

Rising Birth Rate Poses Problems For American Catholic Educators

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Within the next seven years Catholics of the United States will have to face the most challenging expansion problem that has ever confronted them.

The rising tide of school children resulting from the higher birthrate of the forties is already causing concern among Catholic educators. Bulging classrooms almost everywhere, coupled with a shortage of teachers—especially religious teachers—has brought them up short.

Conservative estimates call for the building of at least 45,000 additional classrooms and the recruiting of some 60,000 additional teachers by 1960 if we are to continue to provide Catholic educational facilities for but half of our Catholic children. After 1960, classroom and teacher needs will increase yearly even beyond that the annual need will be between now and 1960.

And these needs are not peculiar to Catholic schools. They represent only a part of the rising tide of children confronting all American schools.

ENROLLMENTS IN public and private elementary and high schools are expected to increase by more than 1.3 million annually until at least 1960 (a 4 per cent increase per year) when this

1960, the number will be greater. By 1957 there will be almost half again as many as in September 1951. Four million pupils are expected to enroll in Catholic elementary schools by 1960 if



personnel and building needs can be met.

Today 46 per cent of Catholic elementary school children are attending a Catholic school. If Catholics are to continue providing a Catholic education for even less than half of all their children of this age, they will have to build and equip 3,500 new elementary schools between now and 1960-61. This building program is estimated, at present school construction costs, as close to a billion dollars.

While financing this needed expansion program, during the next seven years Catholics will have to recruit, educate, and have ready to step into the classrooms over 27,000 additional elementary school teachers, not counting replacements needed to cover normal attrition in teacher personnel.

Were Catholics to provide educational facilities for all their children, they would have to be ready to absorb around a million new pupils each September for the next five or six years. Today they are providing a Catholic education for more than 4 out of every 10 Catholic children and youth. Every school day Catholics of the United States are saving the taxpayers over \$4,000,000 in maintenance and operation costs alone, not counting the huge sums involved in capital outlay.

By 1960 CATHOLICS expect to have nearly double the enrollment in their high schools than they had in 1950, or around 900,000 as compared with some 600,000 this year. It was during the current school year that they experienced on the high school level the first wave of the 1940 higher birthrate. Next September's freshman class will be still larger, and so will each succeeding freshman year until at least 1956.

The peak year for high school enrollment most likely will be 1957-58, based on the estimated number of Catholic adolescents at that time. The actual enrollment, of course, will depend on ability to meet building and personnel needs.

Today there are some 2,300 Catholic high schools staffed by more than 28,000 teachers. The

600,000 students enrolled account for a little over one third of all Catholic adolescents in America's high schools. In other words, Catholic high schools are educating only 36 per cent of all Catholics enrolled in secondary schools. Catholic high schools are not, however, an insignificant part of American secondary education; actually, one in every 12 American secondary students is in a Catholic high school. One in every nine of America's elementary school pupils attends a Catholic elementary school.

If Catholics are to continue educating even less than half of their adolescents desiring a high school education, they will have to finance, build and equip—between now and 1960—more than 15,000 additional high school classrooms at a cost of more than \$500,000,000 and also recruit and train nearly 23,000 additional high school teachers.

To the extent that building and teacher needs go beyond actual realization by 1960, to that extent will more and more adolescents be turned away from Catholic high schools. One thing is certain: Catholics are not confronted with a mere emergency situation. The problem is not only here, to stay but will reappear with increasing force beyond 1960, in increasing severity.

Today some 230,000 students are enrolled in 231 Catholic colleges and universities. This means that one in every 11 American college students attends a Catholic higher education institution. Catholic colleges are planning an expansion program geared to an enrollment of close to 400,000 by 1960. The beginning of the big bulge in college enrollments will be felt around 1953. If it reflects the high birthrates of the forties, each year during the decade of the sixties will reflect a larger and larger enrollment, with the fall of 1965 registering the greatest shock in enrollment increase. Enrollments are likely to mount annually beyond 1965 until 1971 when the record infant crop of this past year confronts college admission officers with a new record high of college entrance applications.

Whereas there were 8 1/2 million young men and women between the ages of 18 and 21 in the U.S.A. this past fall, there will be 14,250,000 by 1970. Increase in college enrollment will come not only from this greater number of college age, but also from a higher percentage of those of college caliber actually going to college. Of those in colleges today, only 2 out of 5 are in the upper quarter of their age group in mental ability. These facts lie behind the enrollment estimates which predict that college enrollment in the nation will double what it is today by 1970 when there will be three times as many students of college age pursuing an education than in 1940.

If the avalanche of children confronting our schools is alarming public educators, Catholic educators are even more seriously concerned. For during the past several years the prevailing birthrate among American Catholics has been significantly higher than the birthrate for the nation at large.

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St. John The Evangelist

Greece Parish Readies School Addition For Expected Enrollment Of Over 700

Greece—Rapidly nearing completion is a \$160,000 addition for St. John's Parochial School in Greece, N. Y. Over 700 children will be in attendance this September using the already completed eleven room unit constructed in 1949 and 1952. This final unit contains eight classrooms, Principal's and Nurse's offices, and basement hall.

FUND DRIVES in 1948 and 1951 provided sufficient financial resources to begin construction of first a seven classroom unit and then a four room unit. The present three story structure replaces the original wood building which served the parish nearly seventy five years while it was a small rural church. Rapid suburban development has demanded vastly expanded facilities for education and the Greece parish will now have a school of 19 classrooms.

THE REV. DONALD E. LUX, pastor, plans to use the school hall for additional Sunday Masses to relieve the crowded conditions in the small Gothic church. Sisters of St. Joseph staff the school and live in the convent located immediately adjacent to the school. Last year, an addition to the convent doubled its facilities and can now provide for twelve nuns. The school faculty, in addition to 10 Sisters under the direction of Sister Rose Xavier, has one lay teacher, Miss Elizabeth Lamendola.

The Rev. Frederick Bush, Assistant at St. John's, is working with the pastor on plans for the Dedication Ceremony which will take place probably in October when the work of construction is completed.

THE GREECE PARISH was organized over seventy five years ago to serve a scattered farming community. Belgian, Dutch and German immigrants quarried the stone and built their own church. The first classes were conducted in a one room basement and all nine grades seldom totaled more than ten or fifteen. Some parishioners recall how one year the pastor served as the school teacher and if there were a sick call or other urgent parish business, the pastor-teacher would declare a "holiday."

Home building in Greece began in a limited way before the Second World War but the most extensive developments have occurred within the last five years.

OVER 125 CHILDREN are enrolled in St. John's Kindergarten, and over 100 for each of the first three grades. Upper grades have totals of 40 to 60. Eleven rooms will be used this year and additional rooms will be put into use each year until there are two rooms for each grade.

Approximately 600 children bring their lunch for noon time thereby creating a recreational problem at that time. Men of the parish have planned playground facilities to enable older boys to play baseball, basketball, etc. while the girls can spend their time in tag, jump rope, and "playing house." When rain or snow keep the children indoors, movies give them a "break" between lunch and afternoon classes.

Long Range Plans Forecast Expansion Of Parish Schools

By PAUL CONTESTABLE

Long range plans are being formulated by various parishes throughout the diocese for the establishment or expansion of parochial schools. Increased enrollment for the

past few years necessitated expansion of facilities in parishes that already have schools and other parishes are planning their first schools.

Indicative of the increased enrollment in diocesan parochial schools is the opening this Fall of three new schools in the Diocese. St. James Parish in Waverly will open its first school in September as will St. Michael Parish in Newark. Also St. John the Evangelist Parish in Greece will open its new school addition this Fall.

Other parishes are making long range plans for future building or expansion to care for the need of more parochial school rooms. Included in this planning are the following parishes:

St. Rita, West Webster—No school exists at the present time. Approximately 200 children are now attending Holy Trinity School in nearby Webster and another 150 children are enrolled in public schools. Plans are now underway for an eight room school to be started late this year and ready for occupancy in September, 1955.

St. Jerome, East Rochester—Classes are now being held in the C.Y.A. building. A new \$249,000 school is already under construction and will be ready in September, 1955. Ground was broken on June 29. A stage is being added to the C.Y.A. building and will be used for school activities.

St. Louis, Pittsford—A 400 per cent increase in four years has outgrown present school facilities. Plans for a new church and school are in process of preparation at the present time. Announcement has already been made

of a fund raising campaign to accomplish this objective. The campaign will get underway this Fall.

Assumption, Fairport—A new school has definitely been decided on but plans are still in the making according to the Rev. Leonard A. Kelly, pastor. With his parishioners, Father Kelly is studying the problems presented in starting a parish school and many possibilities have presented themselves. The parish is planning to advance the project and it is hoped to start the school with first grades in 1955.

Holy Cross, Rochester—The present school has 12 classrooms with an expected enrollment of 630 or more. The expansion program is definitely needed. A campaign for funds will be held the middle weeks of October according to the Rev. J. Joseph O'Connell, pastor.

St. Francis, Auburn—Three classrooms are being added to care for additional students. Part of the auditorium was converted into two classrooms and a third room consists of an addition to the school building.

Ordinations Listed At St. Bernard's

His Excellency Bishop Kearney will administer major orders to 41 seminarians at St. Bernard's Seminary, Rochester, on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 18 and 19, according to the Rt. Rev. Wilfred T. Crough, rector. These students are beginning their last year at the diocesan major seminary.

Minor orders will be administered by His Excellency Auxiliary Bishop Casey to 45 seminarians at St. Bernard's on Friday and Monday, Sept. 17 and 20. These young men will begin their third year at the seminary.

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