Champion Of Catholic School Education

"The religious school has been with us from the very foundation of American institutions," says Rochester Bishop under whose leadership diocesan schools have enjoyed phenomenal expansion

By MONSIGNOR CHARLES V. BOYLE, Superintendent of Diocesan Schools, and FATHER WILLIAM M. ROCHE, Associate Superintendent

"Parochial school graduates are an eloquent defense of Catholic patriotism. The Catholic school system has given far more to America than it will ever ask in return."

Bishop Kearney

THE BISHOP of [illegible] proven champion of [illegible] schools. During the [illegible] of his fatherly care of the Rochester Diocese, Bishop James E. Kearney has been extremely [illegible] of Catholic education [illegible] has encouraged, directed and [illegible] his loyalty to those charged [illegible] duty of training our [illegible] Though his twenty years [illegible] In the wake of a depression [illegible] wars, and a postwar period [illegible] certainty, the history [illegible] school system of Rochester has been one [illegible] ready adaptation [illegible] needs of expansion [illegible] gainst obstacles [illegible] Various in current [illegible] methods.

Catholics in the [illegible] op Kearney feels [illegible] profoundly grateful [illegible] opportunity of [illegible] achievements. Although [illegible] this country [illegible] from the government [illegible] a measure [illegible] Eucharistic Mission [illegible] Blessing

We should [illegible] Kearney has [illegible] burden of a Catholic [illegible] possible here [illegible] Father there are [illegible] for our own [illegible] the classes upon [illegible] there be to God [illegible] effective."

The education [illegible] Rochester Diocese [illegible] twenty years is a [illegible] Kearney's zeal [illegible] wholesome support [illegible] and faith he has [illegible] voice to chart the [illegible] actions and his [illegible] and people have [illegible] other's wishes.

[illegible] engaged [illegible] Diocese received [illegible] Kearney's appointment [illegible] with a great deal [illegible] His educational experience [illegible] that of college professor [illegible] large Scottish Seminary [illegible] parish and Bishop of a [illegible] has [illegible] and varied experience [illegible] educational work [illegible] guidance of successive [illegible] area [illegible] of Catholic schools [illegible]

Awards in Bishop's Oratoricals are annual highlight of high school year.

BISHOP KEARNEY was [illegible] as a [illegible] developed and [illegible] his [illegible] established parochial [illegible] Bernard McQuaid for the Rochester Diocese.

Writing on the [illegible] the North American Review [illegible] 1889 Bishop McQuaid stated: "[illegible] and people who fail to live [illegible] their faith because of heavy sacrifices to be made are unworthy members of the Church [illegible] demands of her disciples heroic sacrifices to preserve the Faith."

Bishop McQuaid's [illegible] established in the Diocese of Rochester a first rate educational system built upon the solid foundation of priests, Sisters and laity, who were not afraid of such heroic sacrifices.

Bishop Kearney found these ideals of the first Bishop of Rochester very much alive in 1937, and the traditions of Catholic education deeply rooted in the fabric of the Diocese. There were 24,511 pupils enrolled in [illegible] diocesan schools. These [illegible] taxpayers over a half [illegible] dollars. In the state as a whole he also observed Catholic schools were saving the taxpayers [illegible] dollars. This was in 1938. Twenty years later, the savings effected by the operation of our schools in the Rochester Diocese alone throughout the state have been astronomical figures.

On his arrival in the Rochester Diocese Bishop Kearney was quick to see the facilities for Catholic high school education. He found the Diocese operating eight secondary schools including St. Andrew's Seminary offering four year high school courses, and two that offered one year. St. Ann's, Hornell, and St. [illegible]

In the [illegible] the following registration: Nazareth Academy 326 pupils, Mercy High School 315, Sacred Heart Academy 70, Aquinas [illegible] 180, St. Agnes' Holy Family [illegible] School enrolled 160, Catholic High School at Elmira 148, De Sales High School at Geneva 322 and Notre Dame [illegible] there were 25 ninth grade pupils [illegible] Hornell, and 7 in [illegible]

As impressive as this picture might seem, Bishop Kearney realized very well that many Catholic boys and girls were not enrolled in Catholic high schools. In Rochester for example only 35 to 40 per cent of the graduates of Catholic elementary schools were enrolled in the city's Catholic high schools. The Bishop was hopeful and determined that this percentage would increase.

There were, however, good signs too heralding the forthcoming expansion necessary to meet the demands of parents for more Catholic grade schools and high schools for their children.

To the Bishop's great satisfaction, diocesan schools reported improvement in study courses and advances in scholastic achievement. Nazareth Academy became the first school in the Diocese to offer home economics as a minor course of study.

Nazareth Academy in 1937 could proudly count 3815 graduates to its credit, while the newer Mercy High listed 376 graduates in five years. Students of Mercy won national recognition for their art exhibitions at the Rockefeller Institute. The same year the Academy of the Sacred Heart added a new wing, boosting capacity to 150 students. With a registration of more than 1000 boys, Aquinas Institute had reached a new peak enrollment.

Another incident also indicated the growing acceptance and demand for Catholic education. During Holy Week, 1938, St. Charles Borromeo School in Greece was destroyed by fire. To the eternal credit of the parishioners and friends, Bishop Kearney was able to dedicate a new parish school on September of the same year.

OUTBREAK OF World War II made it increasingly more difficult to keep education abreast of the times, and marked a temporary setback in plans to expand diocesan schools. Europe was torn by open war, and America was poised on the brink.

School enrollments continued in a downward trend throughout the country. During the school year 1939-1940, there were 22,873 elementary pupils in the diocesan schools. There were a total of 77 elementary schools and 8 secondary schools. St. Ann's, Hornell, St. Rose's, Lima, and St. Agnes, Rochester had a ninth year. Elementary registration was down in the Diocese, nearly 100 in two years.

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