The Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Religion

presents

The Family Forum Series
2003–2004

Focusing on issues of children in crisis.
All events are free and open to the public.

featuring

Martin E. Marty

Robert W. Woodruff Visiting Professor of
Interdisciplinary Religious Studies at Emory University

The Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Religion brings together
diverse academic perspectives to explore the influence of
religious traditions on law, politics, society, and culture.
Martin Marty to Lead Family Forum Series

Renowned church historian and author Martin E. Marty is hosting an impressive lineup of speakers to debate the issues of children in crisis during the 2003-2004 Family Forum Series sponsored by the Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Religion (CISR) at Emory University.

Marty, recently appointed Emory's second Robert W. Woodruff Visiting Professor of Interdisciplinary Religious Studies, takes the stage with President Jimmy Carter, former Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director William H. Foege, and Habitat for Humanity International's founder and president, Millard Fuller, among others. Marty is in residence at the CISR for the 2003-2004 academic year, where he is codirecting its new project, The Child in Law, Religion, and Society (see story below).

CISR Director John Witte Jr. describes Marty's appointment as "a great coup" for Emory and the CISR. "Never before have I encountered a scholar with such boundless and bracing energy, or such a lively and learned pett."

Marty is the Fairfax M. Cone Distinguished Professor Emeritus at the University of Chicago where he has taught for thirty-five years and where the Martin Marty Center has been founded to promote "public religion" endeavors. Time magazine has called him the "most influential interpreter of religion" in the nation. He is the author of more than seventy books, including a National Book Award winner and several classics in the field of American religious history. He recently retired as senior editor of The Christian Century and still edits Context, a newsletter dealing with the role of religion in public life.

The Child in Law, Religion, and Society

Newsweek magazine carried a major story on "lost children" in the United States in 1997. These were children born in poverty and in broken households, and more likely than not they were expected to drop out of school, out of step, and then out of society altogether. At the time, that number exceeded 15 million little souls. The number would double in two decades, the story predicted, unless states and churches, agencies and academies gave children a new priority.

The Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Religion (CISR) at Emory University is giving children a new priority in a major three-year study on The Child in Law, Religion, and Society. The project, which commenced in August 2003, involves two dozen senior faculty from around the Emory campus, including the School of Law's new Robert W. Woodruff Professor Martha A. Fineman, CISR Director John Witte Jr. and Martin E. Marty, Robert W. Woodruff Visiting Professor of Interdisciplinary Religious Studies, are leading the project.

The project involves an intense faculty seminar and five public forums each year. It will culminate in a major international conference in 2006 and a new series of volumes.

The focus is on children qua children—in their being and becoming, in their birth and growth. The project will study the rites and rights attached to birthing and naming, baptism and circumcision, education and discipline. It will study the steps and stages in a child's physical, emotional, sexual, moral, and spiritual formation, and the rituals and ordeals and the rights and responsibilities that attach to each. It will study the pathos of child abuse and rape, child poverty and homelessness, juvenile delinquency and violence, illegitimacy and infanticide. And the project will study the mystery of the child—that combination of innocence and imagination, acuity and candor, empathy and healing, sharing and caring that uniquely become a child.

As the project's codirector, Marty says he is seeking to raise broad questions that scholars of all disciplines will find relevant to their research. "In the study of children, we usually start with problem children," he observes. "But how do children who are adventurous and full of character and assertive and who know when not to be assertive get that way? They're raised in the same culture as everyone else. I'm interested in what exists in nature/nurture, genes/environment/life experiences that presents these qualities. If we can come up with some observations, that would be useful."
September 22, 2003

"Who Cares for the Children?"

Martha A. Fineman, Robert W. Woodruff Professor of Law, Emory University

Moderator: Martin E. Marty
Time: Noon–1:30 p.m.
Location: Tull Auditorium, Emory University School of Law

October 14, 2003

"What Happens to Children in Peril?"

Presenters: President Jimmy Carter and Martin E. Marty

Time: 2:00–3:15 p.m.
Location: Tull Auditorium, Emory University School of Law

October 27, 2003

"Children: Will We Ever Get It Right?"

Presenter: William H. Foege, former director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Respondent: Martin E. Marty
Time: Noon–1:30 p.m.
Location: Tull Auditorium, Emory University School of Law

Sponsors: Emory’s Law and Religion Program, the CISR, the Barton Child Law and Policy Clinic, the Task Force for Child Survival and Development, and the Emory University School of Law

February 17, 2004

"Where Do the Children Live?"

Presenters: Millard Fuller, founder and president of Habitat for Humanity International, and Martin E. Marty

Moderator: Frank Alexander, professor of law, Emory University
Time: 6:30–8:00 p.m.
Location: Tull Auditorium, Emory University School of Law
The CISR was established at Emory University in the fall of 2000 to stimulate and support advanced research and education on religious themes. The CISR serves, in part, to elevate multiple pockets of religious inquiry, to bring them into greater interaction and synergy, and to enhance some of their common themes. It sponsors research fellowships, faculty seminars, cross-listed courses, scholarly projects and publications, and public lectures and conferences. The CISR is administered by the Law and Religion Program, a companion organization at Emory University.

The CISR is one of The Pew Charitable Trusts' Centers of Excellence, designed to encourage study of the many ways in which religion influences contemporary life.

For more information, go to www.law.emory.edu/cisr or call 404.712.8710.