

Priest's an expert on the Scriptures



BILL BRESLER/staff photographer

The Rev. John Castelot shares his condominium with Tiger, his beloved Yorkie dog. Castelot, who serves during weekend Masses at St. Edith Catholic Church in Livonia, is an authority on the Scriptures.

By Ariane Funke
special writer

The Rev. John Castelot is a retired priest, but his crowded schedule tells a different story.

Castelot, 73, has spent his career studying and teaching on the Scriptures. Now, four years after retiring from the faculty at St. John Seminary in Plymouth Township, Castelot talks to church groups several times weekly about biblical topics.

"The Scriptures are a common bond for all Christians," Castelot said. "I try to awaken an interest so people will read with more understanding and will want to follow up with additional courses."

Castelot — Father Jack to those who know him well — is a slight man with white hair and a dry wit. He shares his Plymouth Township condominium with his beloved Yorkie dog, Tiger.

"I'm so busy, Tiger is going to sue for neglect," jokes Castelot, tossing a soft, worn shoe to the dog.

CASTELOTT SERVES during the weekend Masses at St. Edith Catholic Church in Livonia and teaches one day a week at the Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit. He writes two weekly columns — one for the Michigan Catholic newspaper and another for a syndicate based in Washington, D.C. The topics are related to the Scriptures.

Castelot's speaking engagements take him all over the metropolitan Detroit area. He's booked solid for the next several months. Although most of his visits are to Catholic churches, he also speaks at Protestant churches.

"It's an ecumenical venture," Castelot said. "The interest in the Scriptures is growing. That's very gratifying."

Castelot, a native of Connecticut, draws on years of study both in the United States and abroad. An early professor inspired Castelot to specialize in the Scriptures.

Castelot earned a master of arts degree in philosophy and a doctorate in theology. He studied at the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome and has learned Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek in order to be able to read ancient texts.

Castelot, who is certified to teach Scriptures at the graduate level, has been to the Holy Land four times. He has taken field trips to Israel, Lebanon, Egypt, Syria and Jordan.

CASTELOTT CAME to St. John Seminary when it opened in 1949 ("I came with the furniture"). He taught the seminarians who attended school there. St. John closed in the late 1980s.

The Rev. Ronald Babich of St. Hilary Catholic Church in Redford is just one of many former students who have called on Castelot. Babich recalls his teacher as a popular, knowledgeable instructor who "talks from the heart."

Around two years ago, shortly after he was assigned to St. Hilary, Babich asked Castelot to speak to the church's parish council.

"People were asking all kinds of questions," said Babich, 40, who was ordained in 1977. "He (Castelot) felt there was a hunger in the parish for that information."

Babich booked Castelot to give a

six-session overview of the Scriptures.

"We had to wait a year," Babich said. "He was booked up."

Those sessions last fall were well-attended, Babich said. And Castelot has been engaged to return to St. Hilary next September for a series on the Gospel of Mark.

Castelot is well-versed in both Old Testament and New Testament subjects. Does he have a favorite?

"It's hard to decide," Castelot said. "They're all so good. I'm partial to the Gospel of Luke. I like his portrayal of Christ's compassion."

HE TRIES to give his audiences both historical and religious perspectives, but admits he's always "fighting the clock and the calendar."

When he talks about the Old Testament prophets, he places them against the backdrop of the period's wars, famines and floods. The writings of St. Paul give much insight into the life of early Christians practicing an outlawed religion.

According to Castelot, Paul was a well-educated Jew who had a religious experience around 37 A.D. Paul embraced Jesus' teachings. For the next 30 years, Paul traveled through what is now Turkey and Greece preaching to early Christians. Paul was frequently imprisoned and was martyred in Rome around 67 A.D.

"He was an intellectual giant," Castelot said. "He had a complex personality. He was a Jew by birth, by temperament and by education."

"All the first Christians remained Jews, even as Christians," Castelot said. "He saw Judaism in a different way because of Christ."

Castelot, who has been giving

'The Scriptures are a common bond for all Christians. I try to awaken an interest so people will read with more understanding and will want to follow up with additional courses.'

— The Rev. John Castelot

talks for around 20 years, attributes much of the interest in the Scriptures to changes which have occurred in Catholicism since the Vatican II Council during the early 1960s.

More laypeople have become involved as lecturers and servers. The Scripture readings were increased from two to three selections and placed on a three-year rotation.

"People are hearing parts of the Bible they never knew existed," Castelot said. "People feel much more involved. They are participants, rather than spectators. They are interested in their faith and in knowing about it."

"It was slow at first," Castelot added. "If I had 15 to 30 people, it was a crowd. Now it isn't unusual to draw 100 to 125 people."

Castelot keeps fresh by staying up-to-date with his reading. And he has the challenge of speaking to new audiences all the time.

"It's tiring," he said. "I'm not a kid anymore. But I enjoy the teaching."

church bulletin

The church bulletin is published every Thursday in The Observer. Information must be received in the Livonia office by noon the Monday prior to publication.

Fashion show

Saint Helen Philoptochos Society of Sts. Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church in Westland will have its 32nd annual dinner and fashion show, "Cruise — ing into the '90s" at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, March 15. Admission price is \$30 per person. Proceeds will toward charity, including the Pontiac Rescue Mission, shelters for homeless women and children and Headstart. For reservations, call 937-3392 or 278-3857.

Hunger group

Bread for the World, an interdenominational hunger issues group, will have a training session for its annual "Offering of Letters" campaign 7:30 p.m. Thursday, March 15, at Memorial Christian Church, corner of Hill and Tappan, Ann Arbor. The campaign is designed to encourage church members to offer letters to Congress asking legislators to support hunger-ending legislation. For information, call 487-9058.

Nicaraguan elections

The Rev. John Wallace, pastor of Lola Valley United Methodist Church, will show slides and talk about his recent experience as an observer of the electoral process. The program will be held 4-6 p.m. Sunday, March 18, at Lola Valley Church, 16175 Delaware, Redford. For information, call 255-6330.

Choir concert

The Manchester College A Cappella Choir will perform 8 p.m. Wednesday, March 21, at the Trinity Church of the Brethren, 27350 W. Chicago, near Inkster Road, Redford. Included on the program will be sacred works from the Renaissance through the 20th century. The 40-voice choir is conducted by Dr. Patricia Cahalan. Manchester College is a four-year liberal arts college in North Manchester, Ind.

Radio rally

The radio staff of the "Children's Bible Hour" from Grand Rapids will be in the area for a radio rally 7 p.m. Saturday, March 17, at Berean Baptist Church, 38303 Eight Mile, Livonia. Everyone who is heard on the weekly radio broadcast will be on

hand. The program will also include a dramatized story, presented just as it is done for radio, and Christian music. Admission is free, but a freewill offering will be taken. For information, call 477-6365.

Dinner concert

Rosedale Gardens Presbyterian Church, on West Chicago between Merriman and Farmington Roads, will present a dinner concert featuring the Schoolcraft College Community Choir at 6 p.m. Sunday, March 18.

The Schoolcraft Choir is celebrating 25 years of musical excellence as its 70-voice ensemble performs its seasonal, choral. This performance at Rosedale Church will be preceded by a full-course "Spaghetti Supreme" dinner sponsored by the Rosedale Senior High.

Tickets are \$3.50 for adults; \$1.50 for children ages 7-12; kids under 7 eat free. All proceeds go to the Senior High's Summer Youth Mission. For information, call 422-0494.

Family concert

Calvary Baptist Church, 43065 Joy, Canton, will host The Jon Case Family in concert at 6 p.m. Sunday,

March 18. Admission is free, but a freewill offering will be taken. A nursery will be provided. For information, call 455-0022.

Guest speaker

Aldersgate United Methodist Church, 10000 Beech Daly, Redford, will feature the Rev. Bill Wager as the speaker at the special Lenten service at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 21. There will be a potluck dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Wager served as pastor at Aldersgate United Methodist Church for 14 years, from 1966 to 1980. He's since retired from ministry. He lives in Port Huron with his wife, Noreen. The next session of the annual conference will mark the 52nd anniversary of Wager ministry's in the United Methodist Church.

Jazz Ensemble

An evening of contemporary jazz will be presented at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 31, at the St. Aidan Activity Center, 17500 Farmington Road, Livonia. Wayne State University Professor Dennis Timi's Jazz Ensemble will perform. He will perform at the piano, with George Benson on sax, Don Mayberry on bass

and Tom Brown on drums. Donation is \$5, and tickets will be available at the door. The concert will be presented by the St. Aidan Cultural Society. For information, call 471-5158.

Oratorio Society

The Plymouth Oratorio Society will perform J.S. Bach's "The Passion According to St. John" at 7:30 p.m. Sunday, April 1. The performance will be in the sanctuary of the First United Methodist Church of Plymouth, 45201 N. Territorial. Admission will be free of charge, and a freewill offering will be taken. This is the fourth season for the Plymouth Oratorio Society, a group formed to perform a major choral work each spring. The ecumenical chorus draws 80 singers from 14 communi-

ties and 26 churches. The public may attend the performance.

Life Care Ministries

People who have a problem and need someone to talk to can call a Christian telephone listening service operated by Life Care Ministries. The service is operated noon to 11 p.m. Monday through Saturday. The phone number is 427-LIFE.

Anniversary

Good Hope Lutheran Church, 28680 Cherry Hill, Garden City, will have special worship services 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Sunday, March 18, to celebrate its 35th anniversary. Services will be followed by a dinner-dance 4-10 p.m. at Roma's of Garden City. Former members can call the church office, 427-3660, for information.

moral perspectives



Rev. Robert Schaden

Violence can't be contained

A recent story out of the Middle East concerned the death of a child who fell victim to a soldier's weapon. It seems that the soldier in question had acted contrary to a law that forbids the firing of a weapon around women or children. Despite the atrocities that have left women and children as dead as any combatant, attempts to protect women and children are almost as old as war itself.

I too pay lip service to the value of protecting women and children. Despite the debate over the role of women in combat and the use of children in some of this world's armies, I believe that efforts to protect women and children are good. However, there is a downside to policies in that direction.

The implication is that violence toward grown men is quite acceptable. What would happen if when dropping in on places like Panama or funding violence south of our borders we showed a deeper reverence for people, period?

THERE WILL forever be a danger in choosing certain groups for the reverence that is due to all people. For one thing, such a process does subtly endorse withholding reverence from those who are not so chosen. At the same time, we eventually cross the lines that we ourselves have set up. The policy becomes modified to one of protecting women and children if doing so does not threaten an objective.

There are many widows and orphans in Central America who may have been protected while their husbands and fathers were shot. Now they are alone and dependent and scared and very unprotected. When the Jesuits were slaughtered

in El Salvador, the woman who kept house for them was also murdered along with her daughter. When we continue to fund El Salvador to the tune of \$1 million a day, one does wonder whether our talk of being for the protection of women and children is little more than reading our own lips.

When we were little kids, we were told that we could not play with matches. The reasoning was sound: Fire gets out of control and we would end up burning down more than we intended. Violence, like fire, is almost impossible to contain.

We all become abhorred when we hear of rape, child abuse and now another form of non-reverence, the abuse of elderly people. Yet the truth that violence cannot be contained and reverence cannot be parcelled seems to slip by us.

LITTLE KIDS should not play with matches but big folks should not play with violence. When they do, little kids get hurt and die. What happened in the Middle East is also happening in our streets and kitchens and family rooms. Only when a real reverence is shown for everyone will it become the responsibility for anyone. As long as it is OK to do violence to anyone, life will continue to be cheap for everyone.

I'm sick of tales of blood and guts. Yet picking up my children from the streets is a daily reality. I wonder if it is possible to have men of the cloth who are not ministers of violence. The Rev. Robert Schaden is the pastor of St. Edith Catholic Church in Livonia.

Your Invitation to Worship

<p>ASSEMBLIES OF GOD</p> <p>Brightmoor Tabernacle Assemblies of God 26555 Franklin Rd. - Southfield, MI (1-896 & Telegraph - West of Holiday Inn) A Charismatic Church where people of many denominations worship together. MORNING WORSHIP 8:30 A.M. & 11:00 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL 10:30 A.M. Celebration of Praise - 6:30 P.M. 7:30 P.M. Wed. Adult, Youth & Children 11:00 A.M. Worship Service "Live" on WFOV 105.9 AM Franklin Road Christian School K-Grade 6 Church: 352-6200 Nursery provided at all services KENNETH R. MCGEE, PASTOR Need Prayer?: 352-6205</p>		<p>EPISCOPAL</p> <p>EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT 9083 Newburgh Road Livonia - 591-0211 The Rev. Emery F. Gravelle, Vicar Services 8:30 A.M. Holy Eucharist 9:30 A.M. Adult Christian Education 10:30 A.M. Family Eucharist & Sunday School A Barrier Free Facility for the Handicapped</p>	
<p>FAIRLANE ASSEMBLY WEST (Assemblies of God) 41355 Six Mile Rd., Northville Sunday Worship 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. & 6:30 p.m. Fairlane West Christian School Preschool & K-6 348-9031</p>		<p>NON-DENOMINATIONAL</p> <p>UNITY of LIVONIA Publisher of the "Daily Word" Sundays 9:30 & 11:00 A.M. Sunday's Lenten Lesson "Finding Oneness at Last" 3/17 St. Patrick's Day Potluck on Sat. at 6:30 P.M. 28660 Five Mile Rd. 421-1760 Dial a Positive Thought. 261-2440</p>	
<p>UNITED ASSEMBLY OF GOD 48500 N. Territorial Rd., Plymouth (between Stratton & Beech Aves.) 483-6630 Sunday School 10:00 A.M. Morning Worship 11:00 A.M. Evening Worship 6:30 P.M. Wed. Family Night 7:00 P.M. Jack R. Williams, Pastor</p>		<p>PENTECOSTAL</p> <p>FULL GOSPEL CHURCH OF PLYMOUTH 291 E. SPRING ST. 3 Books of Math 2 Books E 1:10 SUNDAY WEDNESDAY Bible School 10:00 A.M. Bible Study - 6:30 P.M. Worship 11:00 A.M. and 6:00 P.M. (Closed for 49 days) (Nursery Provided in A.M.) Pastor Frank Howard - Ch. 483-4225 - Hm. 689-9900</p>	
<p>FREE METHODIST</p> <p>CANTON FREE METHODIST 44815 Cherry Hill Rd. 881-6360 WORSHIP 11:00 A.M. SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 A.M. NURSERY PROVIDED VISITORS WELCOME</p>		<p>CHURCHES OF THE NAZARENE</p> <p>PLYMOUTH CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE 45801 W. Ann Arbor Road Plymouth, Michigan 48170 (313) 453-1525 Sunday Worship 11:00 A.M. & 6:00 P.M. at Pioneer Middle School Sunday School at 9:45 A.M. Tues. Ladies' Bible Study - 9:30 A.M. Wed. Family Night - 7:00 P.M. 1 Mark Barnes - Senior Pastor Robert King - Minister of Youth James Talbot - Minister of Music New Horizons for Children Day Care 455-3196</p>	
<p>CHRISTADELPHIANS</p> <p>CHRISTADELPHIANS Sunday Memorial Service 10:00 A.M. Wednesday Night Bible Class 8:00 P.M. April 7, 7:00 P.M. "What is Happening in Europe?" 28616 Parkdale, Livonia - 485-7610</p>		<p>CHRISTIAN CHURCHES</p> <p>WEST SIDE CHRISTIAN CHURCH Plymouth Christian High Joy Road & Canton Center 484-4007 Worship Services 10:00 A.M. Sunday School 10:30 A.M. Sunday Evening Youth Program 6:00 P.M. Friday Bible Study Donald Paul, Minister - Nursery Provided</p>	