

Collections Provide Aid To Small Village

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The bishop of Abancay, Peru, faced an overwhelming task. The people of his diocese live in small villages in a very poor, isolated area of the Andes mountains. Visiting the people means traveling many miles on dirt roads, and there are few priests to serve this area. Catechists from the village hoped to serve as lay leaders, but the diocese lacked resources to bring these people together and provide training.

A lay leadership training program for the diocese of Abancay was made possible through funds from the Collection for the Church in Latin America. Short training programs for catechists throughout the diocese have enabled these lay leaders to serve the faithful in their remote villages... providing religious education, leading the people in prayer, and preparing them for the sacraments. Often they are the leaders who speak up for the rights of their people.

The Abancay program is one of hundreds of church projects in Latin America funded by the annual Collection for the Church in Latin America. Since it was created by the U.S. bishops in 1965, the collection has supported projects that strengthen the church throughout Central and South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

Like most Latin Americans, the people of Abancay have a strong faith but face poverty and a lack of education and resources. A recent survey of four Abancay villages conducted by a priest in the diocese found that:

• Of the 578 children born into these families, 16.6 percent died during childhood. Six women died during childbirth in 1989 alone.

• The average caloric intake in these villages is 1,500 calories per day; it should be at least 2,400 calories per day.

• Of the 44 fathers surveyed, only one had completed secondary school.

Seventeen had finished five years of primary school, and 12 had never been to school at all.

• Of the 49 mothers surveyed, 28 had never been to school. None had been to secondary school.

Latin Americans like those in Abancay struggle to meet their daily physical needs and often lack basic resources for worship and spiritual life. That is why money from the Collection for the Church in Latin America is desperately needed to provide materials and leadership training. All projects funded by the collection are planned and carried out by indigenous church workers.

According to the Most Rev. Rene A. Valero, auxiliary bishop of Brooklyn and chairman for the NCCB Committee for the Church in Latin America, last year the collection raised more than \$3 million, which funded 285 church projects. This year the special collection will take place on Jan. 27 in most dioceses.

"The church in Latin America is responding in a heroic way to the spiritual and material needs of the people," noted Valero. "Through your efforts, the Catholic Church in the United States has helped our brothers and sisters in Central and South America."

New Program For Black Children Focuses On Providing Homes, Love

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP)—The adoption program for black kids is called One Church, One Child but project leaders range far beyond black churches in providing homes for orphaned children.

The program, launched by a Chicago priest in 1980, started in Florida in March 1988 following the principle that at least one black family in a predominantly black church should adopt a black child.

By the end of October 1990, 834 children had been adopted statewide through the program, but there has been only limited success placing children through black churches.

"There are some churches involved, but it needs to be 100 percent involvement," said Trudie Poole, who along with her husband Chris has adopted two three-year-old sisters.

"Any time there has been a black problem—and it is a black problem—we have always been able to go to the black church. We need to have a heightened awareness."

The program has more than 500 children from the age of six months to 16 years still waiting for adoptive parents. Most of them are black.

Before adopting Claudia and Andrea, sisters born less than a year apart, Ms. Poole began speaking to churches and sororities to encourage



GIVE CHRISTMAS CHEER—On Friday Dec. 21, members of the Queens of Hearts Club gathered at the home of Ruby Stroud to pack boxes of food and toys, which were delivered to a Wake County family. Shown kneeling is Ruby Stroud. Standing (l. r.) Magie J. Holley, Pauline Goodwine, Edwinton Ball, president; Witonah Williams, Alberta M. Lovington, Ruth Davenport and Allie M. Peebles. Not shown are: Amella Byers, Vivian E. Irving, Marguerite Lightner, and Eleanor Mitchell.

their members to consider adoption. Now she can talk specifics.

"When you can stand up and talk to people and you're talking to them from knowledge and personal experience, they're more receptive to it," said the insurance consultant.

She and her husband decided to adopt girls because they had three sons from previous marriages. It hasn't been easy for them.

"You go through some trying times, but being a Christian, you find help," said Poole, who attends a Missionary Baptist Church in Winter Park with his wife. "You learn to rely upon God."

The Rev. Michael Cousin, pastor of Mount Olive African Methodist Episcopal Church in Orlando, is a new local coordinator for the program, and he hopes to increase church participation.

"I think it's a worthwhile program," he said. "I didn't know there were so many children out there that really needed homes."

Debra and David Tossie, an Oviedo couple, adopted their son Greg seven weeks ago after seeing his picture on a bulletin board at a church presentation.

Ms. Tossie recalled youngsters talking about being sad and happy at a Christmas party for their son's pre-kindergarten class. The teacher asked their son what made him happy. He said, "My new mom and dad."

Aging Institute Focus On Helping Older Mate

The holiday season—'tis the time for family reunions and traditions. But if it's been a while since you've seen your parents, be prepared for a possible change in the familiar routine.

The family is aging. Fortunately, says a spokesman for the National Institute on Aging, today's adult children are better able to help their parents come to terms with some of the changes that commonly accompany aging.

How can you help older family members cope with age-related changes? Brainstorm, recommends Gene D. Cohen, deputy director of the NIA. Intergenerational brainstorming sessions are likely to help family members identify the issues they confront daily and produce an exchange of creative coping strategies.

"The quality of life for older people may be affected by lots of little-ticket items that interfere with their functioning," says Cohen, a nationally known researcher in the field of aging and psychiatry. "By encouraging them to talk about their daily routine and how they spend their time, you may help them articulate their needs. And whether those needs are social or medical, you can steer them in a better direction for action or proper evaluation."

According to Cohen, some changes that can occur with aging may reduce a person's physical functioning, speed, and excellence of performance, and may even increase his or her susceptibility to disease. Often, these age-related changes are actually signs of specific diseases, making it difficult to separate the effects of aging and disease.

"For example," he says, "many individuals will experience pain and stiffness as they age, but X-rays of older adults generally show that many older people have some clinical evidence of arthritic-like

symptoms."

What's important, he cautions, is recognizing that many age-related changes can be modified through treatment, and that many older people can benefit from some of the same healthy behaviors that younger adults are involved in, such as exercise. Cohen points to a recent NIA-funded study of 90-year-olds in a nursing home who exercised their legs using a weight machine.

"Our society has become much wiser when it comes to dealing with aging issues," Cohen says. "Fifteen years ago, we saw aging as a disease to which every older person succumbed. Thanks to research on aging and research on the illnesses of later life, we know better. We know that illnesses in later life are different from normal aging changes, that illness in later life can be modified, and that normal—or typical—aging can be enhanced."

If you're planning a visit with older family members, Cohen suggests that you call their local Agency on Aging to find out about community services, resources, and activities. "Make a few phone calls, get a few names to contact for more information, then follow up," he says. "Consider it a New Year's resolution."

UNDERSTANDING

When we affirm understanding instead of misunderstanding, and we see all things in a clearer, more loving way, we release criticism, fear and doubt, and we are filled with trust, love and understanding.

DAILY THOUGHT

No fearful tear will ever last though hostile storms do glower because the clouds of shadowed past grow bright in new hope's flower, as darkness has gone when earth has welcomed rising dawn.

Eugene Betelho

Alice Walker Honored By Town Members

EATONTON, Ga. (AP)—Officials in the town where Alice Walker was born and raised are planning a memorial walk honoring the author of "The Color Purple."

The Pulitzer Prize-winning novel featured Celie, a poor black woman forced to live with a man who loves another woman.

In Eatonton, Ms. Walker is remembered only by a street named for her and books on display at the Chamber of Commerce.

Now, organizers of The Color Purple Educational Fund Foundation, which provides scholarships to needy students, hope to create a historical trail that points out places frequented by Ms. Walker during her years in Putnam County.

Preliminary plans call for the trail to consist of four stops:

• Ward's Chapel Cemetery. Seral of Ms. Walker's relatives, including her father, Willie Lee, and her grandfather, Henry Clay, are buried there.

• The Walkers' last country home, the house the Walkers lived in before moving into Eatonton. The foundation wants to make the house accessible to the public but is not sure if the property owners will agree, said Emory Lavender, head of the Clean Community Commission.

• The Alice Walker birthplace. The house has been torn down.

• The home of Alice Walker's mother, Minnie Lou Walker, which is being renovated. It would serve as the headquarters of the foundation.

In addition, plans call for a monument to the author to be erected in the courthouse square.

"We need the trail so that we can keep Alice Walker alive," said City Councilman Ulysses Rice. "I wish we had a museum."

Ms. Walker's relatives and well-wishers say the efforts to recognize her are long overdue.

"I think the Chamber of Commerce should have done this by now. They shouldn't have had anybody to bring it to their attention," said Robert Walker, Alice Walker's brother. "It should have been done already. She put Eatonton on the map."

Ruth Walker Hood, who started the foundation as a tribute to her sister, feels Alice Walker deserves the type of publicity given to another Putnam County writer, Joel Chandler Harris, who created the Uncle Remus characters.

"I think Alice Walker's contribution to the world is equally as important," said Ms. Hood. "They are both very important to the literary world. They should share equal recognition."

Tourists often end up at the house of her mother, who is an invalid who doesn't speak much, Ms. Hood said. Yet, her mother's home is often the only place in Eatonton where people can buy Walker's books and memorabilia.

"I think that's ridiculous," she said. "I think they should be able to find out whatever they need to know [elsewhere] in Eatonton."

Come Let's Think

BY EVA L. PERRY
WONDERFULLY MADE

We were not made to rust
In lusts—
And God's purpose forever miss—
Not made to be buried in the dust—
But to rise to heights of bliss.
Made to commune and walk
With God Himself,
And with Him forever be—
Not made for trifling things of time,
But made for eternity.

The foregoing lines were revealed to me one day. I like to be alone and think on the truth of God. The Spirit searches the deep things of God, and brings to light many things that are ordinarily hid from humanity. Adam and his wife were made in the likeness and image of God Himself. They were perfect and had need of nothing. All good was at their disposal. They were well warned against the fruit of that "middle tree."

The Bible informs us of another very special tree which was also there in the Garden of Eden. This was called the "tree of life." If a man ate of this tree, he would live forever and not die. Oh, what a wonderful state of being!

Our Father loved us to the extent that He did not want us to live forever in sin—Adam ate the evil fruit and thus had to be driven out of the Garden before he reached the "tree of life." As it stands now we are all born in sin, but we do not have to continue in sin. Every man and every woman—every boy, and every girl has a chance to repent from sin and partake of the "tree of life" in Jesus Christ. Eternal life is now in God's Son. Yes, the "tree of life" is blooming. Think about it. "He that hath the Son hath life."

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the life, he that believeth in me though he were dead, yet shall he live again—and he that liveth and believeth in me, shall never die" (John 11:25-26).

The new creation is just wonderful—it brings us into what Adam and Eve fell short of and missed. Glory be to God forever. "Life, and that more abundantly." Amen.

Read your Bible prayerfully and think!



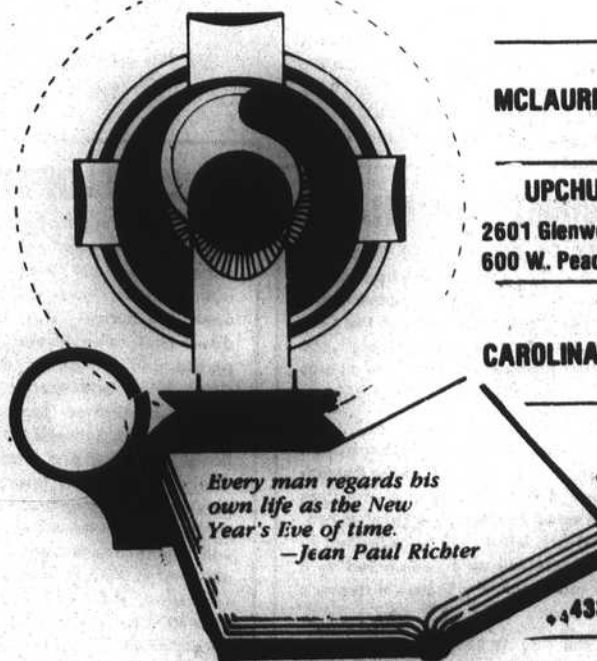
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One of the principal differences between a free society and a totalitarian one is that we elect our governing officials, who win by a complicated process based on receiving a majority of the votes. This means that there are also those of us who would have preferred another candidate or slate of officers, and who received the news of this defeat with not only disappointment but also great apprehension about the fate of our country. Nonetheless, when the majority speak, the remainder must accept the verdict with good grace; and we must all pray at our House of Worship for the Lord to guide the chosen leaders in the right direction. Also, we should let them know of our concerns and recommendations. If we all do this, it might enable them to do a better job; and prove our fears about the future to be completely unfounded.

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