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IN THIS ISSUE:

- \* Patterson one of 3 interviewed for Southeastern presidency
- \* Noriega 'shocked' by guilty verdict
- \* Sherman predicts Fellowship will hire 20-plus missionaries in 1993
- \* Richmond seminary approves new faculty members, \$1 million budget
- \* BWA conference challenges Baptists to establish churches worldwide
- \* Baptists worldwide report starting new churches
- \* BJC extends deadline for conciliation offer
- \* Rump congress in Peru installs Baptist minister as president
- \* Victims of domestic violence encouraged to seek help
- \* Domestic violence: One woman's story
- \* Violence confronts Christians with tough questions, experts say
- \* Churches discover ways to help abuse victims
- \* Warning signs of spouse abuse

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EDITOR'S NOTE: There is no ABP issue scheduled for April 16.

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Patterson one of 3 interviewed  
for Southeastern presidency

By Greg Warner

ST. LOUIS, Mo. (ABP) -- Three people -- including Paige Patterson of Dallas -- were interviewed for the presidency of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary April 10 in St. Louis, Mo.

Although he would not confirm the identity of the three, trustee chairman Roger Ellsworth acknowledged the interviews took place and that the search committee hopes to pick a nominee by the end of the month.

Sources close to the search identified the three interviewed as Patterson, president of Criswell College in Dallas and an architect of the fundamental-conservative movement in the Southern Baptist Convention; Albert Mohler, editor of the Christian Index, newsjournal of Georgia Baptists; and Richard Melick, a professor at Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tenn.

Both Mohler and Melick confirmed to Associated Baptist Press April 14 that they were interviewed but declined further comment.

Contacted before the interviews, Patterson refused to "confirm or deny" his participation. "I don't have any comment of any kind," he said April 8. He did acknowledge that he had been contacted by a member of the search committee.

Southeastern's trustees, who are not scheduled to meet again until the fall, are expected to call a special meeting to elect a new president. "We

would like to have a president named by (Southern Baptist) Convention time," said chairman Ellsworth, a pastor from Benton, Ill. The SBC meets June 9-11.

Ellsworth said April 9 the trustee executive committee, which serves as the search committee, has "not made a final decision yet" about a candidate for the presidency. "We will have a conference call later this week and determine what our next step will be," he said.

Asked if a nominee will be picked by the end of April, as some predicted, Ellsworth said, "I suppose our conference call will tell me how realistic that is."

Patterson has been viewed by most observers as the leading candidate for the vacancy, created when Southeastern's embattled president, Lewis Drummond, announced he will take early retirement in June. Southeastern currently is under scrutiny from its accrediting agencies.

Patterson reportedly still is being pressured to leave his current job by Criswell trustees, who fired him in October then reinstated him at the urging of former SBC president Adrian Rogers and other fundamental-conservative leaders.

Mohler, a doctoral graduate of Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and former assistant to Southern President Roy Honeycutt, has earned the respect of SBC fundamental-conservatives since coming to the Georgia editorship in 1989.

Melick, a doctoral graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, has taught nine years at Mid-America, an independent seminary with close ties to Memphis pastor and Southeastern trustee Adrian Rogers. A former professor at the Baptist-affiliated Palm Beach Atlantic College in West Palm Beach, Fla., Melick is one of the authors for the new inerrantist commentary published by the SBC Sunday School Board.

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Noriega 'shocked'  
by guilty verdict

By Greg Warner

MIAMI (ABP) -- Manuel Noriega was "shocked and bewildered" when a Miami jury found him guilty of drug trafficking, according to a Baptist layman who has visited him during his imprisonment and trial.

But Tony Ponceti, who has been Noriega's spiritual tutor since 1990, said the deposed Panamanian dictator's newfound faith in Christ remains strong.

"If he hadn't been as strong as he is spiritually, he would have started (verbally) attacking (his accusers)," Ponceti said. "The proof of his strength is he has been able to hold back."

Noriega, 58, did not testify in his own defense during the trial, which lasted several months.

Ponceti has visited Noriega regularly since the Panamanian leader announced he had accepted Christ as his savior in May 1990. Ponceti visited both Noriega and his family soon after the verdict was handed down April 9.

"I found him shocked and bewildered," said Ponceti. "He did not feel that they were going to find him guilty."

Noriega's lead attorney, Frank Rubino of Miami, said his client will appeal the conviction. In what prosecutors called "the trial of the century," Noriega was found guilty on eight of 10 drug-related counts and faces up to 120 years when his sentence is imposed July 10. Noriega also is expected to stand trial on other charges.

Ponceti, who led Noriega through Christian discipleship materials for several months after Noriega's conversion announcement, said he met with

Noriega "irregularly" during the trial because of security restrictions.

He said he plans to continue visiting Noriega at the Metropolitan Correctional Center south of Miami, where the prisoner is expected to stay until transferred to a permanent federal prison. He also will apparently have to wait for that transfer to be baptized as he has requested.

Noriega's wife and three daughters, who also reportedly made professions of faith during their exile in the Dominican Republic, were granted visas to enter the United States and attended the trial. They have been staying with friends in Miami.

Ponceti said he and his wife visited with Noriega's wife, Felicidad, several times during the last week of the trial and prayed with her while awaiting the verdict.

"I have seen few Christians with the spiritual strength that these people have," he said. "Felicidad is not a mature Christian but she is a sincere one."

Because of publicity, attending church has been difficult for Noriega's family since coming to the States, Ponceti said, but he is trying to get the family involved in a Bible study.

-30-

Sherman predicts Fellowship will  
hire 20-plus missionaries in 1993

By Mark Wingfield

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (ABP) -- The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship will begin supporting 11 missionary couples in Europe next year, including some currently assigned by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to the Baptist seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

That was the message Cecil Sherman delivered to a group of Kentucky Baptists April 11 while attempting to persuade them to fund a new Fellowship missions venture called Launch Europe.

Sherman was the keynote speaker at a meeting of the Kentucky Baptist Fellowship held at Crescent Hill Baptist Church in Louisville. About 200 people attended the daylong meeting.

The Kentucky Baptist Fellowship is a state affiliate of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. Both the state and national group are composed of Baptist moderate-conservatives disenchanted with the current fundamental-conservative leadership of the SBC.

FMB trustees have abandoned the SBC's traditional European missions program like a baby left on a doorstep, said Sherman, newly elected coordinator of the national Fellowship and former pastor of Broadway Baptist Church in Fort Worth, Texas.

The Fellowship would be cruel to step over that baby while searching for other mission opportunities, he said.

FMB trustees unwittingly gave the Fellowship a reason for being, Sherman explained. Initially, people flocked to the Fellowship because they shared the common experience of having been traumatized by changes in the SBC, he said.

"But we needed a better reason for being than that," Sherman said. "We are a purpose people. Baptists get together to do missions."

Sherman said it is "ludicrous" to call the fledgling Fellowship a new denomination, but he also described the purpose of denominations to be "missions delivery systems."

From Sherman's own description, the Fellowship will become a missions delivery system next January, when it begins supporting the European missionaries and possibly others.

The organization's total missions budget for 1993 is \$2.5 million, he said. Of that, half will be spent in Europe and half will be spent in other domestic and foreign efforts yet to be determined.

Sherman said he has received a formal request from Ruschlikon seminary trustees for the Fellowship to assume support of the faculty and staff who no longer will be supported by the FMB. "We're headed toward doing this mission," he said.

He also indicated the Fellowship has received dozens of inquiries from current SBC missionaries about possible Fellowship support. He declined to reveal the names of any missionaries under consideration for Fellowship support.

Joann Hopper, spokeswoman for the Ruschlikon seminary, welcomed Sherman's announcement, even though she said it came as something of a surprise.

"We're happy to hear that they expect to pick up that many, but (the announcement) is premature," she said. Some of the FMB missionaries assigned to Ruschlikon may choose to be reassigned to other FMB mission fields rather than come under Fellowship sponsorship, Hopper suggested.

"I'm quite positive the people at Ruschlikon have not made up their minds," she said. "It's a very personal matter."

But Hopper added: "Ruschlikon is very grateful for the support of the CBF...because when the Foreign Mission Board deserted us, the CBF picked up the slack."

A decision by FMB trustees last fall to defund the Swiss seminary set in motion a storm of protest about how Baptists do missions in Europe.

Baptist moderate-conservatives have charged that FMB trustees are moving from a confessional and cooperative missions approach to a creedal and paternalistic approach. Baptist fundamental-conservatives, on the other hand, argue that FMB trustees are purging liberalism from foreign missions.

This dispute ultimately led to the resignation of FMB President Keith Parks, a veteran missionary who will step down as president in October due to "philosophical differences" with trustees.

Sherman said he believes Parks resigned because trustees asked him to do something he could not do in good conscience. FMB trustees, he said, want to make European Baptists "reflect the theology of SBC leaders."

Parks' resignation is the "last wake-up call" for Southern Baptists, indicating the new fundamental-conservative leaders will forever change the denomination's agencies, Sherman said. "If you're waiting for the other shoe to drop, it won't happen."

Instead, future changes will be made slowly as old leaders retire or resign quietly, he predicted.

Sherman also asked the group just what it will take to wake up some Baptists. He cited a litany of changes in the denomination, including the resignations of a seminary president and Sunday School Board president and the firings of two denominational editors.

"What has to happen before you'll go to your churches and do something?" he specifically asked pastors.

Sherman told pastors he did not want to divide their churches. However, he said the fair thing to do in churches where there are split opinions is to give members choices about where their mission money will be spent. At the church he recently left as pastor, Sherman said, members were allowed to give their money through the traditional Cooperative Program or through one of the Fellowship's funding plans.

Allowing such a choice could keep churches from splitting, whereas putting the issue to a vote one way or the other would be more divisive, he said.

Sherman charged that the SBC's current leadership wants to portray the decision as an either-or choice between the Cooperative Program and the

Fellowship. But churches do not have to stop giving through the Cooperative Program to give through the Fellowship, he said.

"I'm not asking you to cut anybody off," Sherman said. Instead, he said, he hopes more churches will move some of their missions money to support Fellowship efforts, particularly the Launch Europe initiative.

Currently, about three-fourths of the money channeled through the Fellowship is designated for traditional SBC causes. For new ventures such as Launch Europe to be successful, churches must be willing to channel more unrestricted funds through the Fellowship, Sherman said.

Compared to the total budget of most churches, the amount of money that makes it to the Fellowship or the Cooperative Program is only a small percentage, he noted. "It's not much money. It's just the money with all the nerve endings. It's the emotional money."

Robert Parham, executive director of the Baptist Center for Ethics, told the Kentucky group that traditional approaches to Baptist cooperation are passe.

The old Southern Baptist Convention is as dead as Elvis, Parham said, and Baptists who still believe in reported sightings of the convention they once knew are only dreaming.

"It's time for thoughtful, cooperative Baptists to face the truth: the king of denominations is dead," he said. "It's time...to get on with the kingdom business of the real king."

Parham said Baptist moderate-conservatives have come to a fork in the road where they can choose either anger or joy. The road to joy is a "sunlight road" and a "pro-active road," he said.

-30-

Trustees of Richmond seminary approve  
new faculty members, \$1 million budget

By Beth McMahon

RICHMOND, Va. (ABP) -- Trustees of Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, meeting in Richmond April 6-7, approved the hiring of new faculty members, passed a \$1 million budget, heard plans for a partnership with Baptist Theological Seminary at Ruschlikon, Switzerland, and passed a resolution of appreciation for Virginia Baptists.

Approved were Isam Ballenger to be professor of missions and world religions and Glenn Hinson to be professor of spirituality, worship and church history. Both will begin teaching this fall.

Ballenger had been vice president for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa at the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board since 1987. Over his 27-year missions career, he also served as missionary to Germany and president of Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

He announced his retirement from the FMB this January, citing the "conservative resurgence within the Southern Baptist Convention" as "an agenda I cannot serve."

Hinson has been the professor of church history at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., since 1959. His range of studies has included spirituality, Baptist history, New Testament, patristics, ecclesiology and liturgy.

He has taught at several schools, including Catholic University of America, Wake Forest University and Notre Dame, and has given guest lectures at numerous colleges and seminaries. He is author of 17 books and has written articles and reviews for a number of journals and periodicals. He also participates in a variety of ecumenical organizations.

With the addition of Ballenger, Hinson and Elizabeth Barnes, who was

approved by trustees last fall to be associate professor of theology and ethics, the seminary will have six full-time faculty members.

Trustees also approved a \$1 million budget for fiscal 1992-93. The budget, nearly double the current year's, will be funded from a variety of sources, including the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, the Baptist General Association of Virginia, and the Alliance of Baptists. Gifts from churches and individual donors also contribute to the budget.

The 1992-93 budget includes \$45,000 for student scholarships. The average scholarship grant per student for the 48 students enrolled in 1991-92 has been nearly \$2000, or 60 percent of tuition.

Trustees were told the budget also will provide for five new adjunctive professors and one new staff member in 1992-93. They will include Page Kelley, visiting professor of Old Testament and Hebrew; Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, adjunctive professor of preaching; Dan Via, visiting professor of New Testament; and additional visiting professors in pastoral care and preaching.

Via's wife, Margaret, is a new staff member of the seminary. A former Virginia Baptist pastor and now pastor of Duke University Chapel Congregation, she will be chaplain to the seminary community.

The seminary also has announced Henry Mugabe will return to teach a course during the 1993 winter term. Mugabe, academic dean at the Baptist Theological Seminary of Zimbabwe, taught a class in African theology at BTR in January.

The BTR board also approved a partnership with Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland. The Richmond seminary has offered to provide a professor for one semester every three years to the European seminary and to facilitate Ruschlikon students attending BTR as exchange students.

"To be able to help the Ruschlikon seminary at this time in its history is important to them, but our long-term relationship will prove to be advantageous to both schools," said BTR President Thomas Graves.

Trustees unanimously approved a resolution of appreciation to the Baptist General Association of Virginia, which expresses thanks for the association's support of BTR. The resolution also invites Virginia Baptists to nominate a Virginia Baptist each year to serve on the trustee board of BTR.

In his report to the board, Graves pointed out to trustees how far the school has come in a year. "It was one year ago when we met for the first time together hoping to open for business in the fall of 1991. At that time we had no faculty, no furnished classrooms, and office space only for the staff employed at the time.

Now, he pointed out, the school has a faculty that is "creating a Baptist institution that is second to none"; a financial base that has grown to include the Baptist General Association of Virginia, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, and increased support from the Alliance of Baptists and individual and church donors; offices and classrooms leased on the campus of Presbyterian School of Christian Education; and seminary representatives who have spoken to over a third of the pastors and associations in Virginia, as well as many more throughout the region.

"We have not done this in just our own wisdom, our own strength, and in our own time," Graves said. "There have been too many 'blessed accidents' for us to describe what has happened in the last year in a way other than providential. I thank you for your insight and wisdom. It is rare when our efforts so closely coincide with the needs of the world around us."

**BWA conference challenges Baptists  
to establish churches worldwide**

By Stanley Crabb

SWANWICK, England (ABP) -- "Every Baptist congregation in the world should try to establish at least one new congregation by the end of the decade," according to a declaration adopted at the Baptist World Alliance's first international conference on starting churches.

About 250 Baptists from 45 nations participated in the Baptist International Conference on Establishing Churches, which took place in the central England village of Swanwick March 23-27.

"Research shows that new congregations are more likely to experience growth than the older churches," said Tony Cupit, an Australian who directs the BWA's evangelism and mission division.

Cupit said that if Christians wish to expand their witness in the world, they must start new churches on a large scale. Countless churches in the world have never "planted" a single church, he told the European Baptist Press Service. "We want to challenge churches to plant new churches."

The conference was the largest ever convened on evangelism and mission by the Baptist World Alliance and it "put church planting on the Baptist map," Cupit said.

In addition to plenary sessions, which provided a mix of worship, inspiration, and case studies involving church planting, conference participants could choose from a large variety of workshops.

The capstone of the conference, a 400-word document, was designated the "Derbyshire Declaration: A Call to Establish New Churches."

The document defines itself as a "message to the family of Baptists throughout the world" and confirms that church planting is a "powerful means for growth" and "a most effective means to fulfill the Great Commission."

"This is a great statement and I endorse it," said Larry Lewis, president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, who led a Bible study during the conference.

The statement acknowledges "that our preoccupation with the needs in our own areas...may blind us to the urgent need to proclaim and demonstrate the gospel in areas of the world where people have not heard of the love of God in Jesus Christ...."

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**Baptists worldwide report  
starting new churches**

By Wendy Ryan

SWANWICK, England (ABP) -- Based on the reports from delegates who attended an international conference on starting churches, Baptists around the world are planting new congregations, but they are using very different methods and meeting places to do so.

In England, where the March 23-27 conference was held, British Baptists are aggressively planting new churches, including one in the South Yorkshire mining town of Mexborough which has met in a pub for almost three years.

"We now have our own building," said Harry Weatherly, former associate missionary for the church, who reported on the church start. "But the pub owner was happy to let us use it when we began in 1989."

Weatherly reported that 30 people now meet in Mexborough, where no church had existed before.

Among the many reports of new church starts in England were those of

churches among ethnic immigrant groups.

Concerned about fellow Asians in London who needed to hear the gospel, Isaac Williams from Pakistan and some of his friends searched the electoral register for names that indicated Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus in their community.

Williams, a student at Spurgeon's College, explained that he and his friends addressed envelopes to all of the names they found and personally delivered these to the people. "We went like a postman would go to deliver a personal message," he said. "This is important and shows respect and honor."

"When we started in 1990, there were 10 people," Williams said. Now 50 to 70 attend the Southwest London Asian Fellowship.

The conference, the first ever on planting churches sponsored by the Baptist World Alliance, included church-planting reports from Europe, representing a change from recent patterns of slow or declining growth there.

Jean-Pierre Dassonville, general secretary of the Federation of Evangelical Baptist Churches in France, reported on an upcoming week of evangelism with Southern Baptists and British Baptists. Forty teams have visited France in this evangelistic ministry.

Dassonville reported that more than half of the federation's 93 churches have been planted in the last 10 years.

In Bulgaria, 20 new churches have been planted since the fall of communism two years ago, according to one delegate. "There is not a village or town where we have not had an evangelistic meeting and a new church is started," the delegate said. "We expect 35 to 40 by the summer."

In Cuba, "our churches are not big enough to seat the people who are coming," said Ernesto Diaz, "and we are very happy about that."

"We're seeing revival in Cuba," said Diaz, pastor of four churches. He said that in one of his churches alone, 48 new Christians were baptized in 1991. Diaz also reported that the Baptist Convention of Western Cuba, to which he belongs, baptized 740 people in 1991, the largest number since it began.

From Romania, Paul Negrut, co-pastor of Second Baptist Church in the Oradea, reported 20 new churches since the fall of communism.

In Germany, Baptists are reaching out to foreigners and refugees and are planting satellite churches for Tamil, Vietnamese and Chinese immigrants, delegates reported. Almost all of the new churches met in homes or other places besides church buildings.

"If we ever hope to win the cities for Christ in America" said Larry Lewis, president of the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, "we will have to establish thousands of churches with no intention that they will have their own building."

"The apostolic role in the New Testament is that of church planter and missionary, said Lewis, who gave one of the three Bible studies during the conference, "and that role is still valid for today."

According to Baptist World Alliance figures, Baptists started 7,033 new churches in 1990. The largest number of new church starts (5,454) was in the United States. Although not all nations report new churches, other reported totals include 384 in Africa, 706 in Asia, 76 in Latin America and the Caribbean, and 149 in South America.

-30-

-- Wendy Ryan is director of the division of communications for the Baptist World Alliance.

BJC extends deadline  
for conciliation offer

WASHINGTON (ABP) -- The Baptist Joint Committee has extended the April 17 deadline for its offer to use Christian conciliation to settle a dispute over \$300,000 on deposit at the Southern Baptist Foundation.

In an April 14 letter, BJC General Counsel Oliver Thomas notified James Guenther, attorney for the Southern Baptist Executive Committee, of the agency's decision to extend the deadline. Thomas recommended the extension last week after Guenther indicated that his client could not respond by the deadline because the Executive Committee does not meet again until June 8.

Thomas also accepted Guenther's invitation to address the Executive Committee prior to its deliberation on June 8. In the same letter, Thomas extended Guenther an invitation to address the BJC at its next regularly scheduled meeting Oct. 5-6.

The Foundation recently sent the Baptist Joint Committee a check for approximately \$81,000, the amount of interest then in the account, but declined the BJC's request for the \$300,000 principal.

Messengers to the Southern Baptist Convention approved a proposal to provide \$300,000 for BJC capital needs in 1964. The funds were allocated in 1967 and 1968 and placed on deposit at the Foundation.

"We would like to see this dispute resolved in accordance with biblical mandates," Thomas said. "Our offer gives the Executive Committee an opportunity to do that."

-30-

-- By Pam Parry

Rump congress in Peru installs  
Baptist minister as president

By Ken Camp

DALLAS (ABP) -- Baptist minister Carlos Garcia took the oath of office as Peru's president April 9 at a clandestine location in Lima, but it appeared the inauguration was a temporary, symbolic gesture by a portion of that nation's Congress-in-hiding.

Meeting in secret, 135 Peruvian congressmen impeached President Alberto Fujimori and swore in Garcia, the nation's second vice president, as acting head of state after declaring the president's office vacant.

The legislators reportedly expressed the desire to install First Vice President Maximo San Roman as Peru's president when he returned to the country. He was believed to be in the United States, meeting with the Organization of American States.

During a 10-hour, closed-door, emergency meeting in Washington on April 13, OAS foreign ministers approved a resolution urging Fujimori to restore constitutional government in Peru. The OAS also agreed to send a high-level delegation, headed by OAS Secretary General Joao Baena, to meet with Fujimori in Lima.

Fujimori -- a Peruvian Roman Catholic born to Japanese immigrants -- had suspended the constitution on April 5, dissolving the Congress, announcing plans to reorganize the judiciary, calling out military troops to patrol the streets, and placing some elected officials under house arrest.

Opponents labeled his actions a military coup and a "dictatorship," but Fujimori said he was defending constitutional government against the "terrorist barbarity" of Shining Path Maoist guerrillas.

Fujimori's impeachment by the rump session of Peru's Congress and

Garcia's oath of office lacked any power of enforcement since the president maintained control of the military and offices of public administration.

Garcia currently is "doing fine" in the embassy of another Latin American nation, and his family remains safe in their home, an informed source told Associated Baptist Press.

The source -- who asked not to be identified -- said Garcia was in sympathy with Fujimori's desire to "cut the cancer of corruption" from Peru's judiciary and legislature, but as a constitutionalist, Garcia believed the president "threw out the baby with the bath water."

The source said that for now, it is "business as usual" for most citizens in Peru, where many citizens have welcomed Fujimori's decisive actions.

"People are still living and breathing, walking the streets and going to work," he said. "They are free to meet in worship and to pray. It's business as usual, except the Congress and courthouses are closed." However, he requested prayer for Garcia's safety and for Peru's future.

A dozen Baptist Young Men from Texas, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee are still scheduled to participate in a mission project in Peru, July 20-Aug. 6, according to Eddie Pettit, director of Baptist Young Men at the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

The men plan to renovate a Baptist encampment at Santa Eulalia, about 40 miles east of Lima, conduct a sports clinic for Peruvian youth at the camp, and work with inner-city churches in Lima.

"Everything's on go right now," said Pettit, who added that a final decision about the trip will be made in conjunction with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board one month before departure.

Garcia served six years as a pastor in Colombia while studying at the seminary in Cali and 16 years in Lima, including two terms as president of the Peruvian Baptist Convention.

He was elected to the second vice presidency in June 1990 in an election that also resulted in four evangelical Protestants being elected to the Senate of the predominantly Catholic nation and 14 to its House of Representatives.

"It was an historic occasion in my country, unique in all its history," Garcia said during an interview in Dallas last November. "It was the first time evangelicals successfully entered into the political process.

"People were discouraged and disappointed in the traditional political parties with their close ties to the Catholic church. The people put their confidence and hope in a new people and a new movement."

Garcia facilitated the distribution of more than \$4 million in medical supplies and other aid donated by Texas Baptists when a cholera epidemic hit western South America, and he said he hoped to continue using his position as Peru's second vice president to open other doors in his country for evangelical Christians.

-30-

EDITOR'S NOTE: Following is a four-part series on domestic violence.

Victims of domestic violence  
encouraged to seek help

By Shari Schubert

(ABP) -- Get out. Get help.

Those are the words of advice offered to victims of family violence by law enforcement officers and social workers who are familiar with the problems of physical and emotional abuse.

The victims of such domestic violence typically are the most vulnerable family members -- women and children.

Statistics show that domestic violence is the greatest single cause of injury to women nationwide. Every 18 seconds an American woman is beaten by her husband or male partner, according to Coleen Coble, executive director of the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

And as many as a third of all women treated in emergency rooms are there because of abuse from a husband or boyfriend, according to the Journal of the American Medical Association.

Some women don't survive the violence. A 1986 FBI report noted that 30 percent of female homicide victims are killed by their husbands or boyfriends, compared to 6 percent of male homicide victims killed by wives or girlfriends.

In addition to physical injury, many women also suffer other forms of abuse -- threats, insults and other forms of emotional abuse; social isolation or public embarrassment; sexual degradation; disruption of self-care; or destruction of personal possessions.

Research also indicates a close link between battering of women and battering of children. One study of children at shelters for battered women found that nearly 70 percent of the children were also victims of physical abuse or neglect.

Abuse specialists say the statistics only scratch the surface, however. Like other family-related problems, domestic violence often goes unreported.

"It is well-known among criminologists that murder, assault and rape are most often committed within families and groups of close friends," explained Patrick Anderson, a Baptist who is professor of criminology at Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Fla.

"People tend to experience the greatest passion -- violence, rage, anger, as well as love and affection -- with people with whom they are most intimately associated," Anderson said.

Wilma Conner, intake coordinator for the Missouri Baptist Children's Home, noted that a pattern often seen in abusive families is that one family member -- the mother or a child -- becomes the "scapegoat" who is blamed for all the family's problems, and becomes the target of abuse by all other family members. In turn, the "scapegoat" may accept the blame, conclude that he or she is a bad person, and act that out in personal behavior.

Even if a child himself is not physically abused, "watching it is as abusive...as being the one who's being hit," Conner added.

Domestic violence typically perpetuates itself from one generation to the next, and may contribute to or become part of a vicious cycle with other problems such as alcohol and drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, dysfunctional sexual behavior or suicidal tendencies.

Characteristics of both abusers and victims include low self-esteem, emotional dependency, problems with sexual identity, a history of family violence and denial of the seriousness of the violence.

Social workers point out that women often will tolerate abuse rather than seek help, and they will even return to an abusive situation after seeking shelter or medical help.

Economic dependence is sometimes the reason. A woman who leaves her mate is likely to face economic hardship. The first year after divorce, a woman's standard of living drops by 73 percent, according to statistics in Missouri, while a man's improves by an average of 42 percent.

"Many women endure abuse because they fear not knowing where the next meal is coming from or where to go with the children if they leave their homes," said Yolantha Harrison, a single mother who organizes activities for residents of a multifamily housing development in Houston.

Although battered women know the abuse will reoccur -- if not today, maybe tomorrow or next week -- the fear of being beaten is less than the fear of not knowing how to survive outside the abusive family, said Harrison, whose ministry is sponsored by the Union Baptist Association in Houston.

Emotional dependence also may be a factor in why women stay. Many battered women have no experience in independent decision-making.

Feelings of loneliness, inadequacy and guilt come into play, abuse specialists say. Often these are reinforced by the abuser as a means of control. Or he may threaten to harm or kill the woman if she leaves.

Beliefs about marriage and family, often rooted in religious convictions, may cause a woman to believe she must keep the family together at all costs.

And women may return to an abusive mate who promises to change. "The last thing you lose is your ability to hope it will be better," one specialist observed.

Can an abusive family be helped? Yes, said Conner of the Missouri children's home, but not until family members are willing to admit they have a problem. "Somebody's going to have to have the guts to call it what it is," she said.

Once those involved are willing to seek help, assistance is available through a variety of channels -- law enforcement agencies, government social service agencies, private agencies, support groups, shelters and counseling centers. Churches too are becoming involved in providing help and support systems for victims of domestic abuse.

Emergency help now is available in many communities through women's shelters. The availability of such facilities is a relatively new development; the first shelter for battered women was opened in London in 1975.

Since then, hundreds of shelters have been established. Some are sponsored by churches or groups of churches, such as the Women's Care Center at First Baptist Church of Leesburg, Fla., and the Baptist Women's Shelter in Tulsa, Okla., sponsored by the local Baptist association.

In addition to providing battered women with a safe place to go while they examine their options, shelter programs may provide various other services, such as child care; legal, welfare and housing information; education or job training; individual or group counseling; or substance abuse programs.

Physical abuse of a spouse or child is a crime, and the criminal justice systems in many states have begun to take a tougher stance against offenders in recent years, according to advocates for abused women. Some states even have laws against harassment, stalking and emotional abuse of the children.

But even incidents of abuse that are reported are often hard to prosecute because of the difficulty of proving that a violation of law actually took place, said Pat Joyce, assistant prosecuting attorney in Cole County, Mo.

Joyce said it is easier to obtain a judgment against an abuser if the victim can present evidence, such as a photo, police or physician's report, or the testimony of someone other than the victim who can verify the incident.

State governments often have family-services departments that can assist in domestic-violence situations, not only with intervention but sometimes with preventive services, counseling, shelters and protective day care. If state agencies don't offer such services, they often can make referrals.

The Mills Home campus of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina often gets such referrals.

"A lot of children are placed in our care by departments of social services because there is violence in the family," explained Vicki Helton, intake social worker at the Mills Home facility. "Usually if there is abuse between adults, there is abuse to others too, especially with teenagers.

While small children see the violence and are affected emotionally by it, Helton said older children are beaten when they try to rescue a parent who is abused.

"We work to empower a mother to get out of a situation when there is violence," Helton said.

Helton became very familiar with domestic violence while working for the Gaston County (N.C.) Department of Social Services. Once she was chased by an angry man from a home where she was investigating abuse.

At the North Carolina children's homes, Helton and others try to teach clients how to handle anger without resorting to violence.

Debbie Campbell, director of the Philpott Parent Aide Program for the North Carolina children's homes, trains volunteers to go into homes identified by county agencies as at risk for abuse or neglect. The volunteers train families in creative ways to deal with anger and to deflect violent behavior.

Stress -- particularly financial stress -- is the "bottom-line indicator" of potential abuse, she said. "When you've got unemployment, no income, no transportation, no support base...the more stress you have, the more likely you are to take it out on your children," Campbell said.

Although the sources of stress are different at various social and economic levels, Campbell said, domestic violence knows no social boundaries. For families with more financial resources, those stresses come not so much from having nothing but from wanting more, she said.

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-- Shari Schubert is news writer for the Word & Way, newsjournal of Missouri Baptists. This article includes information from Greg Warner of Associated Baptist Press and Norman Jameson of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina.

Domestic violence:  
One woman's story

By Denise George

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (ABP) -- Sharon met her husband, Ralph, a widower, through mutual friends. A surgeon and deacon in the church, Ralph is described by his friends as a kind, caring, gentle man.

"After two week of marriage," Sharon recalled, "I dropped the dirty bed sheets on the floor. For no apparent reason, Ralph became enraged. That's when I discovered Ralph's temper."

Shortly afterward, Sharon recalled, Ralph began hitting her, throwing her against furniture, grabbing her hair, and shoving her to the floor.

Neighbors could hear Sharon's screams during the frequent beatings and would sometimes gather on the street beneath the bedroom window.

"They knew what was going on," Sharon said, "but no one knew what to do. And no one wanted to get involved."

Ralph was liked and respected in the church where he had been a lifetime member. During their 15 years of marriage, Sharon devoted herself to Ralph and to his church. She told no one in the church about the abuse. And no one suspected it.

"Ralph was careful to bruise only the parts of my body and legs that

my clothes would hide," Sharon said.

After a beating to the head, Sharon suffered permanent hearing loss in one ear. Her doctor wrote "trauma-caused" on her chart, Sharon recalled.

Sharon said she also endured emotional abuse. Ralph called her names, taped the home phone, and allowed her no contact with friends.

"People often ask me why I didn't leave him, why I stayed with him so long," Sharon said. "During those years, I felt alone, alienated and worthless. I lost the will to live. I was so under Ralph's control, I couldn't even think for myself. I felt like I didn't belong to the human race."

Sharon tried several times to kill herself and failed. She later found out Ralph also had battered his first wife, who after 20 years of daily abuse committed suicide.

Several years into the marriage, Sharon said, Ralph became even more hostile. "I was so terrified of him, I moved into the guest bedroom and had a deadbolt lock put on my door," she said. "I really believed my life was in danger."

Sharon's turning point came after an unusually tense confrontation with Ralph at 3 a.m. Fearing for her life, she called an attorney. With his help, Sharon left the abusive situation. She also stopped going to Ralph's church. Not long after, a friend invited her to a community church and Sharon became a member.

"That's what I needed most -- a friend who reached out to me with understanding," Sharon said. "I will be eternally grateful to her."

Through the church during the last three years, Sharon has found the support, encouragement and emotional healing she desperately needed.

"My Sunday school class members have called me and made me feel like a part of the church. They have listened to me and made me feel that someone really does care. When I had minor surgery early one morning, my pastor greeted me at the hospital when I arrived. I feel surrounded by the church's love and prayers -- so completely at home here. It's like a brand new life."

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(The names in this story were changed to ensure privacy.)

-- Denise George is a free-lance writer and author of eight books. She is married to Timothy George, dean of Beeson Divinity School at Samford University in Birmingham.

Domestic violence confronts Christians  
with tough questions, experts say

By Shari Schubert

(ABP) -- For centuries, society and the religious community have been sending mixed messages about domestic violence.

Friar Cherubino of Siena, between 1450 and 1481, wrote in his "Rules of Marriage": "When you see your wife commit an offense...scold her sharply, bully and terrify her. And if this still doesn't work...take up a stick and beat her soundly...not in rage but out of charity and concern for her soul."

The common expression "rule of thumb" comes from British Common Law, which allowed a man to beat his wife with a stick no thicker than his own thumb.

The Puritans, on the other hand, outlawed physical and verbal abuse between husbands and wives. The Essex County Court fined one man 40

shillings when neighbors reported that he had told his wife "shee was none of his wife, shee was but his Servantt."

Scriptures commanding wives to submit to their husbands and children to obey their parents have at times been taken out of context in an effort to justify wife beating and child beating -- even though other Scriptures admonish husbands to love their wives (Eph. 5:25) and fathers not to provoke their children to wrath (Eph. 6:4).

"The teachings of Jesus emphasize love, tolerance and acceptance of children," said Patrick Anderson, a criminologist and frequent interim pastor in Baptist churches.

"The biblical adages in Proverbs -- "spare the rod and spoil the child" and "if you beat him with a rod he will not die" -- and other such instructions regarding physical punishment in families have been misused by some (abusive) men," said Anderson, professor criminology at Florida Southern College in Lakeland, Fla.

Churches today sometimes turn a deaf ear or bury their heads in the sand rather than confront the issue of domestic violence, said pastor and counselor Gary Woolverton of Missouri. "We don't want to believe this problem could exist within our Christian beliefs."

But it does exist, abuse specialists say.

"I look at people in our church all the time and wonder who beats their wife or who's being beaten," said Debbie Campbell, a pastor's wife and director of the Philpott Parent Aide Program at the Baptist Children Homes of North Carolina. "Statistically, it would be true that someone in our church is doing that."

Victims sometimes suffer in silence because they feel no one will believe their story.

"Our pastors need to know when we are having these kinds of problems," said Woolverton, who serves as counselor for the Southeast Missouri Counseling Facility, a ministry sponsored by a Baptist church, local Baptist association and the Missouri Baptist Children's Home.

But Woolverton cautioned that troubled family members will not turn to a pastor who fails to communicate acceptance or who can't maintain confidentiality.

Pastors and others who do have the opportunity to give spiritual counseling to people caught up in family violence inevitably must address some difficult questions:

-- Why does God allow people to be victimized?"

The "simple answers" often offered by the religious community are "inadequate to deal with the complexity of most experiences of human suffering," said Marie Fortune in A Commentary on Religious Issues in Family Violence.

Such simple answers may "set up a dynamic which blames the victims for their suffering," said Fortune, director of the Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence in Seattle, Wash.

The rationale is something like this, Fortune notes: "If you are a good Christian...God will treat you kindly, or take care of you, or make you prosper.... If you suffer, it is a sign that...God is displeased with you."

Religious teachings are adequate to address experiences of suffering "when the traditions acknowledge the complexity, the paradox, and sometimes the incomprehensible nature of those experiences," Fortune suggests.

-- Is divorce acceptable?

Stoney Shaw, pastor of Parkway Baptist Church, St. Louis, said he could not conscientiously advise an abused spouse to seek a divorce. But he noted, "I do believe in separation so that there can be reconciliation." He added that he would encourage the couple to remain separated until they have received counseling and there is evidence of a change in behavior

patterns.

Too often, Shaw observed, a person who has been hurt wants to be happy at any cost, and will choose to just get out of a relationship which could, in time, be healed. But he also acknowledged that an abused spouse who chooses not to end the relationship may face a long, difficult, uncertain time of waiting for the abusive partner to admit he has a problem and take steps toward change. At such a time, it is important that the church provide emotional and spiritual support, he said.

A woman's decision whether to divorce an abusive spouse ultimately must be her own, said Thom Meigs, associate professor of pastoral care and psychology of religion at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.

Regardless of their position on divorce, pastors and counselors interviewed emphasized that a victim of domestic violence should not remain in a situation where her life and well-being are at risk.

"Cemeteries are full of people who trusted and lost," said Woolverton.

-- How can victims be forgiving?

The old adage, "Forgive and forget," is poor advice, according to Meigs. "I don't tell them to forget. I don't think they really can."

Rather than erasing painful memories, he said, forgiveness is saying "I take my memories seriously" and moving on to the point where one is no longer consumed or controlled by those memories. In that sense, the professor explained, forgiveness is a positive step because it allows the person who has been hurt to take back some power.

"It's not an instant kind of thing," he added, noting family violence carries with it a loss of a relationship. "They've got to do some appropriate grieving."

Meigs stressed that the pastoral counselor's role needs to be that of a "processor" to help the troubled individual work through problems and make decisions. The counselor can provide comfort, encouragement and help in dealing with "theological themes" such as grace and providence.

But the counselor must not become the decision maker. To do so, Meigs explained, will tend to reinforce the low self-esteem that often has contributed to the person's problem in the first place.

Meigs said churches need to provide a place where people can talk about the fact that they are hurting without being penalized.

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Churches discover ways  
to help abuse victims

(ABP) -- Churches can provide practical ministry to victims of family violence, specialists say, by addressing not only spiritual needs, but emotional and physical needs as well.

Sometimes, the best help a church can give includes referral to community resources and professional counselors -- or even calling the police.

Reporting known abuse is one way of saying that abuse is wrong and that "we care enough to find ways to stop it," explained Thom Meigs, professor of pastoral care and psychology of religion at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, Mo.

Some churches are starting shelters for abused women and families. But the cost of operating such a shelter usually is prohibitive for a single church to take on by itself. Start-up costs for such a ministry has been estimated at \$100,000, according to Don Anders, who is responsible for church and community ministries for the Missouri Baptist Convention.

"It is much easier to support an existing shelter or join with a group

of churches so that the cost can be shared," Anders said.

That's what churches in Tulsa, Okla., have done. The Tulsa Baptist Women's Shelter, where Beverly Goss serves as supervisor, is sponsored by Tulsa Baptist Association with help from the Oklahoma Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board.

Churches in the association take turns, a month at a time, to provide food, supplies and other assistance for the facility. Church groups lead Bible studies and craft classes and have done work projects, such as painting and wallpapering.

Donations of clothing have been helpful, Goss noted, pointing out that a woman who has been kicked out of her house in the middle of the night may arrive at the shelter with nothing but her pajamas. Medical supplies such as bandages and over-the-counter drugs are also useful, and doctors often donate their time to aid residents.

The Tulsa shelter has a one-on-one "care partner" volunteer program. Volunteers, after receiving training, work with shelter residents in such areas as setting goals for their future. Volunteers also witness to shelter residents.

Pastors and counselors emphasize the need for churches to provide a non-judgmental, accepting atmosphere for families caught up in violent behavior.

Connor Avenue Baptist Church in Joplin, Mo., is located near a women's shelter and welcomes residents of the facility to participate in its services and activities. Pastor John Carnagey said he has tried to emphasize to the church that "we don't really need to have a dress code for Sunday mornings."

While victims of abuse usually need professional counseling, any caring Christian can provide some basic affirmation and encouragement.

They also can offer direct help if necessary. Counselors offer the following advice:

-- Pastors and church staff workers can start by educating themselves by calling a local domestic-violence center to learn what to do if confronted with spouse abuse.

When couples come for marital counseling and abuse is suspected, the husband and wife should be counseled separately, said Michelle McAlpine, lead counselor at the Family Violence Center in Birmingham, Ala.

"The abuse is his problem, not hers," McAlpine said. "A woman who is battered does not have freedom of speech."

Churches also can host abuse seminars, which often are offered by local domestic-violence centers.

-- Church members can watch for warning signs of domestic abuse. Suspected victims of abuse should be approached privately, not in the presence of the suspected abuser, and asked: "Is someone hurting you?" "Is your husband hurting you?"

Church members can put suspected victims in touch with help, such as the pastor, church counselor, local domestic-violence center or the National Domestic Violence hotline (1-800-333-SAFE).

-- Victims of abuse should seek help immediately, counselors say. They should talk to their pastor or a close friend. They should make themselves and their children safe by leaving the abusive situation, without telling the abuser where they are staying.

-- Abusers should admit they have a problem, move out of the family home until they get help, and enroll immediately in a program specifically designed to change violent behavior.

"Once abusive men learn what abuse is and why they abuse, they can learn to change their behavior," states pastoral counselor John Richardson.

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-- By Shari Schubert and Denise George

Warning signs  
of spouse abuse

A woman may be a victim of spouse abuse if she:

- Has visible cuts, bruises or black eyes, and her explanations are not consistent with the injuries -- e.g. "I ran into a doorknob and got this black eye."
- Is reluctant to invite anyone to her home
- Consistently misses appointments or church commitments
- Seems on edge, jittery, withdrawn, or has frequent mood swings
- Won't stay around to talk after church or other events because she says she must hurry home
- Wears unusually heavy clothing out of season -- e.g. long sleeves in hot weather to cover bruises on her arms)
- Often wears heavier-than-usual makeup to hide bruises or marks on her face.

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CORRECTION: A mistake was made in the dates of two meetings reported in the 13th paragraph of the April 9 ABP story "FMB names search committee..." Please replace the paragraph with the following:

At the last trustee meeting in February, Parks asked the board to endorse his intention to serve until 1995 so that he could implement his 10-point plan for mission expansion. Instead, trustees scheduled a retreat for March to discuss Parks' tenure. It was during that retreat, Parks said, that he determined he did not have the necessary support from trustees to continue as president.

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