

# NEWS

## Keeping a Safe Environment

### 'Grooming'

At some point, we all have been "duped." Afterward, we may be left with feelings of bitterness, anger, resentment, and, more often, embarrassment. For the purposes of protecting children, it is important to remember that pedophiles specialize in their own way of duping society. In order to get closer to a potential victim, they engage in a process referred to as "grooming."



The term grooming refers to the way predators try to mold, fashion, build up and set up victims and their families in order to molest a child, all the while appearing innocent. Sometimes predators can spend weeks, months or even years grooming victims, using calculating, manipulative and deceptive methods, patiently seeking to gain control over their victims.

Offering to babysit, pick children up from school, help with school projects, make household repairs and so on are just some of the things that predators do to gain the trust of parents and families.

There are basically three types of grooming: physical, psychological and community. Physical grooming involves touch. Starting with innocent pats on the back or arm, the predator progresses to hugging, tickling and wrestling. This conditions the child to be comfortable with increasing levels of physical contact. The predator uses subtle, innocent-appearing moves; the child thinks nothing is wrong. Children might even interpret the touch as they do one made by a loving parent; however, each and every touch of the predator is sexual in nature.

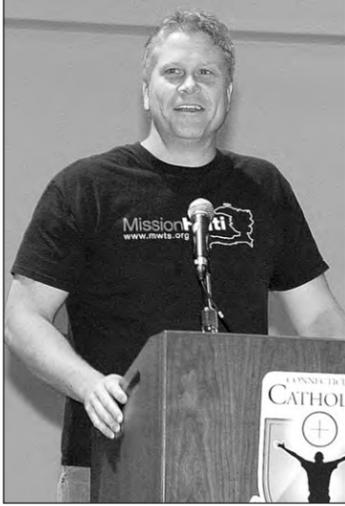
Psychological grooming comes in many forms. Predators spend time with their victims by showing children attention and using any possible method of communication that allows their targets to feel that they are on the same level and understand one another. This is a key factor. Predators become peers to their victims – peers with power and control. Special gifts, treats, food, trips, attention and the like allow for a deep connection between the predator and child. If a child rejects the predator in some way, the predator will feign sadness, and then the child will feel guilt and confusion. Other times, the predators resort to physical threats to a child's family, pets or friends.

Community grooming is the way molesters create a controlled environment around themselves. To adults, they project an image that they are good people, responsible and caring citizens. When an allegation surfaces, other adults explain it away easily because the predators have groomed them to think that they would never harm a child.

Secrecy is key to grooming tactics. Predators manipulate victims to keep the abuse

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**SEAN FORREST SPEAKS** – Sean Forrest, in photo at left, a parent, youth minister, songwriter and performer, discusses his life and conversion to the Catholic faith at the Catholic Men's Conference Nov. 15 at the Connecticut Convention Center. Mr. Forrest told a room filled with men about his profound conversion to the Catholic faith and deep commitment to spreading the Gospel. (Photos by Gary Tennyson)

## First conference engages, empowers men

By Mary Chalupsky  
Transcript Reporter

HARTFORD – It was thumbs-up, all the way.

By any account, the first Catholic Men's Conference surpassed all expectations ... and not just with the speakers, message, location, prayer or inspiration.

It was the attendance of well over 800 Catholic men who poured into the Hartford Convention Center Nov. 15 for a day of talks, fellowship and prayer that set the bar. Participants left feeling emotionally high and spiritually charged.

"Awesome," said Adam Kuhm of Old Lyme. "It was nice to see the deep faith and come away morally centered with messages that touch home."

Mark Azzara of Cromwell spoke along the same lines. "This is really amazing ... the turnout and the fact that the men are sensitive to what's being said," he stated. "I go to other conferences, but at this one, you can tell the guys are really listening.

They're asking for the truth."

The daylong event was the first Catholic men's conference of its kind in Connecticut. It was patterned after hugely successful conferences organized over the past few years in Boston, Milwaukee and other cities that draw more than 2,000 attendees.

For this one, however, planners were nervous. With less than two weeks to go, there were only 300 registrations for the cavernous convention hall. As organizers called for their team to fast and pray, they continued reaching out to parishes, organizations and friends.

On the day of the conference, the hall was still set for only 400 people. However, as participants, including priests and seminarians, descended upon the center, another 400 chairs quickly appeared. Many people also stood along the walls.

"It's the Holy Spirit," said organizer Bob Marcarelli, who looked out over the crowd in disbelief after working for months with a team of

planners to spread the word about the conference. Judging from the numbers, their efforts and prayers paid off.

"We started planning two years ago," said Mr. Marcarelli. "It took a long time to get things going. But we wanted to have an event for men to come together in unity and stand up for their faith," he said.

"It's phenomenal," added co-organizer Jim O'Day. "It's the Holy Spirit," he echoed, "and the Blessed Mother."

Drawing upon the theme, "Taking Your Faith to the Next Level," participants heard talks from priests, lay evangelists and bishops, urging them to be better fathers, husbands, Catholics and men.

Sean Forrest, a husband, father, youth minister, songwriter and performer from Connecticut who has spoken at hundreds of retreats and conferences, talked about his profound conversion to the Catholic faith and deep commitment to spreading the Gospel.

"I was taught that Catholics were not Christians," he said, referring to days before his conversion. Now he tells whoever will listen that "Jesus founded the one Church, and that's the Catholic Church. Our bishops can be traced all the way back to the apostles."

Referring to the call for change in the recent presidential election, he exhorted, "There's only one person who can bring change and that's Jesus Christ."

He reminded the men that they are their children's primary catechists.

"God doesn't want 10 percent of your money," he said. "He wants 100 percent of your heart. Guys, show you are men of God and not wimps."

Archbishop Henry J. Mansell, principal celebrant of the Mass, thanked participants for their witness to the faith and warned about President-elect Barack Obama's plans to enact the Freedom of

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## Vatican official criticizes president-elect Obama

WASHINGTON (CNS) – A U.S. cardinal who has worked at the Vatican for 12 years harshly criticized President-elect Barack Obama Nov. 13, saying he has "an agenda and vision that are aggressive, disruptive and apocalyptic."

Cardinal J. Francis Stafford, head of the Vatican tribunal known as the Apostolic Penitentiary, spoke on "Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II: Being True in Body and Soul" in a lecture sponsored by the Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family at The Catholic University of America in Washington.

Saying that the United States experienced a "cultural earthquake" when Mr. Obama was elected president Nov. 4, Cardinal

Stafford said the president-elect "appears to be a relaxed, smiling man" with rhetorical skills that are "very highly developed."

"But under all that grace and charm, there is a tautness of will, a state of constant alertness, to attack and resist any external influence that might affect his will," he added.

Cardinal Stafford quoted liberally from Mr. Obama's July 17, 2007, address to the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, in which Mr. Obama affirmed his support for *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that legalized most abortions, and said, "On this issue I will not yield."

Mr. Obama also said in the 2007 talk that he would not want

his daughters to be "punished by a pregnancy."

"Punished by a pregnancy," Cardinal Stafford repeated. "Catholics weep at these words. ... What should we do with our hot, angry tears of betrayal?"

The Cardinal compared the upcoming years of the Obama administration to Jesus' agony in the Garden of Gethsemane.

For the next few years, Gethsemane will not be marginal," he said. "We will know that garden."

Although the text of Cardinal Stafford's talk was not made public, a video clip from it was posted on YouTube by *The Tower*, the student newspaper at Catholic University.

*The Tower* also reported that

Cardinal Stafford spoke about *Humanae Vitae*, Pope Paul VI's 1968 encyclical on human life, and said Catholics need to return to the original values of marriage and human dignity.

"If 1968 was the year of America's 'suicide attempt,' 2008 is the year of America's exhaustion," he said. "In the intervening 40 years since '*Humanae Vitae*,' the United States has been thrown upon ruins."

Cardinal Stafford, 76, was Bishop of Memphis, Tenn., 1983-86, and Archbishop of Denver, 1986-96, until he was called to the Vatican by Pope John Paul II in 1996 to serve as president of the Pontifical Council for the Laity. He was named a Cardinal in 1998.

## One in service to the Lord



**BISHOPS AND PRIESTS GATHER** – Bishops and priests of the Archdiocese of Hartford get together for a photo during a Priests' Convocation Oct. 28 and 29 at the Best Western Mystic Hotel. More than 150 priests gathered to grow in their ministries and to reflect upon the life to which they have been called. The Office for Ministry Enhancement, directed by Father Thomas J. Sas, coordinated the event. (Photo by Father Timothy A. O'Brien)

# Forty-day campaign credited with saving lives

HARTFORD – The Archdiocese of Hartford's first-time participation in the national 40 Days for Life Campaign saved 18 babies from abortion at the Hartford GYN Center.

"Mothers changed their minds and decided to give life to their babies," said Mary Lou Peters, assistant program coordinator for Pro-Life Activities for the Archdiocese of Hartford and local director of the campaign.

Of course, those 18 babies, whose mothers instead went to the St. Gerard's Center for Life for counseling and support, are

those who could be counted. The campaign also could have results yet to be seen, said Mrs. Peters.

"I think the fact that people stood for 40 days outside the abortion clinic in all kinds of weather – cold, rainy, sunny or dark – spoke volumes to those who witnessed us. The commitment to change hearts and minds concerning abortion is very profound and will not be abandoned," she said. "The impact of witness provided by 40 Days for Life cannot be adequately calculated."

The campaign was conducted from Sept. 24 to Nov. 2 as part of a

nationwide effort. During the same period, the national campaign reported 583 babies saved, Mrs. Peters said.

The campaign involves educational outreach, prayer, fasting and keeping a vigil in a church or at an abortion clinic. Its goal is to end abortion in this country.

In all, 76 parishes in the Archdiocese participated in the campaign by registering for a specific day to hold 24 hours of adoration in their churches and 12 hours of peaceful, prayerful vigil at the Hartford abortion clinic. Holy Apostles College and Seminary

in Cromwell and the Franciscan Sisters of the Eucharist in Meriden also participated.

Mrs. Peters said that eucharistic adoration was so appreciated and well-attended that some parishes are continuing the ritual.

"The 40 Days for Life Campaign nationwide proved to be the most successful yet, and plans are already in the works for the 2009 spring and fall campaigns," Mrs. Peters said.

The campaign purposely was scheduled to take place shortly before Election Day, with the hope that new, more pro-life-minded

legislators would be elected on the state and national levels.

"Sadly, many pro-life candidates lost in this election, but there is no doubt that the pro-life movement was in the forefront of news and is a force to be recognized," Mrs. Peters said. "The pro-life movement is only energized by the recent elections."

The first 40 Days for Life campaign, conducted in Bryan/College Station, Texas, drew the support of about 1,000 people. The first national campaign took place in the fall of 2007, with more than 80 cities participating

## First men's conference engages

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Choice Act, effectively erasing any pro-life advances.

Hartford Auxiliary Bishop Peter A. Rosazza, Bishop William A. Lori of Bridgeport and Bishop Michael Cote of Norwich concelebrated.

Bishop Lori spoke earlier on "The Importance of Family Life" by sharing the experiences and influence of his father and family as he grew up in Louisville, Ky.

Bishop Lori, who is the supreme chaplain for the Knights of Columbus, used the podium to speak out against the movement in the country toward same-sex marriages.

"The government is confused," he said, when a traditional marriage between a man and a woman no longer matters.

Referring to the recent Connecticut Supreme Court ruling that opened constitutional doors to same-sex marriages, he said that even the state's attorney general, whose job is to defend the rights of citizens, did not argue on behalf of marriage and its purpose for the procreation of children.

"It won't take us long to realize the consequences" of these decisions in Connecticut, he warned.

"Many people who care see that we're making a big mistake," he continued. "We have to defend marriage by our example."

Making its debut was a Pope John Paul II motorcycle designed by the famous Orange County Choppers that is valued at \$120,000.

The motorcycle was the inspiration of Richard Veneziano of Windsor, along with Dave Craig and Phil Liguori, also from Connecticut, and Ron Stott of Syracuse, N.Y. It is promoting an apostolate for vocations and support of the Eucharist.

The bike is adorned with a photo of Pope John Paul II and his coat of arms, a crucifix blessed by Pope Benedict XVI, representations of the Polish and Vatican flags, 24-karat embellishments to represent

the sacred vessels of the Mass, Pope John Paul's "Be Not Afraid" and "Totus Tuus" mottos, rear-view mirrors shaped like fish and a miter-shaped piece. Plans are for the bike to begin touring the country.

The featured speaker was Danny Abramowicz, a former New Orleans Saints all-pro wide receiver and current host of "Crossing the Goal" on EWTN, whose talk was titled "The Spiritual Workout of a Former Saint."

"Guys, we're not here by accident," he said. "God had a plan long before this."

"The number one problem in our Church today is male spirituality," he charged. "Men are taking on women's roles, women are taking on men's role," resulting

*"It's awesome. This was a very inspiring shot in the arm."*

— Raymond Racine

in dysfunctional families and relationships.

"Without prayer, we have no chance," he stated. "We are in a spiritual war," and without the Lord in our life, "we have no chance."

Mr. Abramowicz, who called the Bible our "play book" and the Catechism of the Catholic Church the "game plan," urged participants to turn to prayer, the Eucharist, confession, and the Blessed Mother, and to seek spiritual direction.

A cradle Catholic, Mr. Abramowicz talked about his early fight against alcohol that almost cost him his marriage.

"Look, there's a lot wrong with this country. It's out of control," he said, pointing to the absence of an ethical and moral compass.

"How can we change that?" he asked. "You and I as individuals can change that, person by person – as fathers, husbands, men."

"Get involved in things that

change your heart," he said. People spend a lot of time on the physical things of life, he said, but "it's the spiritual that lasts forever."

Other speakers included Father Larry Richards, a national speaker, radio show host, retreat master and pastor of a church in Erie, Pa.; Legionary Father Charles Sikorsky, president of the Virginia-based Institute for the Psychological Sciences; and Sean Wolfington, a Catholic entrepreneur, financier and producer of the highly acclaimed movie, "Bella."

"It's unbelievable," said Jim Milinovich of Meriden, about the conference. "This has transformed my life. I've been walking in a desert. But now I realize that this was for my benefit to change my life. I'm going to bring so much back to my family and children."

Raymond Racine, from St. Mary's Parish in Coventry, was equally positive. "It's awesome," he said. "This was a very inspiring shot in the arm. I wasn't sure I wanted to come, but it's given me a new invigoration to do things with the Church."

"I'm amazed," said Chet Zebrowski of St. Thomas Parish in Thomaston. "Every one of the speakers hit upon what's happening in the world, which is frightening. It makes me want to bring this message back to everyone I work with."

Added Bob Murphy of Cheshire, "It's been a very uplifting and enlightening conference for Catholic men, and spiritually edifying. It's been especially encouraging to spend the day in a conference with so many men who are devoted to their faith and family."



**TRIBUTE MOTORCYCLE DISPLAYED** – A Pope John Paul II motorcycle, created by Orange County Choppers in Newburgh, N.Y., was displayed at the Catholic Men's Conference on Nov. 15 at the Connecticut Convention Center. The motorcycle features an airbrushed image of Pope John Paul II on the gas tank; gold leafing that represents a chalice, paten and the ciborium; the colors of the Polish flag; a depiction of the Vatican flag in the inlaid wheels; mirrors shaped like fish; the words "Totus Tuus" on the rear fender; and a front chin scoop fabricated to represent the Pope's miter, among other features. (Photo by Mary Chalupsky)

# Classifieds

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## Employment

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providing services in the Waterbury and surrounding communities, has a full time leadership opportunity.

**DIRECTOR of Outreach & Education**

This important position is responsible for community outreach & education programs fostering respect-for-life and awareness of Carolyn's Place services. The ideal candidate will possess excellent communication skills, have education & program development experience and hold a BA/BS degree in education, social or medical services. Experience in respect-life programs is desirable. Some evening & weekend availability required. Medical benefits available.

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