consecutive year. Steve, C-MAC president, reflected, "Darryl is such a professional. It's been a great blessing to have him keep raising the bar for what we are trying to do here at Sports Camp." Also in his third year was Anthony

as the Sports Camp Equipment Manager. "It's really due to Anthony's attention to details and generous dedication that SC was able to run like a Swiss watch," said Director Darryl. Father Paul Check, the Courage Director for the Diocese of Bridgeport, CT served as Chaplain; he then spent the entire weekend on the field with the guys. Mark Houck served as Coach, and led the men in explanations and scrimmages of the games. Mark is a national noted Catholic speaker on chastity and shared his story of being a pro-football hopeful. He is currently the President of "King's Men" that sponsors "The Knight's Weekend," an experiential and spiritually based retreat. Steve Brust also served as Coach, and led the men in Saturday's events. "He is a great supporter of SC and his expertise as a coach has been invaluable for us over the year," said Director Darryl. There was daily Mass, Confession, Morning and Evening Prayer of the Hours and Adoration.

In what has become a Sports Camp tradition, each man of the winning team received the *Sports Camp Medallion of Victory*, with the pronouncement, "through perseverance, you are victorious." A new Sports Camp tradition was the MIP 'Most Improved Player' award. Each year it is amazing to see how new men who never played sports before lose their fears and really pick up some new skills. It's not easy to pick out just one man from each team for each sport. Focus is on players who not only show amazing improvement, but give their team their heart and soul. Robert from CA was named MIP for the Dolphins and was quoted as saying, "I spent three and a half days of fear on a train to get here. I felt like this MIP award is a vindication of my childhood when I was always told I just couldn't do anything. Well, I can! Right now, I feel like now I can do anything!"

Look for next year's dates for Sports Camp on the Courage website by clicking on "Sports Camp."

Please note, and share with others, that the Courage Newsletter can be downloaded in PDF format from the Courage web site at <http://www.CourageRC.net>.

Homosexuality and the Catholic Church: Clear Answers to Difficult Questions by Fr. John F. Harvey, O.S.F.S.

Ascension Press, the publisher, writes of Fr. Harvey's new book: "As the founder and director of Courage and Encourage, Fr. Harvey is aware of the sensitive nature of homosexuality. With his extensive experience ministering to those with same-sex attraction, Fr. Harvey presents the Church's authentic teaching in an objective and pastorally sensitive manner. Fr. Harvey is particularly concerned with awakening our Catholic public to a battle which will take place between Catholics and the movement on a legislative level to promote same-sex unions and gay marriage. They exist already in our culture and are growing stronger day by day. Fr. Harvey has noticed as so many Catholics are profoundly ignorant of the threat of the gay movement. They do not realize it is an attack on Christian marriage and the family."

The book is promised to come out in November 2007, but it may come out in early December. You can order the book by calling **Ascension Press** at the toll free number, 800-376-0520 or shop online, <http://www.AscensionPress.com> or mail check to: Ascension Press, W5180 Jefferson Street, Necedah, WI 54646 (WI residents add 5.5%)

Also . . . did you know that the Knights of Columbus, as part of The Veritas Series, "Proclaiming the Faith in the Third Millennium," published the booklet, **Same-Sex Attraction: Catholic Teaching and Pastoral Practice**, by John F. Harvey, O.S.F.S. In this booklet, Fr. Harvey presents a spiritual plan of life for those who deal with same-sex attractions and wish to live chastely. Copies are available directly from: Knights of Columbus Attn: Catholic Information Service, P.O. Box 1971, New Haven, CT 06521-1971 or log on to <http://www.kofc.org>. Or for a single copy, you can contact the Courage Office.

Please continue to pray for the men and women who have contacted the Courage Main Office this past year interested in starting a Courage and/or Encourage group in their respected dioceses.

Courage Day of Recollection in NYC

New York Courage and Encourage hold Days of Recollection every year in May and December. The next Day will be Saturday, December 8th (9:30 AM through Mass at 3PM) at St. John the Evangelist Parish House (348 E. 55th St, NY, NY ~ between 1st and 2nd Avenue). Our special guest speaker will be Fr. Richard John Neuhaus, Editor-in-Chief of *First Things*. We hope you are able to come into Manhattan for this special Advent day of prayer and fellowship.

Courage Men's Retreat

The next Courage Men's Retreat will be held in Stamford, CT from Friday, January 18th at 6 PM through Monday, January 21st, 2008 at 2 PM. For more information or to register please e-mail Fr. Paul Check at www.courage@diobpt.org.

Response to Appeal's Letter

We received a positive response from the appeal's letter which was sent this past July and August. We have received more than \$65,000 and hopefully will continue to grow. Thanks again for all your support and prayers.

Added Note: For years Courage and Encourage members have been praying to Our Blessed Lady that a qualified priest would be named as Fr. Harvey's successor. At this time, an American bishop wants to speak with Fr. Harvey about a priest in his diocese who may be suitable for this position. Please continue to pray!!

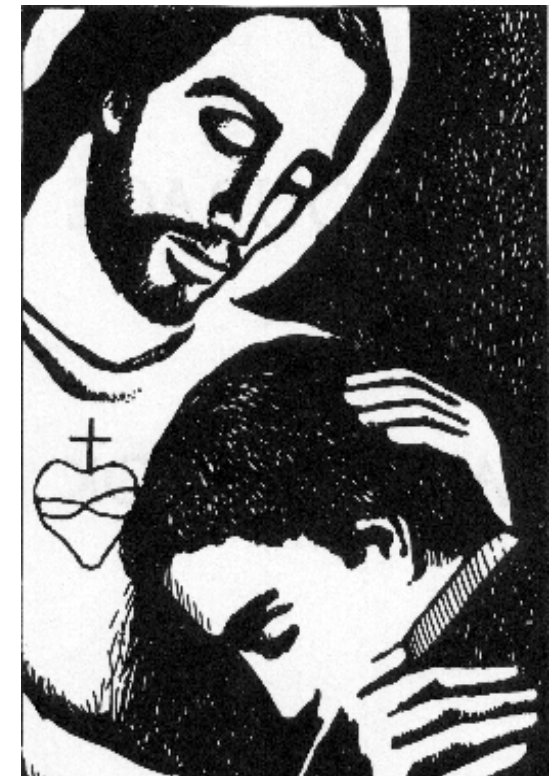
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On behalf of Fr. Harvey and the Courage staff, here's to a very blessed and joy-filled Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas Season. As we continue to journey together, may the Holy Spirit inspire and strengthen us to rise in faith to this great call . . . to help others learn their purpose in life, to live in Christ!