

## "Catholic" Sex Educator Patricia F. Miller — Revisited

By JAMES LIKOUDIS

Some years ago, Catholics United for the Faith (CUF) made available a review by Buffalo, N.Y., Catholic parents of Patricia F. Miller's sex education program entitled *In God's Image: Male and Female — A Catholic View of Human Sexuality*. Originally published by Franciscan Communications, the program consisted of 23 explicit and invasive videos accompanied by student worksheets, *Teacher's Manual*, a book for parents, etc. It carried the approval of Archbishop Roger Mahony of Los Angeles.

For years, Mrs. Miller has been lauded as one of the nation's leading Catholic experts on "sexuality education" with her articles appearing in diocesan newspapers, Catholic magazines, and her religious education workshops praised by various bishops. The author of two widely distributed books *Parent to Parent* and *Sex Is Not a Four-Letter Word*, she had also served as a human sexuality consultant for the United States Catholic Conference and apparently even had input into one of the USCC's documents on sex education. One archbishop wrote that "she is in good standing with the Archdiocese of St. Louis where she lives. She uses the documents of the Vatican and the U.S. bishops in her work."

I recall writing a letter to the editor of *The St. Louis Review* taking issue with an article Miller had written. I had taken the occasion to emphasize that a public classroom can never be the appropriate setting for the sexual instruction of youth in sexual organs, sexual acts, and sexual perversions. The letter was never printed. Similarly, when Alice Ann Grayson who has written extensively on the virtue of chastity, wrote a letter to the editor of *The Boston Pilot* noting that Miller's sex education program and view of sexuality was destructive of modesty and chastity, it met the same fate. Apparently, a leading icon of the Catholic sex education movement was not to be challenged.

An NFP coordinator for the Diocese of La Crosse voiced the sentiments of those eager to support Mrs. Miller's kind of classroom sex instruction in Catholic schools — no matter how such programs violate the rights of parents. She wrote: "We have viewed many programs on sexuality education and have found the majority of them lacking in faith dimension or offensive and

insensitive in their presentation. This program, however, was both sensitive and faith-filled. That is our personal evaluation and the reason why we requested funding for it from the Diocesan Council of Catholic Women. Some priests in the diocese have purchased the program on their own and are using it exclusively in their sexuality education programs in the schools and are very impressed."

The Buffalo Parents' Committee which reviewed Mrs. Miller's videos and materials was not impressed. After detailed criticism, it concluded: "Its 'God-talk' lacks depth and doctrinal solidity and realism — with Jesus sort of tacked on — all this amounting to a serious catechetical failure. In its clinical-sexological assault on the modesty of children, it represents a real perversion of that education in chastity desired by the Catholic Church." The word "perversion" was not lightly used.

Only recently did a friend send me a copy of Mrs. Miller's 1994 book *Sex Is Not a Four-Letter Word: Talking Sex With Your Children Made Easier* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Co.). It fully reinforces the views of the Buffalo parents who found objectionable and unacceptable Mrs. Miller's views on masturbation, contraception, and homosexuality — all of which stemmed from her "pathological trivialization of the mystery of sex." Reading her book certainly helps explain the moral corruption that has won its way into the Church via educators who had abandoned Catholic morality for the lax, permissive, and pagan views of apostate Jews and Christians and modern "enlightened" secular humanists. The book witnesses, if there were still need, to Mrs. Miller's clever distortions of Catholic teaching and to her providing plenty of excuses for Catholics to practice masturbation, contraception, and sodomy. Here are but a few of the spiritual gems found in *Sex Is Not a Four-Letter Word*:

1) "We know that modern medical opinion is clear that there is no physical harm in masturbating. Keeping this in mind, the loving parent will respect the young teen's right to privacy. Only if the behavior becomes obsessive or abusive should the parent express concern to the adolescent. Masturbation is not an issue in many religions" (p. 85).

2) "My suggestion would then be to have a condom in your possession and proceed to show your teenager how to use it properly. You can use your fingers to show the proper way to roll the condom on" (p. 180).

3) "As it has been aptly put, 'We are all part of the mystical body of Christ, and part of our body is homosexual.'" (In her typical nonjudgmental manner, Mrs. Miller praises and recommends such pro-homosexual groups as Dignity, Pflag, and New Ways Ministry, and has only kind words for those homosexuals who "live in committed monogamous relationships" (pp. 112-125).

4) "But God does have His/Her way with us" (p. 109).

Viewed in the context of Catholic doctrine and Catholic moral teaching, much of Patricia F. Miller's "instruction in human sexuality" is erroneous and, quite simply, disgusting.

Interestingly, she thinks the pastoral letters on homosexuality by Archbishops John Quinn and Rembert Weakland support her opinions on morality. But there can be no question that she found comfort and support in the works of her fellow dissenters: Lisa Sowle Cahill, Fr. James DiGiacomo, Fr. Andrew Guindon, Fr. Philip Keane, Fr. Anthony Kosnik, Fr. Robert Nugent and Sr. Jeannine Gramick, the Rochester Diocese's Susan K. Sullivan and Fr. Matthew A. Kawiak, Joan Timmerman, ex-priest Eugene Kennedy, and James and Evelyn Whitehead. Their books at odds with Catholic teaching (some had their imprimaturs withdrawn by Rome) are prominently displayed in her bibliography as are the writings of the pagan sexologists and sex education fanatics active in SIECUS, AASECT, and Planned Parenthood.

One may well wonder how many Catholic dioceses still use in their schools Miller's *In God's Image* video sex education program, invite her for yet more workshops and seminars, and continue to ignore implementation of the Pontifical Council for the Family's magnificent document *The Truth and Meaning of Human Sexuality* which calls for the outright removal of inappropriate classroom sex instruction programs from Catholic schools.