



Lutheran Pastor Norbert E. Kabelitz of Oklahoma City made a hard-hitting appeal for justice to all American school children in a talk at Aquinas Institute. He is shown with Basilian Father Leon Hart, principal.

## 'Greatest Bargain in History'

### Equity for Pupils in Sight

The march toward justice for pupils in all schools of New York State bumped up against some formidable roadblocks this week — but victory still seems to be in sight.

Jewish spokesmen and a Presbyterian ecumenical official voiced opposition in New York City to current efforts to revise the Blaine amendment of the state's constitution at next spring's constitutional convention.

The amendment prohibits tax-paid benefits — such as textbooks — which may aid "directly or indirectly" church-related institutions.

Theodore Ellenoff of the American Jewish Committee told a preliminary convention commission he thought even tax-paid bus rides should be denied pupils who attend other than public schools.

Opening the door to additional services for pupils in parochial schools, he said, would be a "tragic mistake."

Murray A. Gordon, speaking for the American Jewish Congress, made a similar statement at a hearing on the constitution held by the state Democratic Party. He said "any attempt to tamper with the controversial 1894 Blaine amendment would be a tragic step backward toward destruction of the principle of separation of church and state."

Gordon also said tax-paid

benefits to parochial school pupils "is a grave threat to the public school system on which our democracy rests."

W. Stanley Rycroft of the Presbyterian Commission on Ecumenical Mission and Relations, also in New York City, charged that President Johnson and Governor Rockefeller, both Protestants, had acted "politically" by "aiding religious schools."

The "child-benefit theory," Rycroft said in a letter to the New York Times, "circumvents" both the federal and state constitutions and he termed such action "shocking."

Other voices, however, were lifted in defense of the children, and these voices included those of a Lutheran minister and several candidates for political office.

Lutheran minister Pastor Norbert E. Kabelitz of Oklahoma City told an audience of 700 at Aquinas Institute last week that the organization Citizens for Educational Freedom has grown tremendously in membership in recent months as parents across the nation are increasingly dissatisfied with discrimination against pupils in other than public schools.

The nineteen Monroe County candidates for the spring constitutional convention went on unanimous record at a public meeting at the Eastridge High School Wednesday evening as favoring revision of the Blaine amendment.

Robert M. Quigley of Phelps,

a candidate for the convention for Cayuga, Ontario, Schuyler, Seneca, Wayne and Yates counties, told the Courier this week it is only by eliminating the Blaine amendment that we can actually "preserve the doctrine of complete separation of church and state." He said the constitution in its present form is "discriminatory." Quigley also said, "The entire educational system in New York State is based upon the premise that each child shall have an equal opportunity for education," and the Blaine legislation is a constant threat to such "equal opportunity."

One of the most eloquent statements on the subject this week came from Dennis J. Livadas, a member of the Greek Orthodox Church, and a candidate for Rochester city court judge.

His statement is as follows: "I support repeal of the Blaine Amendment without reservation. Free textbooks to all children in private and parochial schools is both right and legal."

"This program does not violate the principle of separation of Church and State. Public funds now provide buses, milk, lunches, physical education, etc., for the health and safety of parochial children. Federal funds are paying for research, technical facilities, scholarships, grants, and school buildings. All of these programs are constitutional."

"The private and parochial school system represents billions of dollars of investment and more billions annually in operations, at no cost to the State. The parochial parents sacrifice of their own free choice to make this system possible. This gives greater variety to our education, preserving many diverse cultures to enrich our common society. The resultant competition strengthens all our schools—public as well as private—thus preventing State monopoly of education and safeguarding academic freedom."

"Plus: The Roman Catholic Schools are strong teachers of the classical respect for law and authority, strict personal morality and discipline, religious reverence, love of country, family stability. God is not dead there. We never needed these attitudes more than today. The State cannot survive without them."

"To buy all this for \$15 a year per pupil is the greatest educational bargain in history. As New York taxpayers and as thoughtful Americans we should provide these free school-books as a token of appreciation for all these contributions to the welfare of our State." Livadas concluded.

— Faber Henry Atwell

# The Catholic COURIER Journal

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## 'Closer to the People'

### St. Ambrose Mission in Homes in Parish

St. Ambrose parish will be the locale of a unique four-week spiritual crusade from Oct. 23 to Nov. 20. Four Holy Cross priests will spearhead the effort, using approaches which are completely new to the Rochester area.

Evening Masses offered in parishioners' homes (four different homes each night) and followed by open end discussions for those gathered there will be the primary means used, according to Monsignor Arthur Ratigan, pastor of St. Ambrose.

In this intensive phase of a long range program of parish renewal in the spirit of the Vatican Council the aim will be "to make religion relevant to the daily lives of our people," the pastor stated.

"We want to demonstrate," he said, "that the Church is anxious to come closer to her people, understand their needs and serve them better."

The parish will be divided into four areas, to ensure a more thorough coverage. Each evening, except Saturday, a family in each area will be host to "a living room Mass" (or dining room Mass) adds Monsignor Ratigan to which 8 to 10 couples in the neighborhood will be invited.

Following the Mass, the priest who offered it, will be ready for an informal dialog with those present. Topics? Anything and everything, according to Monsignor Ratigan.

"We have already polled our parishioners through a questionnaire however, to find out

what they would like to discuss," he explained.

Open communication between priests and people is one of the big aims of the St. Ambrose venture.

Parishioners who have been approached to be hosts for the neighborhood Mass-and-discussion sessions, have been vocal in their enthusiasm: "Mass right here — in our own home? Wonderful!" has been a typical response according to the parish priests.

After Mass is over, the altar will be cleared, vestments will be put away and priest and people will open up a discussion.

"We know that people have many questions in these days of rapid changes in the Church, and we welcome the opportunity to talk things over with

them," comments the pastor. During the five weeks, the four Holy Cross priests hope to contact via these neighborhood discussion groups, meeting once a month in parishioners' homes.

The initial program, Monsignor Ratigan hopes, will be followed by a long-range effort, centering on small neighborhood discussion groups, meeting once a month in parishioners' homes.

Aiming to "bring the basic ideas of the Vatican II Council to his people in this way, Monsignor Ratigan talks in terms of an "aggiornamento" (up-dating) on the parish level.

The hosts will provide coffee and cookies, nothing more elaborate. Non-Catholic friends in the neighborhood will be welcome.

## Zap! A Novena At the Edge Of the Cliff

Hollywood — (CPF) — Whenever Gotham City's police commissioner needs help, as millions of television viewers know, the call immediately goes out to Batman — and before you can say POW! and ZAP! and CRUNCH!, the Caped Crusader has once again thwarted the dastardly villains.

But even though Neil Hamilton has been portraying Police Commissioner Gordon for almost a year now, when assistance is really needed he prefers to rely on someone else: St. John Bosco, better known as Don Bosco.

The dramatic story of the 67-year-old actor's "friendship" with the patron saint of young people is told at length by Hamilton in the current issue of The Salesian Bulletin, published by the Salesians of St. John Bosco, an order dedicated to working with youth.

"Wherever you may see me — either on the street, on the stage, the screen or television," wrote Hamilton, "you may say without fear of contradiction, 'That man has in his pocket a Don Bosco Novena.'"

Hamilton, who began his career as an extra in silent films and became a matinee idol in the late 1920's and early 1930's, dates his friendship with Don Bosco from the "lovely, bright and warm" day some 25 years ago when he started out for "a spot high in the mountains over Santa Monica" — where he planned to kill himself.

"LOOKING BACK on it now it seems like utter madness," he explained, "and yet at the same time I was convinced it was the only thing to do. I knew it was wrong, but my compulsion to do it stemmed from the fact that it offered a solution, or at least seemed to: Insurance — money for my family, money that would pay three months' back rent. Money for food, and the dozen and one essentials necessary for existence."

For, by the early 1940's, Hamilton was bankrupt and had



A job for Don Bosco? Neil Hamilton as Police Commissioner Gordon, flanked by Batman and Police Chief O'Hara.

lost his position and friends as well as his money. At the height of his early career, he was able to look back on hundreds of films he had made: "The White Rose," "America" and "Isn't Life Wonderful!" for the legendary D. W. Griffith; "The Sin of Madelon Claudet," which won an Oscar for Helen Hayes in 1932; the original "Beau Geste," in which he played Ronald Colman's twin brother, and others, including "Dawn Patrol," "The Animal Kingdom" and "One Sunday Afternoon."

He was, as he put it, at "the top of the heap, with a big house that took five servants to run, with the second largest swimming pool in the State of California." The 1929 Crash took most of his savings, a bad investment in a San Francisco's World Fair exhibit in 1939 took the rest, and when middle-age came, the acting jobs didn't.

Thus, despite having been "blessed with a fine Catholic mother and father whose teaching-by-word and example, put the rock of faith solidly under my feet," Hamilton had decided to commit suicide by throwing himself off a cliff.

"You might think or wonder why it was that I, who as a young man had once planned to enter the priesthood, would not have known there was one who would never let me down — Almighty God; but I had asked Him so often for so much

that I was prayed out. There was not a prayer left; of this I was convinced," Hamilton wrote.

BUT then:

"As I climbed toward Sunset Boulevard, I found to my great surprise that I'd turned from the sidewalk and had climbed a steep flight of stone steps that I'd never climbed before, and found myself standing in front of the Newman Club located on the edge of the U.C.L.A. campus."

There he told "the whole 'silly-shabby story' to a sympathetic priest. Shortly, the priest led Hamilton to the Newman Club chapel named after Don Bosco, and gave the actor a copy of a novena to the saint.

"He even seemed faintly amused as, looking me straight in the eye, he said, 'You tell me that you are prayed out, that you have no prayers left? Well then, you have nothing to worry about. The prayers in this little novena are all printed out for you; all you have to do is read them.' I thanked him and left, without the slightest realization that this visit, and its result, would color my life and my thinking from that moment to my dying day."

Although stories of "instant results" from novenas and other types of prayer have been criticized, Hamilton insistently dates the start of his professional comeback from the ninth

day of his first novena to Don Bosco — when he went to Universal Pictures and was given his first job there in eight years. Steady assignments followed, on Broadway and TV as well as in films.

TV Guide early this summer noted that "his friend St. John Bosco is always with him, and he carries with him pirated copies of the novena prayers, which he passes out to acquaintances and people he meets," and Hamilton builds his talks around the Don Bosco novena when he addresses Church groups and gatherings like the Hollywood motion-picture and TV industry communion break fast last winter. But his objective is broader:

"There may be only one person, man or woman, young or old, within the range of my voice who — like myself back in the early Forties — is convinced that they are prayed out. That further asking is a foolish waste of time. Their prayers have not been answered; maybe they think they haven't even been heard."

"To that one person and for that one person do I tell my story. I cannot tell them how nor when their prayers will be answered, but to that one person do I say do not give up, not for the time it takes a clock to go 'tick.' Your prayers will be heard." — (Catholic Press Features)



A very young Palmyra parishioner gets a helping hand from his big sister. This is part of the "new liturgy" at St. Ann's parish in the heart of Wayne County. See page 4 for story and more pictures.

## IF YOU MOVE

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## What's Right

York, Pa. — (NC) — Bishop George L. Leach of Harrisburg said here there is too much talk in this country about "what's wrong with the Church" and not enough about "what's right with it."

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## Pope Includes Peace In Mission Day Plea

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul VI, in a Vatican Radio address marking World Mission Sunday, Oct. 23, urged Catholics to cooperate in spreading the Gospel and raising standards of living among the people of developing nations.

At the same time, he made a new plea for world peace, voicing the sorrow over the growth of hatred, racism, nationalism and segregation in many parts of the world.

"Never before," he said, "has World Mission Day offered us such a spectacle of cares, preoccupations and difficulties. Another reason for sadness in our paternal heart is the growing divisions, hatreds, conflicts that separate peoples because of evil, racist doctrines, nationalism and segregationism that nourish rancors of all kinds."