

The Approach of *Fully Alive*

Adults in every society want to share with their young the wisdom they have gained from living and from reflecting on their life experiences. This is, of course, the special privilege and responsibility of parents, but it is also the responsibility of the whole community to support their efforts. *Fully Alive* was created to help Catholic parents teach their children to be fully human. Its focus is on the ordinary experiences of daily life—family relationships, friendships, marriage, birth, death, joys, and disappointments.

Much of the writing in the Wisdom books of the Old Testament reflects this desire to teach the art of daily living. Wisdom, whether it be from the time of the Old or New Testament, is largely based on the human experience of believers. The writers of many of the Wisdom Books seldom speak of the Exodus, the Ten Commandments, and the teachings of Moses. They took it for granted that the message of revelation was known; they wanted to communicate what had been learned through long experience in daily life. They strongly believed that God, who had placed intelligence in human beings, could also make his ways known through intelligent reflection on life.

Fully Alive is designed to provide children and their families an opportunity to reflect on and be guided by the wisdom drawn from Christian human experience. The program always presumes the message of revelation and, when needed, Catholic doctrine and morals are explicitly presented. This relationship between wisdom based on the experience of believers and Church teaching is important to the program. Teaching children about the revealed will of God is an essential aspect of *Fully Alive*. Human experience indicates, however, that children who are well loved, who have developed trust in others, and who can communicate personal thoughts and feelings will be more receptive to God's will. *Fully Alive* encourages children to reflect on the

fact that they are loved, to open themselves to others, and to value their lives as unique manifestations of the Creator's love.