

KABBALAH KINDERGARTEN

Singer and actress Madonna has spent over \$21 million of her own money to establish the New York Kabbalah Grammar School for Children. The school, which is being called "The K School," will instruct primary-age children about the beliefs of Jewish mysticism. In addition, the pre-elementary school pupils will receive normal instruction in reading, writing, and arithmetic — but, according to Madonna, "spirituality" will be at the center of every lesson.

The school is located a few blocks away from Madonna's Manhattan apartment and will begin classes in December.

Strict enrollment requirements face parents who want to enroll their 5-year-olds. First, parents must be practicing Kabbalists before even submitting an application. Next comes a formidable academic test for the child along with an investigation of the family. Tuition will be \$3,600 per term.

Kabbalah, which means "received tradition," is a blend of Jewish mysticism, magic, speculation, and superstition. It unites the elements of numerology and astrology to offer a theology for the nature of God, the origin of the universe, and the destiny of man.

Madonna became devoted to the mystical derivative of Judaism after becoming pregnant with her first child in 1997. Others from America's entertainment aristocracy, including Britney Spears, Demi Moore, Barbra Streisand, Roseanne Barr, Elizabeth Taylor, and Courtney Love have expressed interest in this form of mystical spirituality.

—MKG

EMMERICH HEADED FOR SAINTHOOD

The 19th-century passion mystic and visionary Anne Catherine Emmerich was beatified during a ceremony on Oct. 3. Last summer, Pope John Paul II sanctioned the official order for her beatification. According to Roman Catholic belief, beatification is the near-final step in the process that eventually leads to canonization. Canonization is the official declaration by the Roman Catholic Church that a person is a saint in heaven.

The renewed interest in Emmerich can be largely attributed to actor/director Mel Gibson and his motion picture *The Passion of the Christ*. Gibson used Emmerich's visions, found in her book *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, as a source for his film. During the wave of publicity before the release of Gibson's film last spring, sale of the Emmerich volume increased from 3,000 copies in 2002 to 17,000 copies last February alone.

In Catholicism, the road to sainthood is a long and difficult process. First, a person must die. Then the deceased's virtues and reputation, writings and public declarations are examined by the diocese in which the candidate died. Upon favorable review, along with the Pope's approval, the candidate receives the title of "Venerable." Emmerich received the title of "Venerable" in April 2001, thereby attaining a degree of heroic virtue and paving the way for her beatification. Following her beatification, confirmation of a miracle attributed to Emmerich will be the final requirement for her to achieve sainthood.

For more information on Emmerich and her passion mysticism, see the July-September 2004 issue of *The Quarterly Journal*.

—MKG

MORMONS CONTINUE TO BAPTIZE DECEASED JEWS

Nearly a decade ago, Jewish officials objected when the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was posthumously proxy baptizing Jews. In 1995, the Mormon church said it was removing thousands of names from its International Genealogical Index and pledged that it would no longer baptize deceased Jews.

However, Mormons continued to submit names of deceased Jews — many of whom were Holocaust victims — to be baptized in the LDS temple ceremony. In December 2002, after seven years of continued proxy baptisms, the LDS renewed its promise at a meeting with Holocaust survivor Ernest Michel. Michel, current chairman of the World Gathering of (Jewish) Holocaust Survivors, said LDS church officials issued a memorandum pledging that Jewish names would be eliminated from the Mormon data base.

While this agreement was developed, LDS church Elder D. Todd Christofferson hinted at the difficulty of the

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project. "Removing the names of Holocaust victims and other known Jews from a data base containing hundreds of millions of deceased persons is an ongoing, labor-intensive process requiring name-by-name research," he said. In addition to Holocaust victims, the names of other prominent Jews were found: Gilda Radner, Menachem Begin, David Ben-Gurion, and Albert Einstein. According to a December 2002 news report, 380,000 names of Holocaust victims were in the church's data base in 1995, with around 20,000 showing up after the proxy baptisms were supposed to have been discontinued.

Baptism for the dead originally was meant for non-Mormon relatives of LDS church members. The closest living relative of the deceased can sanction the proxy baptism. According to the May 9, 2004, edition of *The Hawk Eye*, Jack Renouf, LDS director of public affairs in Nauvoo, Ill., said, "It's an offer for the dead to be able to choose to be saved or not." Renouf also indicated that, "the temple in Nauvoo was not involved in the practice," but added that "not all Jews are opposed to the idea."

While proxy baptism for deceased Jews may not be taking place at the current Nauvoo temple, the practice of baptizing for dead Mormon relatives first took place during the 1840s at the original Nauvoo temple. Renouf also stated, "The church has 117 temples operating worldwide, so you can imagine how difficult it is to track all the names and who is involved."

The World Gathering of (Jewish) Holocaust Survivors has asked Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, D-N.Y., to assist in speeding up the process of stopping the proxy baptisms and has also met with Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah. No statement was issued after the meeting.

—AMG

THERE THEY GO AGAIN

Last year Benny Hinn teamed with End-Time Handmaidens founder Gwen Shaw to prophesy that "the greatest revival of the Spirit" would start in Germany and spread across Europe. That forecast, like countless similar predictions beforehand, went unfulfilled.

The latest prophet of promise is Randy Clark, the former St. Louis Vineyard pastor who is recognized as the catalyst of the Toronto Blessing. In 1993, Clark, at the request of Toronto Vineyard Fellowship pastor John Arnott, imparted the anointing he earlier received at a series of Rodney Howard-Browne meetings. Clark later resigned from the Vineyard movement to begin an apostolic missions network.

Clark has told *Charisma* magazine, "I believe that we are going to see another healing revival, so I wanted to

do a school where there could be a solid biblical basis for both the models and the theology behind healing and power evangelism" (August 2004, pg. 27). The term "power evangelism" was coined by the late John Wimber, who gained fame with the Association of Vineyard Churches. It is defined as evangelism being demonstrated by healings, signs, wonders, and exorcisms.

Clark is currently criss-crossing the United States conducting four-day healing schools. The schools, according to Clark, were established to correct false doctrine and train Christians in the healing ministry. According to the *Charisma* news report, Clark further stated, "People like the models I learned in the Vineyard and the balance, so I do expect that there will be a multiplication of healing in churches, communities and nations as a result of our healing schools."

—MKG

MOON SHINE

U.S. government lawmakers, including senators and representatives from both major parties, were part of a reception last spring that honored about 100 people for their efforts on behalf of local, national, and world peace. However, the "Crown of Peace" ceremony held on Capitol Hill turned out to be an awards event honoring the Rev. Sun Myung Moon, founder and leader of The Unification Church.

Afterward, some of the elected officials said they were deceived about the true purpose of the gathering. "There was no indication Moon would be there," a staff person for Sen. Mark Drayton, D-Minn., said. Another, Rep. Roscoe Bartlett, R-Md., maintained he "had no idea Moon would receive an award and deliver a speech."

However, George A. Stallings, who helped organize the ceremony, said the invitation sent to officials announced that Moon and his wife would be honored during the event. The Washington Times Foundation was among the sponsors of the reception. *The Washington Times*, owned by Moon, is a conservative newspaper in the nation's capitol. The reception was held at the Dirksen Senate Office Building, which would require the approval of a senator. According to Stallings, the name of the senator is "shrouded in mystery."

During the ceremony, a crown was placed on Moon's head. Rep. Danny K. Davis, D-Ill., donning white gloves, carried the crown on a pillow to Moon. Davis said that while he was a Methodist who "disagreed with many of Moon's religious teachings," he nevertheless "praised Moon's efforts on behalf of world peace," according to *The Washington Post*.

At the gala event, Moon delivered a lengthy address. According to the *Post*, Moon was quoted as saying that