

# Campus minister's work is hectic but fulfilling

By CASEY RAMSEY  
Reporter

houses parish offices, serves as a meeting room, family room,

modeled, so Strieder is calling to check on construction progress and landscaping plans. By the time he's finished, the mail has arrived, full of letters to answer and bills to pay. The work is slow because every few minutes a student stops in to say hello or get a quick hug on the way to class. In the brief moments when the student center is quiet, Strieder prepares notes for one of the classes he teaches or outlines Sunday's sermon.

Strieder, born in Sealy, went to college at the University of St. Thomas in Houston. From there, he went to the seminary at Gregorian University and received his master's degree in Liturgy from The Pontifical Liturgical Institute, both in Rome.

A student of language, Strieder is fluent in Italian, Spanish, Latin, German and English. Strieder will often say a

few words in the native language of his visitors.

"I always catch people by surprise, but it really makes them feel at home," he said.

The "quiet" of the morning usually ends around noon when students gather in the student center to watch soap operas and visit as they eat lunch. There is a friendly atmosphere and underlying feeling of common religious beliefs that make it easy to feel at home. After lunch, Strieder spends his afternoons counseling students and taking care of other work around the church.

Most of Strieder's counseling with students is done in three areas: student-parent struggles, marriage and anxiety over grades.

"Students are often caught in a struggle to do what they want to do and what their parents want them to do," Strieder said.

"Choosing a major is a good example."

Strieder said he also sees many students who feel they have failed as a person because of their inability to make good grades.

"It is important that the students believe in themselves," he said. "I try and point out their ability to do anything."

Ordained into the priesthood

in 1976, Strieder said he wanted to be a priest since high school.

"Of all the vocations I could have chosen, the priesthood gives me the most joy and fulfillment," he said. "It just makes sense in my mind."

Strieder's day finally is over and it ends as it began: quietly. The students are home study-

ing. Mass has been said. Needs, he hopes, have been met.

"I get a great deal of satisfaction working with young people and watching them grow in their faith," Strieder said.

Strieder has found his life's work and is content. Besides, like the sign over his desk says, "The retirement plan is out of this world."

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ding room and bedroom for Texas A&M Catholic students. It has a "lived in" look, full of laughing, crying and singing. All of which helps contribute to the family environment atmosphere Strieder stresses.

Armed with a cup of coffee, Strieder slips past the students into his office to make some phone calls. The student center is in the final stages of being re-

## Community outraged

# Portuguese claim bias in gang rape verdict

United Press International

NEW BEDFORD, Mass. — Members of the Portuguese community, outraged by the conviction of two immigrants for aggravated rape, said Sunday the verdict showed Portuguese-Americans are regarded as "sub-citizens."

With Daniel Silva, 27, and Joseph Vieira, 28, held in the Bristol County House of Correction for raping a woman on a tavern's pool table, residents were afraid the men might be sent back to Portugal or be sent back to Portugal.

Alda Melo, spokeswoman for the Committee for Justice, the group that bailed out the defendants, said, "The treatment of Portuguese immigrants is not quite equal to the rest of the community."

They are treated like "sub-citizens," underserving of equal treatment under the law, she said.

Silva of New Bedford and Vieira of Pomfret, Conn., were convicted Saturday of aggravated rape of a 22-year-old woman on a barroom pool table last year. The woman also was of Portuguese descent.

The two face a possible maximum sentence of life imprisonment and Superior Court Judge William Young can order the two deported after they serve their sentences. Young scheduled Friday for sentencing.

Lawyers for both defendants said they would appeal. A second jury resume hearing evidence against four other men charged with aggravated rape: John Cordiero, Victor Raposo, Jose Medeiros and Virgilio Medeiros.

"I don't feel there was evidence that supported those convictions," Melo said. "We're not going to take this any more."

Emily Sedgwick, Spokeswoman for the Committee for Justice, said the verdict was an outrage inspired by anti-Portuguese bias.

"People were willing to be-

lieve the woman's testimony because Silva is a Portuguese immigrant," she said. "What we said all along, that the prejudice among the jury was not adequately inquired about, was borne out."

New Bedford, a fishing community of 100,000, is 60 percent Portuguese.

The victim is of Portuguese descent but the Committee for Justice claims the verdict was biased because Portuguese-Americans are favored over Portuguese immigrants. The victim's family has been here for at least one generation and she doesn't speak Portuguese while Silva and Vieira are immigrants who had to have the court proceedings translated from English.

The jury was all white but it

included a number of Portuguese-Americans. The Portuguese groups would not put a number on it, saying they could tell just by surnames.

Bristol County District Attorney Ronald Pina dismissed suggestions the verdict was based on Portuguese sentiments.

"I'm a Portuguese-American. That has nothing to do with the case at all," he said.

The announcement of the verdict in the neighboring courthouse in Fall River sparked violent outbursts with Vieira's brother, Louis, pounding his fist against the railing until he was carried kicking and screaming from the building.

At least two television cameramen were punched as the disturbance spilled into the parking lot.

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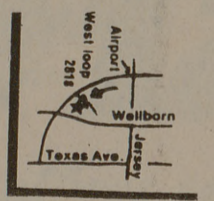
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