

'Employment Anonymous'

Prayer and Palaver Mark This Job Seeking Effort

Pittsburgh — At noon every Tuesday in downtown Pittsburgh, small groups of men meet for lunch in various restaurants. They eat. Then they pray. Then they talk about jobs, with most of the talking being done by those who are out of work. Those who have jobs listen, and try to help.

This is "Employment Anonymous," a local interfaith project that began when a group of Protestants and Catholics looked for a way to bring Christianity into their weekday world.

In the last four years, 500 men have been helped by "Employment Anonymous." Of those 500, 60 per cent went out and got jobs on their own, but they were helped just as much as the 40 per cent who made important contacts during the luncheons. Because one of the "pledges" the unemployed had to take upon joining EA was a promise to pray for 30 days.

"This all sounds crazy," admits the Rev. Donald T. James, an Episcopal clergyman who helped organize the EA sessions, "but it works. Most men, when unemployed for a long time, become almost unemployable. Their attitude when applying for a job almost says: 'You don't have a job for me, do you?'"

"The 30-day prayer experiment seems to lift a burden from the unemployed person and to give him more confidence in himself. It teaches him two things: God cares about him and didn't create him to be unemployed, and the men at the meetings also care."

The "Employment Anonymous" project has particularly been attractive to members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society who are assisting ex-convicts in finding work. "Employment Anonymous" is just basic Christianity in action," commented Tom O'Brien, who is director of

St. Joseph House of Hospitality and a Vincentian penal-committee member.

"Employment Anonymous" has been just one off-shoot of a larger movement called the "Pittsburgh Experiment," an attempt at applied religion in a variety of areas.

"We believe we have proved that the 30-day prayer experiment works," the clergyman added. "People today are willing to try things like television sets, washing machines and cars on a trial basis. Why not religion and faith? If you say you believe in something, yet don't put it to work, you really don't believe in it."

He himself was introduced to the "Pittsburgh Experiment" when he was a salesman. The movement was begun in 1955 by an Episcopal rector who encouraged young businessmen of all faiths to meet regularly to discuss the problem of bringing Christianity into their daily jobs. Not long afterward, Mr. James left his sales job and studied for the ministry. He became director of the "Pittsburgh Experiment" upon his ordination in 1960.

"We don't evangelize for any particular church," he stressed. "We don't care if you hang by your heels to worship God on Sunday. It's what you do the other six days that we're interested in. And, we don't pass ourselves off as a substitute for a person's religion or church affiliation. We tell our members to go to their own denominational church because only through their participation in the church's sacraments do they get the spiritual fuel to go out and get involved in Christianity."

The "Experiment" has resulted in ecumenical dialogue, with Protestant members having been invited to a Catholic



A NEW APPROACH to getting jobs for the unemployed is typified by this luncheon scene of "Employment Anonymous," a Pittsburgh, Pa. interfaith project, described in the accompanying article.

retreat. "They were surprised to find Catholics in the city and see where God is working," the Rev. Mr. James said. "The experiment's key concern is the city's sponsoring it or who is in charge or who is in charge of it." (Catholic Press Features)

Villa Maria Camp Open

Camp Villa Maria opened its twenty-sixth year on July 8. This year the enrollment is seventy-seven girls, ages 6-12. Miss Patricia Dwyer is the Camp Director and Miss Kathleen Neylon is Camp Secretary.

Mrs. Martha Flanagan and Mrs. Mary Hamula are the day and night nurses, respectively. Miss Trudyann Vitale is the dietetic supervisor whose staff includes: Mrs. George T. Sydelko, Miss Nancy Sydelko, Mrs. Martin Keiffer and Miss Cathy Keiffer.

Counselors are: Unit Leaders — Sueann Hanrahan, Clarissa Perez, Beth Ann Colucci and Kathleen Cavanaugh. Co-waterfront Directors are Elizabeth Kennedy and Janine Mauche assisted by Joyce Butler, Georgianna Glace, Linda Mallette and Mary Kay Madden.

Dramatics and Singing is under the supervision of Debby

Drake, Denise Butler and Judy Ekes. Director of Sports is Kathleen Donahoe, assisted by Diana Regan and Kathleen Monroe. Ellen Creighton is Director of Crafts, assisted by Joann Mann and Sharon O'Bryan.

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Book Review

Catherine of Dublin

by SISTER MARY PETRUS SULLIVAN

(Sister Mary Petrus, of the Rochester Sisters of Mercy, is president of Catherine McAuley College)

Simply, vivaciously, with a crystalline artlessness compatible with wisdom, Sister Mary Petrus chronicles the life and hymns the praises of "a charming and virtuous woman," and the "holiness and heroism" of Catherine McAuley.

A young lady of 19, beautiful and beautifully gowned, knelt before the Blessed Sacrament one day in the city of Dublin in the faint pre-dawn of the nineteenth century.

Catherine McAuley was an Irish heiress, with all the accoutrements and circle of interests of any 19th century sentimental lady novelist's heroine (except a good singing voice!—and for this, we are sure, God reimbursed her in good measure by that delicious funny-bone!).

Catherine McAuley was indeed a woman of her 19th century. The adoring child of a faithful Irish Catholic father who was extraordinarily tender-hearted for the poor, she followed in his footsteps.

Her awareness of "desperately needed social work" led her, blindly, unintentionally, and, one might say, unwillingly, to the formal organization of a religious order, a new kind of order, an active order of unenclosed religious women.

"Women religious simply did not roam the streets after dark looking for influenza victims" in the Dublin of 1831.

Rather, as Sister Mary Petrus so illuminatingly describes, it was customary, it was perhaps mandatory, "when the night bells rang—all the good Presentation nuns prepared to smuggle into their white percale havens, with more or less unconcern for the social and economic realities of the city of Dublin." No offense intended, good Sisters!—We'll explain later.

How relevant this new endeavor was to its day we may gather from the response to it on all sides: from the fervent welcome of a parish priest, from a Vatican message, from the young ladies who were attracted to its purpose, from the distressed who said "God bless you!" And, no less, from the one hundred and thirty years of marvellous growth of that Order, at once so "different" and so hesitatingly accepted as a project by its founders.

Yes, the 19th century's desperate need was social work: food, shelter, clothing, medical and nursing care for the poor; the protection of poor women from dangers to virtue. These aspects of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy were rightly ascendant. In due course, the 19th century gave way to the 20th century—as last year's Harvest Queen acknowledged, and bestows recognition upon, her successor.

And the frame of reference which constituted the challenge for Frances Ward, "emigrating" to America in the 1840's, gave way to that which faces the 1966 religious community, of which our young biographer is a valiant member.

Sister Mary Petrus, the author of this biography, who chose to enroll in the ranks of this vibrantly outgoing community of spiritual purposefulness—is a religious woman alert to the challenging relevancy of today.

The book jacket informs us that as a teacher of literature, "Her most intense interest is in the value and aesthetic validity of modern fiction and poetry."

The sun looks down this very day upon the rubble of bombed cities, the inhuman injuries to such physical devastation and dismemberment and physical agony as the 19th century never dreamed possible.

And yet, the sickness of the 20th century is fundamentally an inner sickness—a sickness of the mind, the will, the vision. Though physical danger and destruction is rampant, it is the psychological danger which is more terrible, and perhaps more imminent.

Truly, the valiant woman whom King Lemuel sought, and upon whom Catherine McAuley tried to model herself, is needed today.

Truly, we need the calm, womanly amplitude with which "she hath put out her hand to strong things, and her fingers have taken hold of the spindle. She hath opened her mouth to wisdom, and the law of clemency is on her tongue."

And can those giggling postulators, reflecting a 19th century esteem for what is "ladylike and refined in speech, dress, manner, and conduct," be in truth the valiant woman adequate to face the quandaries and the terrors of the 20th century?

Can their airy agility in innocent, table-tennis badinage have any effect on a hydra-headed, octopus-implemented 20th century adversary? A proving ground which demands the abandonment of "dogma" as the admission price to secularistic benefits? A planning board wherein a sort of Darwin-Marx-Freud-Pavlov entente constitutes itself the arbiter of what is to be?

Let us remind ourselves that those giggling postulators have one priceless treasure, one invincible weapon—that beautifully derived quality of virtue—the armor of the Roman soldier, and the "soul-deep" and marrow-true identity of the valiant Jewish woman.

Their airy, carefree light-heartedness is "part and parcel" of the orderliness of a religious community—orderliness in submission to the will of God and the rule of the Church; joy in the innocent, whole-hearted service of God.

The sprawling, formless, cynical sophistication of the 20th century mocks at "outmoded concepts" labelling them not just old-fashioned habits, but basic abnormalities of function.

But virtue, to prove itself, does not need to shout from the housetops, nor wave a red flag in front of a bull.



SISTER MARY PETRUS

It may be the dying whisper of a frail twenty-four-year-old struck down by tuberculosis:

"Whatever God wills, Mother, but I'm awfully sorry to leave you with so much work to do for the poor. Dying is the easy way out. I'm afraid."

"Catherine rejoiced to find such willingness to live and to suffer and to labor. One can meaningfully die for things only when one is glad to live for them."

And it may not be irrelevant, in closing, to note that "Mother McAuley's chief fondness was for the natural virtue of common, everyday politeness. Mother Catherine often subtly observed with precise and penetrating distinction that "Politeness is not so much the result of education as of recollection and humility."

Politeness—that still, small voice of divine reasonableness—that so-characteristic 19th century virtue! Might it not, even in this our twentieth century day, be a golden key of inter-communication—understandable at once to nature's child and to the highly cultured—miraculously audible in today's babel of swollen ego and crass commercial vulgarity?

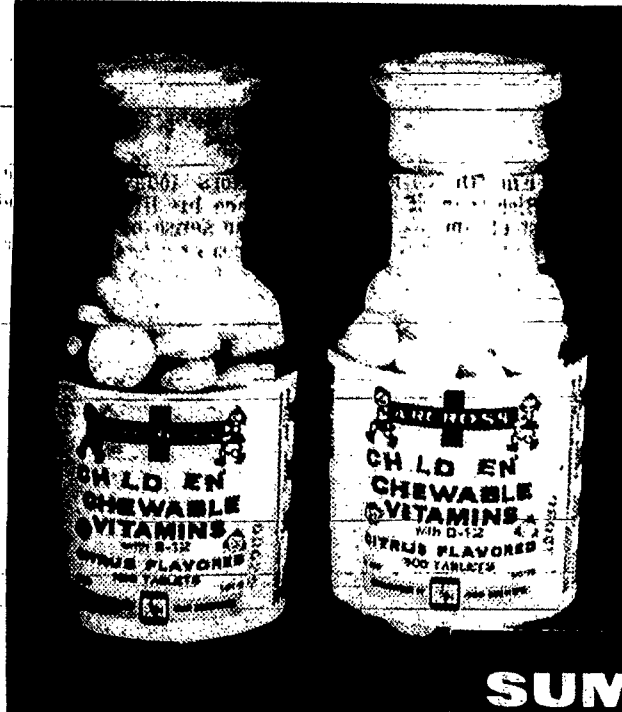
—by Alice Rogers

Area Grads Earn Degrees

Area graduates of schools outside the diocese of Rochester as reported by the schools or relatives follow:

Hospital School

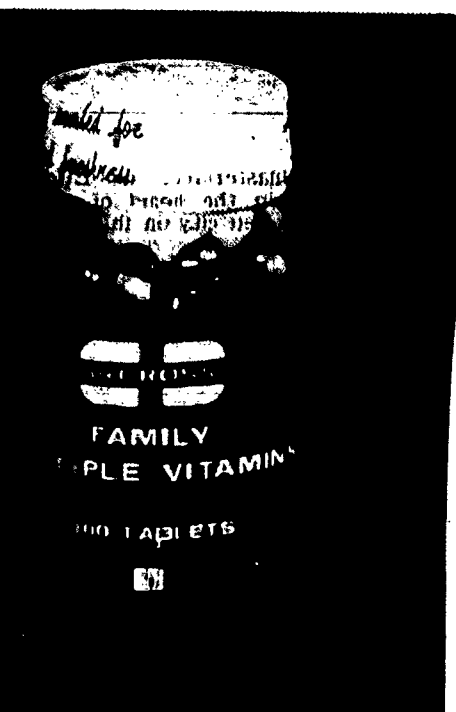
Miss Linda DiFazio, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas DiFazio, of Seattle, Wash., formerly of Geneva and Aberdeen, Md., was graduated from St. Francis Xavier Cabrini Hospital School of Nursing in Seattle. She was given the Inspirational Award and was selected as Cabrini Student Nurse of the Year in 1965. Miss DiFazio will be a nurse at Fort Sam Houston, Tex. in the Army Nurse Corps. Her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Paul DiFazio of Geneva, attended the graduation.



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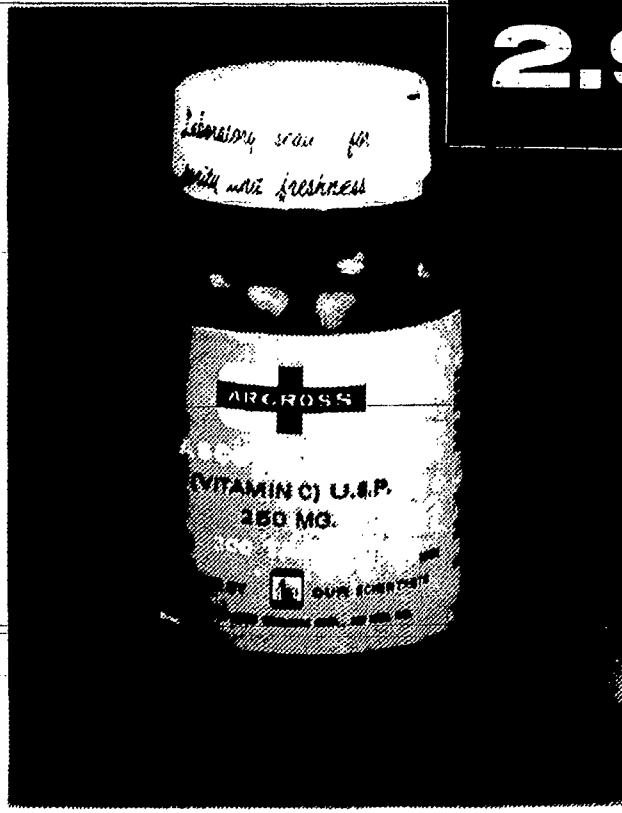
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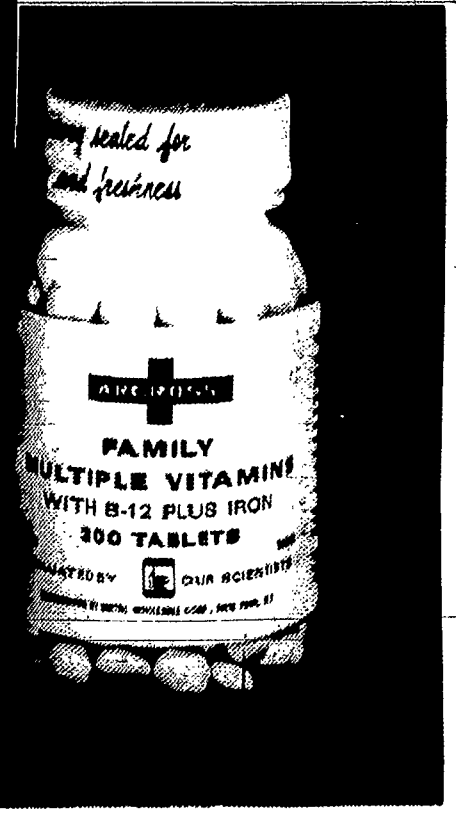
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