

Morality Forum Update

Standing up for family values in society

Issue 36

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Election Year: It's Time for a Change!

By John O'Neill

I am sure that all the regular readers of the Morality Forum Updates will agree with my assessment that we were privileged to have two very inspiring, illuminating and revealing articles in the last Update by Anthony Busk and Dr. Hill. Both articles highlighted the failure of successive governments and in particular the current Labour government to uphold traditional family and moral values. Anthony Busk quoted from the Bible to show that turning away from God will have serious consequences for any nation. The reality as history shows is that taking God out of any society leads overall to selfish individualism and materialism.

In the news recently has been the tragic case of two young boys in Edlington being attacked in the most violent and sadistic way by two older brothers who were from a broken home. This case unfortunately reflects the kinds of lifestyles sadly now not uncommon in our "broken society." The attackers were allowed to watch violent and pornographic videos and also to take drugs. They saw their mother being attacked by her partner. The mother has had seven children from two different men. The root causes of the decline of traditional moral and family values in our society occurred with the advent of the permissive society and the sexual revolution in the 1960's. The "me first" "anything goes" culture has been a complete disaster for our
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NEWS IN BRIEF

Sexual adverts to be banned!

David Cameron the Conservative leader recently stated that advertisers who target children with sexualised messages will face legislation under a Conservative government. Mr Cameron further stated: "It's high time the children's market and advertisers showed much more restraint in the way they operate. The media needs to show some restraint as well. The premature sexualisation of our children has already gone too far. There is too much arbitrary violence in the lives of children too young to understand irony or fantasy. Businesses have got to understand that parents don't like it and want it to stop. We can't go on like this. It's time we gave children back their childhood." Congratulations to Mr Cameron for taking this stand. The way the media etc. sexualises our young people is appalling and government intervention should have happened a long time ago. Please write to Mr Cameron and thank him: House of Commons, Westminster, London, SW1A 0AA

Abortion

Researchers at University of Otago, in New Zealand who studied more than 500 women, concluded that abortion "leads to significant distress in some" and that those reporting adverse reactions were up to 80 percent more likely to have mental health problems. The risk of mental illness was "proportional to the degree of distress" associated with the abortion. 20,247 under 25 year-olds had a repeat abortion in 2008. Five thousand of them were teenagers. Anne Milton the Conservative shadow health minister commented: "These figures demonstrate the Government's failure to produce a coherent and effective sexual health policy for England. It is of huge concern that such a high number are having repeat abortions." The sad reality is that abortion is now being used as a form of contraceptive, which, as studies show will cause much pain and heartbreak for numerous women.

Violent Crime

Recent statistical evidence shows that the number of violent attacks on people committed by strangers was the equal of 2,896 attacks every day. Only two people arrested for carrying a knife have received the maximum punishment of four years in prison. More than half a million serial criminals have been let off with repeated cautions. More than
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nation. Immorality is rampant and yet studies show conclusively, "that no society in history has been able to survive for long without a strong moral code," and, "that immorality corrupts individuals and destroys societies!" Quickie divorces, abortion-on-demand, ever increasing levels of sex, violence and bad language in the media etc. all help to fuel the permissive society and the "yob culture." Recently there was a case reported in the media about a lady who asked a man to stop repeatedly swearing in a public place. The lady was trying to protect her daughter from hearing such foul language. The man's response was to keep repeatedly hitting the lady, which resulted in her losing one of her eyes! Almost every week there are reports in the media about "good kicking's." This is a term which refers to a person, being repeatedly kicked about the head and body and having their head and face stamped upon. Often this kind of savage barbaric behaviour leads to death or permanent brain damage. When a religious ethos was prevalent such sub-human behaviour did not occur. A proper criminal justice system was in place and criminals knew that they would be properly punished- in stark contrast to the unbelievably lenient sentences and early release schemes etc. prevalent in our society. Also being kind, courteous, decent, respectful and having good manners was the norm prior to the permissive society.

More police, prisons and social workers are not the answer to our "broken society." The real answer is that we desperately need a religious ethos to be prevalent again, and that the traditional family unit being given its proper recognition by whichever government is in power. The traditional family unit is the most important issue because the God-centred family unit is our Creator's blueprint for a peaceful and harmonious world: the husband and wife living for the sake of each other, and for the good of their children; living for the good of all mankind, and living in accordance with the general moral and spiritual laws prevalent in all the major religions, which espouse the virtues of becoming beings of true love. Our current government's insistence that all kinds of relationships are valid is incorrect and contradicts all the evidence which shows that traditional marriage between a man and a woman is the safest, most stable, and the best environment for raising children.

The people who govern the nation should first create their connection to God and then govern. They need to become one with the people and have a serving mentality, putting the overall good of the nation before the benefit of themselves or their political parties. Sadly in recent years with the expenses scandal and other contentious issues such as the war in Iraq, overall politicians are not respected as was previously the case. Also, the current government's thinking and policies on key moral and family issues such as sex education and abortion-on-demand etc. often ignores clear evidence and shows that they are following their own politically-correct, liberal humanistic thinking. Such an ideology is harmful to the overall wellbeing of our nation.

We need politicians who have good character and integrity and above all who understand the primary importance of Godly values being the basis upon which our nation should be governed. With the election due we all have the opportunity to make our views known to our election candidates about key moral and family matters.

In the last edition of the Update Anthony Busk reminded us of the very important theme of repentance. Let us keep this theme going and also to pray that righteous thinking candidates will come forward to stand at the election. Religious leaders also need to remind their congregations about the importance of this coming election. Politicians have a vital role to play in regard to stability and prosperity in any society. Our nation has had enough of the liberal, humanistic policies and legislation on key moral and family issues which has caused so much damage in its various forms to our different communities. Our Creator is surely desperately waiting to see true values predominant again in our nation. Through our prayers, repentance and action we can all play our part in helping to achieve that noble aim and ideal.

Morality Forum Action

John O'Neill was one of the speakers at an interfaith event held in Southall during 'Interfaith week.' Key religious and political dignitaries were present at the event. John spoke about the topic of traditional family values in conjunction with the adverse effects of the permissive society on family life. In particular, he mentioned how pornography was having a very negative impact on our society as a whole, with recent new evidence showing how porn was helping to increase divorce rates amongst middle class couples. After speaking John was approached by a number of people who thanked him for what he had said. One lady asked to be kept informed by email concerning moral issues.

Morality Forum activists have been distributing Mediamarch action cards and a letter to the BBC, together with 'suicide' leaflets from The Society for the Protection of The Unborn Child, to individuals and religious organisations in various parts of the country.

Information has been sent on request to various individuals, concerning the topic of homosexuality. In particular such information was sent via e-mail to a Morality Forum supporter in Nepal, as this topic was being debated in the Nepalese parliament.

True Love Hurts

Mother Teresa: Her people and Her work

Book review by Diana Santelli

Author: Desmond Doig



I came across an old paperback, published in 1976, with yellowed pages and bent corners, about Mother Teresa's work. Mother Teresa is a name that everyone is familiar with, usually mentioned among the likes of Mahatma Ghandi and Martin Luther King Jr.-all being recognised for their lives of self-sacrifice and great service to humanity and very often seen as superhuman or saint-like; however, I knew very little about the woman herself and what she had actually done to deserve such status and recognition, and so when I set off to read this book, I was surprised at what I found.

Desmond Doig's book on his experience with Mother Teresa is not written in a flashy way. The writing is elegant and while he holds the utmost respect for Mother Teresa, he never over-praises her. In fact, he presents her in a way that makes the reader feel that this woman, who did so much for others, is in fact like you and me. Mother Teresa is seen as a "dynamic woman, an irresistible force, charged with the love of God, hurrying to do His work... spiritually powerful and yet very human," a bit stubborn at times,

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HOW TO WRECK CIVILISED SOCIETY

By Dee Pfeiffer

As the close of the year, it's a time to reflect on the past and, of course, on the future. Many have been questioning where their priorities lie as jobs are lost or put at risk while others have lost faith in the Government as the expenses scandal revealed the shocking extent of corruption and greed throughout all three major political parties.

Christians in particular realise that in order to have a stable and civilised society that protects, supports and values all, we need moral boundaries and a code of values, but such values – including being able to trust and rely on those in power to protect the unborn and vulnerable – are rapidly being eroded. Cleon Skousen (1913-2006) was an incredibly influential and inspiring father-of-eight. A trained lawyer, author and political commentator, he was also an FBI Special Agent and a Field Director for the American Security Council. In 1962 he wrote a book, *The Naked Communist*, which suggests that communists have 45 main goals they deem necessary to control the world.

Among the list were the following dozen objectives, which we are meekly allowing to happen seemingly without a murmur of dissent.

1. Break down cultural standards or morality by promoting pornography and obscenity in books, magazines, motion pictures, radio and TV.
2. Eliminate all laws governing obscenity by calling them 'censorship' and a violation of free speech and free press.
3. Gain control of key positions in radio, TV and motion pictures.
4. Discredit the family and its institutions. Encourage promiscuity and easy divorce.
5. Emphasise the need to raise children away from the negative influence of parents. Attribute prejudices, mental blocks and retarded children to the suppressive influence of parents.
6. Present homosexuality, degeneracy and promiscuity as normal, natural and healthy.
7. Continue discrediting culture by degrading all forms of artistic expression. Eliminate all good sculptures from parks and public buildings and substitute them with shapeless, awkward and meaningless forms.
8. Infiltrate the churches and replace revealed religion with 'social' religion. Discredit the Holy Bible and emphasise the need for intellectual maturity which does not need a religious crutch.
9. Eliminate prayer, or any phase of religious expression, from schools.
10. Transfer some of the powers of arrest from the police to social agencies. Treat all behavioural problems as psychiatric disorders which no-one but a psychiatrist can understand or treat.
11. Create the impression that violence and insurrection are the legitimate aspects of the country's tradition, that students and special interest groups should rise up and use force to solve economic, political and social problems.
12. Overthrow all colonial governments before the native populations are ready for self-government.

Our leaders ought to thoroughly digest these points, for many

of the ingredients recommended by anarchists for the destruction of civilised society are already in evidence here in Britain. They include the discrediting of the family, the breakdown of morality and the elimination of laws governing obscenity. It is now exactly 47 years since these objectives were published and almost all have been achieved. It's time to help reverse the tide. We surely owe it to future generations.

Letters and e-mails received

Thank you John for this. I have signed the petition and forwarded it to all my Christian friends. Best wishes, Francoise.

Dear John, Good to meet you the other day [At Houses of Parliament]. Thank you for your useful information. Please keep me on your list. Suaad.

Hi John, This is frightening. The boundary of anti-Christian forces is being moved tighter daily, and it can happen to any Christian in the workplace. Please count me in. I will be making a strong case about it in church on Sunday. Thanks for the information. Yours in His service. Deacon Oba Karunwi.

Hi John, Thank you for the e-mails. I would like to write to my M.P. regarding sex education. I'd be grateful if you could do me a draft letter. [Information was sent]. Thanks so much for your hard work on morality issues. God bless. Yew Leng.

Dear John, Thank you for the book [about homosexuality]. I read it all and am deeply struck by how illuminating it is. I will be sending this to as many people as I can, who will find it helpful. All the best. Andy Johnson.

Dear John, Thank you for this interesting magazine. Well done for producing it so regularly and consistently. What you are doing is very important. William Haines.

Dear John, Very good content and presentation. Thanks a lot. David Rennie.

Damascus, 10th December,

Dear John, Many thanks for keeping me informed about all this. Thank you for your untiring work. What I read about makes me feel lucky I live in the Middle East. Here, mention of the name of God is a normal part of culture, regardless of a person's religion. For example, the Arabic answer to the question "How are you?" is "Thank God". The Arabic for "Good to see you back" (from sickness or a journey) could be translated as "Thank God for your health".

This gives me an idea. Your campaigns are clearly sustained by good Christian believers.

This might be an instance where the outrageous behaviour of the council in question would be strongly opposed by Muslims and other believers. Given that in "modern" Britain it is still politically correct to support interfaith, this might be an approach that would touch the conscience of the council.

Just a thought!

God bless you and your work - if I'm still allowed to write that! David Fraser-Harris

Marital Rapport

By June Saunders

(continued from previous issue....)

These natural body chemicals course through both mother and child. The pair experiences heaven on earth. Loving attachment is considered by scientists to be the beginning and foundation of all moral development in human beings, fostering as it does, empathy – the ability to love and understand others, the ability to relate beyond the self. Attachment is our very first other – centred love, and we reach for it with alacrity. Attachment is healing. A very young child who had been through a traumatic experience was screaming, flailing and crying, out of control during a visit to a friend of her mother's. The mother was at her wits' end. The friend observed that when the mother had hugged the child briefly, the child had stopped crying and screaming. She recommended the mother take the child into the bedroom, lie down on the bed with her, press her body full-length against the child and just hold her tight. With minutes, the child had stopped screaming and crying; after about twenty minutes, the child came out to play with the other children in a completely docile way. In Rwanda, church missionaries set up a school for children traumatized by war. They found that the children needed most of all just to be held. Attachment heals wounds – both physical and psychic – in adults as well as children. An injured woman lying on a hospital bed was told that her sister was there to see her in her hour of need. They had not seen each other in decades. Wordlessly, the two held hands. The patient's heart rate slowed down to healthy levels, her brain emitted pleasure-inducing and healing chemicals, she sighed deeply-and began to recover. One couple testifies that during a time of crisis all they did was hold each other and cry. They got through the crisis through holding each other tight. Scientists who study the brain now know that we are "hard-wired" for relationships of deep attachment, and that without such relationships we die younger, experience less healing when recovering from illness, and experience more mental and emotional problems. In fact, scientists are finding that good relationships are a better predictor of long life and good health than major lifestyle choices like not smoking, not drinking alcohol and not eating a fatty diet. Our partners can threaten our attachment needs-which are literally survival needs(ask any baby!)-and that is why ruptures in marriages hurt so deeply. By uncaring, thoughtless, reclusive, rejecting, critical, angry, indifferent or withholding behaviours, our partners can trigger deep-seated fears of abandonment without even knowing they are doing so. The need for attachment is a primal, survival-related need. If it is not there, we feel threatened in our very being and we will often react like cornered rats-ready to fight to the death. Does this mean that if couples just hold each other, a problematic marriage, a distant marriage, a distressed marriage, an indifferent marriage a good marriage-wanting-to-be-better, a great marriage-wanting-to-become-cosmic, can improve? Perhaps. Experts say that a couple's physical relationship is a measure of the health of their overall relationship. One famous marital therapist, Dr. Michelle Weiner Davis, instructs wives to adopt the Nike motto in their marriages and "just do it!" They will be amazed, she says, at how much giving themselves sexually to their husbands enhances the relationship all around. Yet, Dr. Johnson emphasizes the couple's verbal and emotional communication must also be as reassuring as a tight, never-let-me-go embrace. Many people have a deep-seated fear of abandonment. Couples must learn to relate to each other in a way that shows that abandonment is simply not an option. They need to provide each other with a sense of emotional safety, where the soul of each can venture out safely to reveal needs, vulnerabilities and feelings without fear. They must know that the other will be there, present to them, in every way and forever.

Responding to attachment needs. This is where the bedrock of commitment comes in. When attachment becomes secure-i.e., one knows the other person is not going to leave and will keep trying in the relationship-it is a foundation on which to build. That is the essential ground for the couple to work upon as they strive to make their bonds into ones of joy rather than ones of duty, habit or even negativity. Commitment builds safety into a relationship. It is all-important. Yet commitment must go deeper than just staying together in the format of marriage. Commitment must go into learning to love the other, no matter what. That may take re-committing to love each other again and again and again, on deeper and deeper levels of heart. We are called to love in our marriages, and deepening our love through prayer, study, seeking insights and-yes, suffering-is how we learn to find the devotion to become saints of marriage. As we do this, pieces of our old selves and of the fallen culture we have ingested fall away, and we will truly live for the sake of the other, who is our spouse. Our deepest needs for attachment will be answered. True love doesn't just depend on how the couple met-whether they were "in love" when they met or not. Through interaction, habit, sharing finances, children, food, mortgages and all the other concerns of a married couple, we forge genuine bonds with the other person. In counselling couples it is clear that they yearn to love the other and be loved by the other. They want to be as naked in mind and soul with the person as they were in body when they conceived children together. A husband and wife want to hold each other tightly in all their vulnerability, assured of acceptance by the other, and not by anyone else. The questions are the same between couples who met romantically and those who married without being swept off their feet. Underneath every misunderstanding, every edged remark, every conflict, every sense of distance, disinterest or vague lack of fulfilment are burning questions. Do you love me? Do you care? Are you really there for me in a meaningful way? Can I trust you? Can I give my heart to you? Will you hold me tight no matter what? Once relationship issues are seen in terms of attachment, many complications melt away. This is true in marital as well as other familial relationships. When we are in the midst of conflict, we would do well to plunge deeper into the understanding that attachments needs are at the root of the problem. "You didn't take out the garbage" translates into "Don't you love and value me and my efforts enough to help out?" It is pointless to get into an endless litany of who does what chores when. The vital issue is how much the other person's actions or words seem to communicate uncaring. Once that issue is cleared up, the couple or family may honestly not care who takes out the garbage. *It's all right to need one another.* While therapists usually think dependency is unhealthy, human need is a reality, Dr. Johnson counsels. We need each other. There is such a thing as healthy dependency in marriages and families. There is no survival without one another, and the most basic unit of "each other" is a marriage. Inside each of us is a soul crying to the soul next to our spouse, "Be there for me. Hold me tight. And don't ever let me go." We have met someone whom we can love. No matter how often (in addition to the joyful times) your relationship slips into routine, disinterest, anger, distance or angst, meeting someone whom you can love-no matter who that person is- is the most exciting gift we will ever be given. In fact, anger and emotional distance are actually cries of the soul to be closer to one another, cries for connection and attachment. Let's make the most of the gift we have been given by holding the one we have been given tight, soothing each other's needs for attachment, and allowing for the unfolding of our own and the other's soul. If we do so, we will be astounded by each other's beauty, by the mammoth revision and restoration that takes place inside us, and our relationships will be ever new as we explore the boundless possibilities of love with our most significant other.



True Family Values
(compiled by Frank van der Stok,
continued from previous issue)

The Nobility of Three Generations



2. The nobility of parents.

- Parents represent the present-day reality; they are responsible for the welfare of the family in the present.
- They provide for their children and aged parents.
- Their love sets the tone for the family's spiritual life.
- Parents' authority.
 - It is derived from their sacrificial love.
 - Filial children naturally respect them.
 - Their authority expands as they serve and help support the larger society, earning respect from everyone around them.
 - Likewise, their authority in the family grows by virtue of the respect that they receive in the larger community.
- Contrast the leader who just give orders with the leader whose genuine commitment and sacrifice instils respect and awe.
- We demonstrate our kingship by becoming:

- True teachers

Give people a vision and teaching to help them in constructing an ideal society.

Don't hoard wisdom; you cannot do it all alone; but give others the means to be successful. "If you give a man a fish, you will feed him for one day; if you teach him to fish, you will feed him for a lifetime."

- True parents

Showing fairness in concern for others.
Actions which spring from selfless love.
Caring for all people even more than one's own children.

- True owners

The challenge to be righteous in our use of wealth and property has defeated many leaders; its easier to be righteous in our use of power, to reverse the adage that "power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

True ownership is based upon true love, which means investment into the property, or investment of the possession for the sake of others.

- We have to work at changing our lifestyle to be worthy of the title of royalty.
- We have to overcome our bad habits and small-minded attitudes.
- We should derive true pride from virtue and a godly lifestyle.
- We all can become leaders in our communities, born out of

a deep lover for our neighbours and fellow citizens.

- We should be open-hearted in sharing God's love with others.
- The title of royalty is conferred upon us by others.
 - It is conferred by God, who justifies us (spiritual kingship).
 - It is conferred by our relatives and neighbours, who come to respect us and give us the stature of a leader because we serve them.
- This means we become spiritual teachers.
- We become the exemplary members of our clan.
- We become providers and helpers of those in need.
- We become natural leaders of the community.

3. The nobility of children.

- Children represent the future.
- They should grow receiving the love of both parents and grandparents. How they grow up reflects upon the parents and is a measure of their success or failure as parents. There is an African proverb which states, "Children are the clothes of a man."
 - Children's authority
 - They gain authority through the love they naturally coax from their parents and grandparents.
 - Their receptivity is their authority to receive proper education.
 - Parents and grandparents are gratified and excited, and also are serious to educate the children well.
 - The children's opinions need to be respected in order to cultivate their proper sense of subjectivity.
 - The children's success brings joy and completion to the family.
 - Children should be raised to be virtuous and honourable, with the qualities of nobility, courage, compassion, honour, etc.
 - Likewise, they should conduct themselves with a sense of dignity and responsibility before their elders and before God. Dressing well at worship service, for example. Through filial piety, they can receive this tradition.
 - Parents teach by example. The number one lesson is that of sexual purity.
 - Jesus called the children to him, saying theirs is the kingdom of God. Children can surpass their parents, since they stand on their foundation. They have limitless faith, hope, imagination, creativity, enthusiasm, energy. Their growth represents the fruit of their parents' investment.

4. In summary, the true family encapsulates the basic form of God's love and truth.

- The four ways of vertical ethics.
- The four realms of heart.
- The three stages of nobility of the family, comprising the nobility of the entire family ("realm of the royal family"). Nobility and authority is granted to all members of the family of humankind. God is our Parent. All of humankind, as God's sons and daughters, are members of God's family, and thus inherit the authority and nobility of kings and queens.
(from the book "True Family Values" by Wilson and Pak)
(to be continued....)

Navigating the Teen Years

By Heather Thalheimer

As children enter the teen years our fears for their safety grow. How much freedom should they have? What rules should parents set for them? Surprising to some, many teens do in fact avoid risky behaviour. More than half of high school students (54%) in USA are not sexually active. However, that is not the picture the media paints. Parents want to know how they can ensure their children will make safe choices. Every teen will eventually confront that moment when they must decide "to do it" or "not to do it." The good news is that there are many things parents can do to help teens face those critical decisions. Once a child enters the teen years parents tend to hold back fearing we are being intrusive or just plain unwanted. Are our fears and anxieties justified? Let's take a look at what teens want and need. Surprisingly teens do want our opinion and support. Of course your teen will rant and rave about how "so and so" has this or that freedom but just maybe there is a child inside yearning for you to set limits because he or she is under more peer pressure than he or she can handle to become sexually active, to drink or smoke. In addition to wanting parental protection children who are adolescents are in need of our guidance. Adolescents can be very trying because they are transitioning between childhood and adulthood. At times they can show adult thinking by being thoughtful of others and the next day become completely self-centred!

While much of today's parenting information focuses on the developmental stages of infants, toddlers and preschoolers, it is just as important for parents and other adults to be aware of the developmental stages of adolescence and adjust their parenting to meet the needs of their growing child. There are four important developmental tasks that teens must master to enter adulthood successfully. These are:

Establish an identity. Establish independence. Develop moral standards. Prepare for college or a career (self-sufficiency and responsibility).

Psychologist Erik Erickson contends that the search for identity is the "main task of adolescence." While comparing, testing and rethinking of values are part of healthy development for teens, it can be stressful for parents! What do you do when your teens start questioning your family's faith? You are left wondering what happened to the cute child who willingly accompanied us to church and believed everything. This is perhaps the scariest moment for any parent. Understanding that teens are accomplishing developmental tasks and not just being difficult for the sake of it can help parents find that extra ounce of patience and maintain an emotional openness to their child. Conflict may arise over differences between parent and adolescent values and opinions. During this important period it is essential that your teen hears what you stand for and why? Try to keep an even keel and share what is important to you without becoming authoritarian. Look for natural, teachable moments rather than lecturing at them, which never works. Parents often bemoan that their teen comes out with the most outrageous statements and voices opinions known to be contrary to the parents' ideas. It's tempting to be drawn into an argument, determined to prove your point to the detriment of

the relationship. A power battle ensues and everybody loses. In those circumstances try to hold back a little. I have often used the line, "That's interesting, I hadn't thought of it like that before." You'll notice that I am not agreeing or disagreeing with the stated view but this approach does allow the teen to speak and be heard, which is often all they are seeking. These are the moments that we need to deepen our own faith and trust that our Heavenly Parent is working in the lives of our children. The good news is that your children will likely share your values as adults. It's important for parents to understand the psychological damage that accompanies premarital sex and the advantages of abstinence. Adolescents are ill prepared for the emotional consequences and social demands involved in sexual intercourse, and the confusion, anxiety and guilt that often results (Corner and Poussaint). There are no condoms for the heart. We need to be able to clearly state the benefits of saving sex for marriage and encourage them to make good choices. It is important to give teens something to say, "Yes" to rather than "Just say no." To find out more about how to talk with your child about the value of sex and marriage contact www.freeteens.org. Emotions and peer pressure are strong influences in adolescent decision-making and that is why teens need us to help them figure out consequences and assess risk. Harness the power of peer pressure to your favour by connecting your teen to a youth group with positive values and energy. Teens are also striving for independence. One of the most important gifts parents can give their adolescent is "Roots and Wings." Teens need "Roots" (family love, limits, consequences and responsibility) as well as "Wings" (freedom to explore the world beyond their family). The greatest challenge every parent faces is finding the balance in that tenuous equation. So what's a parent to do? Number one, don't give up! Know the very real power you hold. Parents are a much more powerful influence than they realise. The 1995 National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health examined the lives of 90,000 seventh to twelfth graders. Dr. Robert Blum, director of the Adolescent Health Programme at the University of Minnesota, found that one striking factor emerged and recurred in the life experience of all the adolescents who passed up risky behaviour: an involved emotionally stable parent. The study showed that, "Children regardless of race, income, and number of parents, who felt connected to adults, wore invisible armour." (Parenting 911, Giannetti and Saarese). We need to allow this knowledge to guide our day to day parenting. Be available. As parents we are used to jumping through hoops to find child care for young children but as our children reach the teen years we heave a sigh of relief and trust they are old enough to be home alone, but are they? When do teens drink, commit crimes, smoke and yes, lose their virginity? When they are at home alone or with friends but without supervision. It isn't in the best interests of your teen to have long periods of unsupervised time. Research activities and opportunities for teens in your local community. Involve them in community service projects as this not only occupies their time but builds true self-esteem and also teaches them the value of living for something larger than themselves. Expose your teen to religious tradition and discuss morality with them. The National Campaign to Prevent Teen Pregnancy noted that 44% of teens that kept their virginity stated that they were influenced in their decision by

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WAIT UK

By Marshall De Souza

WAIT team praised at Youth Conference

The WAIT team were invited to speak on WAIT education and perform two acts at the 2nd Annual RAF Youth Conference held at Harrow Civic Centre on Saturday, 24th October 2009. 10 WAIT members attended the event along with Uncle Marshall and Aunty Naomi.

We arrived at Harrow Civic Centre at 10.15am just in time for registration. The event kicked off with a welcome and introduction by Dr. Roselle Antoine, followed by an opening prayer. The Conferences' Opening Remarks were led by the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor of Harrow.

After that, there were several Youth Presentations on Education, Law, Politics, Community Development, International Relations, Violence against Children and Media. Among these, Jude and Keishin presented amazing speeches on what WAIT UK is all about and how it has affected them personally.



__Performing the "Red & White" dance in the chamber

After a delicious lunch, the WAIT Team participated in two workshops on Crime & Punishment and Youth & Wealth Creation, where they got to express their views on these issues. It helped them to discover new solutions to solve these problems in the long term.

Finally, the WAIT Team performed the Red and White and the Rose Dance which received grand applause by the audience. The team was praised by the MC & the Foundation President. Other performances included singing, and saxophone performances. The event concluded with an awards presentation and education excellence speech. We hope that we will get to participate in events like these in the near future as it was very rewarding.

WAIT team perform at International Festival

Insun, Elizabeth and Miwa took on the challenge of performing as a trio at the International Festival held at the Peace Embassy in Thornton Heath, Surrey to support the Interfaith Children's Home in Hyderabad, India.

Westminster Academy Performance

By Alex Shaw

During the half term holidays on the Tuesday, 27th October, the WAIT team were invited to perform at the Westminster Academy for a local event called Autumn Medley. Invitations were sent to the whole borough to come, so it had potential to be a big event. We were set to perform in the afternoon.

The performance had quite some importance as recently we received funding from Choice FM radio station and Westminster Academy was one of our partners that we got it with. It was agreed that we can use some of the funding to start after-school break dance classes at the academy which should begin shortly after the half term. So this performance was a good opportunity to advertise this and gather people from the local area who would be interested in joining.

The event was quite good although the turnout was not as big as expected. The venue was very nice. The building was basically new, well designed and had nice flooring. We were nicely received there and were quickly given a room to prepare ourselves which is a lot better than what we usually get. In the performance the boys performed their new Break Dance which was created the day before and the girls performed the Rose Dance after an introductory speech by Sean.

As often happens, there were some technical difficulties, for when we tried to do the Rose Dance the CD wouldn't work on the sound system CD player as it was an MP3 CD. Luckily Uncle Marshall had brought the

Boom Box in his car, and the performance could go on successfully. During the event we managed to get some people to sign up for the break dance sessions. Hopefully when we start, they can bring their friends too.

After the performance was over, we all went to the WAIT office to finish a long day with a nice KFC dinner.



(Girls perform the Rose Dance)

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religious or moral reasons. Teens are trying to build their moral identity and need exposure to ideas. It's easy for parents to react emotionally when teens test family values and beliefs by taking an opposing position. Take a deep breath and remember that without pulling away and "trying on" other ideas and values your child cannot inherit and own his or her own faith. Identity is established by incorporating some of the things they have learned through experience with those things they have learned in childhood. Your teen needs you to keep sharing what's important to you and most importantly why, so don't be put off by a little attitude. Teens that have clearly identified personal goals are less likely to engage in risky behaviour. Find out what your teen is interested in or help them find an interest. If you need ideas talk with your child's teacher or a local community organisation such as the YMCA or Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. Teens with community connections fare much better when faced with challenges. Get to know your teen's friends and become more engaged in their life. Discourage dating, which becomes very prevalent among their peers in middle school, by encouraging group outings and events. This puts a lot less pressure on individual teens and is actually more fun! We live in a culture whose prevailing wisdom is that teens are self-sufficient and we need to get out of their faces. Patricia Hersch, author of "A Tribe Apart" states that "this generation of kids has spent more time on their own than any other in recent history." We have a lot of lonely teens, yearning for love. It's time we re-engaged with our teens and let them know we're in this together.

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6,000 dangerous criminals who pose a "high or very high" risk to the public have walked free from court with community service orders or a suspended sentence in the past three years figures show. One in three violent crimes results in a caution, and only half of all burglars caught are charged. There have been a number of tragic cases in recent times of innocent people losing their lives after being attacked by people released early from prison. Chris Grayling the shadow Home Secretary said, "12 years of Labour government has undermined the criminal justice system, allowing more criminals to get away with it and leaving more victims with a huge sense of injustice." Sara Payne in her first report as the government's 'Victim's Champion' has stated that, "more police officers are needed to combat anti-social behaviour and that an honest sentencing system should be introduced." What Sara Payne says is clearly correct. The lenient sentences and early release schemes etc. are failing abysmally to protect the public from violent criminals, and reform of such policies is urgently needed.

Religious Freedom

In recent years government legislation has been introduced in the name of "equality," particularly in relation to homosexual "rights." Such legislation has resulted in various court cases where religious people adhering to the dictates of their consciences and beliefs have refused to comply with such legislation. Now it seems that the government is turning its attention to faith schools. St Hilda's Church of England secondary school in Liverpool was reprimanded for asking parents to "support" their children's attendance at Christian assembly because; this breached the rights of parents to keep their daugh-

ters out of R.E. lessons! A Catholic school on Merseyside and an Anglican school in Epsom were both singled out for asking parents to sign forms supporting their Christian ethos! Benedict Brogan writing in the Daily Telegraph stated that: "...a Government that is using statutory powers to challenge faith schools for their very reason for being: the right the right to make faith and a commitment to it the deciding factor in admissions." Baroness O'Cathain, a Tory peer recently claimed that the Equality Bill which will require religious organisations not to discriminate against homosexuals or transsexuals was for religious freedom the "single most damaging bill to come before the House in my 18 years as a member." Faith schools produce excellent academic results and the ethos in such schools helps the children to have a correct understanding of how to cultivate their characters. In the most recent league tables, almost two-thirds of the 329 primaries with "perfect" results were Anglican, Roman Catholic or Jewish schools. Instead of discriminating against religious organisations and religious beliefs, the government should take the time to do some earnest self-reflection and realise that the liberal, humanistic approach regarding key moral/spiritual issues is one of the major reasons why we are living in a "broken society."

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"unorganised." It is a very honest account about what he sees and how he feels travelling throughout India visiting the centres that are set up for the dying destitute, for the lepers and the orphans—all of these places that Mother Teresa created to help the "poor amongst the poor" make peace with God and die knowing they were wanted and loved. What to me is even more fascinating is that the author himself is not Catholic, so this perspective comes from a place where there is no Christian bias or feeling that the author is trying to support some Christian cause. Yet it is obvious this man is changed by his experience with this humble Albanian woman in a simple white sari. The book itself is broken down into nine chapters plus an Epilogue, written in only 152 pages, with colour pictures included. The last chapter of the book contains "vocabulary of love," touching and very powerful words spoken by Mother Teresa on topics ranging from prayer, love and faith to her views on work, abortion and death.

Mother Teresa's life is an example of a human being who lived in true religious freedom. As one priest commented, "She is completely free. She had to be, or else she could not have done the things she has." While being a woman of sincere love and action, the reader comes to see that Mother Teresa is by no means, a soft woman. She has to have a lot of strength to overcome all the opposition and difficulties that presented themselves in her work, even having her life threatened on several occasions by those who opposed her. However, she is quoted as saying, "true love hurts." Mother Teresa knew full well that it is never easy to love genuinely and truly. While the book was written twenty-one years before her death, and does not cover the last portion of her earthly life, one still gets an incredible portrait of what this woman was all about. Reading this book gave me a greater understanding and deeper appreciation for all those people fighting for God and for a better world, seeing how much this woman overcame, without faltering, because her motivation was always a spiritual one. "I want very much [for] people to come to know God, to love Him, to serve Him, for that is true happiness. And what I have I want everyone in the world to have." Mother Teresa, in the final pages of the book, leaves the author and the reader with very simple yet powerful instructions: "God loves you with a special love. Love others as He loves you." For this is the way she lived her life.