

DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

Other Need Cited...

Population Rises...

... Tax Savings Noted

aid in preparing our boys and girls for Christian citizenship."

ADDITIONAL HIGH SCHOOLS NEEDED

The increase in the number of parish schools and the rapid rate of increase in elementary school registration since 1942 will move our needs and people to give some thought to the need of new high schools in future years.

Within the confines of the city of Rochester the increase in the elementary schools in 1949 over the previous year was 751 children. In that same year the increase in Rochester and Monroe County was 1188 children and in the Diocese as a whole 1479 children. Studies of a birthrate and baptism registers indicate an even greater annual increase until the year 1958. While the four high schools for girls in the city of Rochester will be able to absorb this increase for a number of years, the outlook is not so promising for our large central high school for boys, Aquinas Institute. Through the use of the unused public elementary school LeGrange Avenue the Basilian Fathers have been able to accept for Catholic education all the boys who applied. The present registration in both buildings is 1700 and is little short of capacity.

It is difficult to see how in future years the Basilian Fathers at Aquinas will be able to meet the impact of the increased number of graduates of our parochial schools and to continue the splendid work they are now doing in providing for all the boys of the city and county who are desirous of Catholic education. There will be need in the city of Rochester in the future for at least one additional high school for boys.

Outside the city of Rochester high school registration remains static. Less than 700 boys and girls are receiving Catholic education at the high school level. But what is being done is being done well. Both from the standpoint of Christian education and scholastic achievement excellent work is found at DeSales High School, the central high school in Geneva, in Holy Family Parish High School, Auburn, and in the Central Catholic High School in Elmira.

Especially worthy of praise have been the efforts of the priests and people in the city of Geneva. For thirty-eight years the Catholic people of this city comprising only two parishes have supported this central Catholic school at a little sacrifice. Undaunted by the destruction of their high school building by fire in 1943, the faithful in Geneva have pledged themselves to the erection of a new edifice at a cost approximately \$141,000.

This praiseworthy faith and zeal of the priests and people of Geneva for this central high school offers a splendid example and one most worthy of imitation by larger communities in the Diocese having a greater number of parishes, a greater number of the faithful and greater financial assets.

EDUCATION OF RETARDED CHILDREN

It is expected that in any Catholic School system as large as that of Rochester there could be many children of retarded mental ability. These children must be kept close to Christ in the environment of the Catholic school and given those special helps and special forms of instruction suited to their needs. Because of optimum circumstances at the Immaculate Conception School in Rochester there was initiated four years ago by way of experimentation and through the foresight of Monsignor Joseph S. Cameron, former Diocesan Superintendent of Schools, some special forms of instruction for children of less mental ability.

Through the generosity of Monsignor Cameron a few children from outside of the parish were permitted to attend.

Remarkable success has resulted in this effort to the extent that the work being done recently received exceptional praise from a representative of the State Department of Education. But to repeat the work being done at the Immaculate Conception in each of our schools would be quite out of the question. The lack of teachers especially educated for this type of work with a special vocation for it, and the lack of room in the schools, would preclude such an approach.

CENTRAL SCHOOL A SOLUTION

A central school to which children of this type from all the parishes might attend would offer a favorable solution. It is quite probable that a school building for this purpose would be available, but funds for the annual current expense would have to come through the generosity of Catholics in a position to underwrite its maintenance. In a very special way these children need all the graces of Christian surroundings.

It is noted in many instances that when parents withdraw such children from Catholic schools for special classes elsewhere, they invariably are returned to the Catholic School—the parents recognizing the need of the religious atmosphere of the Catholic school and the special kindness and charity that is ever present in the religious character of our sisters. There is a real challenge here for those laymen financially able to perform a great work of Christian Charity in helping to save these little handicapped children for Christ.

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Because of the uncalled-for controversy over the Federal Aid bill that would grant school transportation and public health services to children attending religious schools, special mention is made here of the public health and transportation services to the children of the Catholic Schools of the Diocese. Last year 2,213 children received home to school transportation at public expense. The 32,403 children in the parochial and high schools of the Diocese were the recipients of the school health services granted by the particular community in which they live.

The transportation granted to our children is by virtue of an amendment to the State Constitution in 1938 enacted into law in May, 1939. The public health services granted are by virtue of New York State legislative enactment of June 1939. Both laws mandate equal service to all children regardless of the school they attend.

FEDERAL AID OPPOSITION

Last year, as for many years previous, undernourished children in the Catholic schools of the city of Rochester were given milk daily at public expense as well as the children in the public schools. All the children in the Catholic schools were the recipients of the many fine health services available through the Board of Health, medical inspection, audiometer and otological services, as well as nursing services. As a matter of fact health services were given to Catholic school children in the city of Rochester by the Board of Health many years before the State Law of 1938.

Those who oppose Federal Aid for these services to children in religious schools are the Protestants and Other Americans United For Separation of Church and State, the National Education Association and its militant ally the American Association of School Administrators, composed largely of public school superintendents of the nation. This latter body of over 4,000 educators recently in convention assembled almost unanimously (two negative votes) gave approval to a measure that would exclude entirely children in religious schools from receiving these health services through Federal Aid.

These groups state that giving such services to children in religious schools would bring about a union of Church and State. This old shibboleth of union of Church and State is utter nonsense, and its introduction by educated and intelligent men into this matter of health services for little school children indicates an intent to deceive and to arouse religious antagonisms. The enjoyment of bus transportation and health services by the children of New York State for so many years gives the lie to these groups and their members who consent to the established policy of the group. They ought to hang their heads in shame when by their actions and their votes they would

aid in depriving little children of better health and nourishment and a bus ride merely because they go to a school which safeguards their love of God and religious faith.

For fifteen years your Superintendent has cooperated with public health authorities in the administration and supervision of these health services to the children in our Catholic schools in the City and Diocese of Rochester—he sees no union of Church and State! Nor can he see how any other school official familiar with the law and practice of extending these health services to children of religious schools such as exist in New York State and the city of Rochester could vote to approve a measure that would deny these services to children in religious schools.

Again it is not inadmissible to state that those who oppose bus transportation and health services for children attending religious schools put themselves on record as opposing the Constitution. The Supreme Court Decision declared this practice constitutional in upholding the right of the State of New Jersey to transport children to schools of their parents' choice. Federal grants to students in religious schools as well as public schools has for many years been a practice of the Federal Government. We cite here the participation of children in religious schools in the Federal lunch program and their participation in grants under the National Youth Act.

SAVING TO TAXPAYERS

As in former annual reports, there is noted here the contribution made by the Catholic people of the Diocese as a result of the support of their Catholic schools. Such a figure is arrived at by multiplying the number of children in the Catholic schools by the per pupil cost of public education in the community. The per pupil cost figures used here are those of 1947-48, the latest figures available from the New York State Department of Education. Because of the education of 19,909 children in the Catholic schools of Rochester the taxpayers saved \$4,742,721.95. Because of the education of 32,403 children in the entire Diocese the taxpayers saved \$7,313,966.86.

CURRICULUM CONSTRUCTION

Cooperation with the New York State Council of Catholic School Superintendents continued throughout this last year in the important work of curriculum revision consonant with Catholic principles of education. Through a committee of teachers at Cliff Haven, New York, under the direction of the Superintendents' Council the course of Study in Religion, Social Studies and Science has undergone revision. It is expected that the task of the workshop this year will be the study of Language Arts at the elementary level. The significance of the results of this important educational effort is found in the fact that these courses of study have been adopted in many dioceses in the nation and have found their way into foreign lands.

The use of visual aids grows apace. Projectors for the various types of visual aids are finding their way into the schools and this last year a healthy growth was noted in the use of the Diocesan Film Library.

SCHOOL CONTRIBUTIONS

We are pleased to note that the teaching of Christian Charity is not an abstract presentation in our schools. Contributions to the Home and Foreign Missions, the Red Cross and the March of Dimes last year reached a grand total of \$53,731.70.

Graduated from the high schools of the Diocese in June 1949 were 950 boys and girls. Of these, 450 entered institutions of higher learning. State scholarships were earned by eight seniors, three more than the previous year. On a competitive basis twenty-eight scholarships were earned in examinations for admittance to Catholic colleges, twelve more than last year.

Since our last annual report five priests and ten members of the teaching sisterhoods passed to their eternal reward. We ask for these the prayers of all the priests and faithful of the Diocese that Almighty God may shed His perpetual light upon them who sacrificed their years in bringing His divine light to so many of His children.

Respectfully submitted,

(REV.) CHARLES J. MAHONEY

April 20, 1950

Superintendent