

By Staff of The Catholic Free Press

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The Cardinal Newman Society, in cooperation with St. Paul Cathedral and the diocesan Respect Life Office, will host a talk at 7 p.m. Tuesday by Dawn Eden in the Cenacle Room at the cathedral.

The meeting is open to the public.

Miss Eden is director of the Love & Responsibility Program at the Newman Society in Manassas, Va., and the author of "The Thrill of the Chaste." She will detail how Church teaching on chastity offers a solution, not only to the problem of teen pregnancy but also to the wider problem of family breakdown, according to the Cardinal Newman Society. The Society said that "abortion, contraception and other 'solutions' offered by Planned Parenthood and their allies exacerbate those problems."

Miss Eden will place the issue, in accordance with Church teachings, into the context of what steps Catholic colleges can and should take to promote Catholic values on life, love and sexuality, the Newman Society said.

Miss Eden's appearance comes the evening before a Wednesday conference in the Hogan Campus Center at the College of the Holy Cross, sponsored by the Massachusetts Alliance on Teen Pregnancy.

Bishop McManus has asked Father Michael C. McFarland, S. J., president of Holy Cross, to revoke the college's agreement to rent space to the Alliance for the conference.

The bishop said the conference will involve "workshops presented by members of Planned Parenthood and NARAL Pro-Choice Massachusetts. Both organizations promote positions on artificial contraception and abortion that are contrary to the moral teachings of the Catholic Church."

The bishop said that he strongly contends "that the confusion and upset to the Catholic faithful and others that flow from the perception that the administration of the College of the Holy Cross supports positions contrary to the moral teachings of the Church must be avoided."

Father McFarland said in reply that Holy Cross will honor its contractual obligation to rent Hogan Center to the Alliance. But, he said, the college "in no way supports or endorses Planned Parenthood, NARAL or other organizations that engage in or promote practices contrary to the teachings of the Catholic Church."

He also said the college has no affiliation with the Alliance and that no college administrators, faculty members or students "are involved in developing conference content."

Judie Brown, president of the American Life League, reacted to Father MacFarland's decision to refuse to revoke the Alliance's contract in a message to members.

"Bishop Robert McManus called for the event's cancellation," she wrote. "But the college claims they are not supporting Planned Parenthood's agenda. Holy Cross is earning \$10,000 for this conference!! And they will not let us interview the president, Rev. Michael C. McFarland.

"Right now we're sending a media crew to Massachusetts. American Life League will talk directly with people at the college. We'll ask the tough questions. And we'll give YOU the college's answers!!"

She asked that people pray that Father MacFarland "will cancel this scandalous event."

Vic Melfa, a member of the Holy Cross Class of 1957 and president of the Holy Cross Cardinal Newman Society asked, in a letter to alumni and friends that those who do not agree with Father MacFarland's decision "send an e-mail to the chairman of the board of trustees of Holy Cross, Dr. Michael Collins, in care of Students For Life at holycross@studentsforlife.org, They will also forward it to the papal nuncio, the bishop of Worcester, all the trustees of Holy Cross, the leader of the Jesuit order in the United States and in Rome, and to Father McFarland.

Mr. Melfa charged that the sponsors and speakers from organizations including: Planned Parenthood, NARAL (National Abortion Rights Action League), and Judicial Consent for Minors Lawyer Referral Panel are "opposed to federal funding of abstinence- until-marriage programs, leading provider of comprehensive sex information, a sex therapist focused on explicit information (sometimes labeled sex toys), runs abortion clinics in Worcester and throughout the country, advocate for accessible abortions, and assistance for minors in getting court approval for abortions.

"There are no speakers who promote chastity or abstinence before marriage, no pro-life speakers, no speakers from the Catholic point of view," he said.

"Gov. Deval Patrick, who refused \$700,000 in funds for abstinence education, will be given their Leadership Award," he said.

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