

# **BISHOPS' COMMITTEE FOR THE FAMILY AND FOR LIFE**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Discovering the Theology of the Body**

"What if I told you that the key to understanding God's plan for human life is to go behind the fig leaves and behold the human body, naked and without shame?"

"What if I told you that the only way to see the invisible mystery of God is through the vision of the human body in its masculinity and femininity?"

"What if I told you that the Christian mystery itself is simply unintelligible unless we understand the meaning of sexual difference and our call to sexual union?"

"You'd probably think I was a bit obsessed with sex and naked bodies. You might even think I've been corrupted by our pagan, pornographic culture."

"Understandable. But what if Pope John Paul II was telling you these things?"

Internationally renowned speaker Christopher West says these, among other things, are what we learn from the first major catechetical project of John Paul II's pontificate known as the Theology of the Body.

Mr West, who lives with his family in Colorado, USA, will bring his knowledge on the subject to Australia in March and April for public talks and seminars.

"In this collection of 129 audience addresses delivered between September 1979 and November 1984, John Paul developed what promises to be one of his most enduring and important contributions to the Church and the world," he said.

"The theology of the body is a scriptural reflection on the human experience of embodiment connected as it is with erotic desire and our longing for union."

Mr West is the author of two books and numerous articles on the topic. He was an acclaimed speaker at the 'Dare to Dream' National Family Gathering in Melbourne in 2000 and is a visiting professor at Melbourne's John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and the Family.

His visit to Australia is sponsored by the John Paul II Institute, the Billings Family Life Centre and the Family Working Group of the Bishops' Committee for the Family and for Life.

In Melbourne, Mr West will be keynote speaker at the Billings Family Life Centre's annual conference and will deliver a series of lectures at the JP II Institute from March 10 to 31. He will also give a public talk on Saturday, March 22 at Central Hall in Fitzroy at 7.30pm with a suggested donation of \$20.

In Sydney, Mr West will give a one-day seminar on the Theology of the Body at the Lidcombe Catholic Club on Tuesday, April 1, followed by a public talk on Wednesday, April 2 at 7.30pm, at the same venue, with a suggested donation of \$15.

For more information contact the John Paul II Institute (Melbourne) on (03) 9417 4349 or Ron and Mavis Pirola (Sydney) on (02) 9349 1710.