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Food-Borne Illnesses, Safety Legislation Focus of Talk by UD Alumna

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Jan. 22, 2003
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NEWS RELEASE

**FOOD-BORNE ILLNESSES, SAFETY LEGISLATION
 FOCUS OF TALK BY UD ALUMNA**

DAYTON, Ohio — The recent salmonella outbreak in Greene and surrounding counties has raised awareness of food-borne illnesses among area businesses and consumers. Barbara Kowalcyk, a 1991 graduate of the University of Dayton, plans to spread the message among students on UD's campus.

Kowalcyk, who recently joined the board of directors of Safe Tables Our Priority, a nonprofit food safety advocacy group, will discuss her personal experience with food-borne illness at 6:15 p.m. Monday, Jan. 27, in Sears Auditorium in the Jesse Philips Humanities Center. She joined S.T.O.P. after she lost her 2 1/2 year-old son Kevin to E. Coli O157:H7 in August 2001.

The event is sponsored by the Center for Social Concern on campus.

Kowalcyk will be joined by Laura Day, also a member of S.T.O.P.'s board of directors and a victim of food-borne illness as a college student at the University of Alabama. Both will also address the national grassroots efforts to implement federal laws enforcing tougher food safety standards in the meat industry.

The Centers for Disease Control estimates that E. Coli O157:H7, salmonella and other food-borne illnesses cause 76 million illnesses, 325,000 hospitalizations and 5,000 deaths each year in the United States.

Kowalcyk said college students, in particular, should be aware of the risks of unsafe food production and handling. "College students are often cooking for themselves for the first time, so they are at greater risk for using unsafe food preparation practices. They also tend to eat out more — another risk factor for food-borne illness," she said.

Earlier in the day, Kowalcyk and Day will discuss the food production industry with students enrolled in a junior-level business ethics course taught by Andrew Slade, instructor in the philosophy department.

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For media interviews, contact **Barbara Kowalcyk** at (608) 437-4358 or bbkowalcyk@cs.com.

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Sister Rose Pacatte, FSP, director of the Pauline Center for Media Studies in Culver City, Calif., and one of 42 VLCFF facilitators located across the country. "The discipline can now arrive at the homes or workplaces of people who seriously want to develop their faith learning, and across miles we can enter into dialogue about what matters most to us."

Classes are kept small, with enrollment capped at 12 to preserve interaction between facilitators and participants, who need an Internet connection and e-mail to take part. Students generally spend about 25 hours during the five weeks reading, writing reflections and exchanging ideas by posting on the course discussion board.

It's a program that complements the educational programs offered in parishes.

"Despite our emphasis in this country on parish programs for children, Christianity is a religion for adults," said Carol Ann Cannon, facilitator and course designer for VLCFF. "So a parent's understanding of faith may come from when they had classes as children, and many adults seldom move beyond that point. But when parents are involved in some form of education for themselves, so much more is passed on to children, especially the idea that learning is a lifelong process."

Diocese officials find, at \$3,000 a year, the VLCFF program is an efficient and cost-effective way to meet educational needs, said Sister Angela Ann Zukowski, M.H.S.H., director of UD's institute and creator of the program.

"The financial situation of dioceses is of concern to us all," she said. "Many are cutting back on religious education or ministry budgets. In one sense, this is why dioceses partner with us, to offer complementary and alternative outreach opportunities in their dioceses to support and advance their pastoral service."

The Institute for Pastoral Initiatives plans to pilot a three-week online seminar this summer for those who can't commit to even a five-week schedule. The first will focus on the church document on adult faith formation, "Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us." Later seminars may focus on other church documents, social justice or emerging pastoral needs and issues identified by the VLCFF diocesan partners.

"The classes help me grow in my own faith because the students' lives and insights are so full, rich and faith-filled," Pacatte said. "I am so inspired. The students take the time, put in so much effort and really engage. What a witness to how much their faith means to them."

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For media interviews, contact the **Rev. Anthony Bosco** at (724) 837-0901 or abosco@dioceseofgreensburg.org; **Sister Rose Pacatte, FSP**, at (310) 636-8385 or RosePacatte@pauline.org; **Carol Ann Cannon** at (937) 429-3235 or cacannon@coax.net; and **Sister Angela Ann Zukowski, M.H.S.H.**, at (937) 229-3126 or angela.zukowski@notes.udayton.edu.