



Talent Development Institute

The Gabriel Richard Institute course, a nation-wide organization designed to promote a Christian awareness in today's world, is in its second year of operation in Rochester.

Beginning in Detroit 15 years ago, GRI is a non-profit organization which seeks to make people from all cultural and educational backgrounds discover where there is a need for them

and how to utilize their talents to fill this need. The nine week GRI course stresses spiritual motivation, organization and communications.

For more information, call Ray Zimmer, ID 6-2719.

Acres of Despair

By DENNIS J. GEANEY, O.S.B.

I am having a little fun toying with a quotation from Leon Bloy: "Joy is the most infallible sign of the Presence of God." I would change the word "joy" to "life." By life, I mean a zest for living, light-heartedness, nerve, daring, initiative, playfulness, and all that goes with a spirited person who enjoys life. Negatively, it would read: "The absence of joy or life is the most infallible sign of the absence of God."

Here are two shorter versions: "The presence of life is the presence of God." "The absence of life is the death of God."

Next, I want to take Bloy's sentence and see how it relates to the Church as we find it in our day-to-day experiences. Is the Church showing signs of life or death? When we come in contact with the Church, do we find the cup of life overflowing? Or, do we see the tell-tale signs of death, which is the absence of God? I will jot down a few random examples.

I WAS DRIVING by an inner city, massive, black, granite, depressing looking complex of church buildings. I had seen this depressing sight before, but this time I decided to stop and pay a visit to any priest who might be home. I entered this, big city, black tombstone, that buried the history of a half century of pride of race and religion of a people who had migrated at least a decade ago. It was the rectory I visited, not the Church. I was in search of life among these ruins. I felt a visit to the Church would depress me to the point of crushing my spirit.

I found a young priest friend at home. I immediately told him that the whole plant should be leveled. It presents a horrible image of the Church to the passer-by. The Church should be the light of the world, a city seated upon a hill, not a reflector of the decay all around it. He agreed that the Church should be torn down.

It has a seating capacity of nine-hundred and has a total of 250 people at the five Sunday Masses. With his pastoral instincts, he thought Sunday Masses could be held in some rented public where people would feel more comfortable and not sealed in an empty mausoleum. He did not agree that the rectory should be torn down; it could be converted into apartments for families to occupy.

This was in an area of Negro summer rioting, born out of these acres of despair. Yet, something could be done to bring life to the rectory. In the next parish, in an equally depressed area, there is an attractive "Welcome" sign above the doorbell. Inside, you see signs of life. The parish staff are trying to brighten up the rectory. On the walls were Sister Mary Corita's pop art. In the hospitality room, one could sign his name on the wall with the previous distinguished or undistinguished visitors. One can splash walls in Corita fashion with tomato ads and all kinds of bright and catchy bits from Life. A college art class could come into a rectory and bring new life to it with no more expense than a bottle of Elmer's glue and have a lot of fun in the process.

Development Program Planned in India

New Delhi — (RNS) — Father Dominic Pire, Roman Catholic priest who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1958, has announced that he will develop an area of about 200 villages in Madras State as Asia's second "Island of Peace."

The Belgian Dominican concluded a visit to India during which he discussed the project with Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, food minister C. Subramanyam, Madras chief minister M. Bhakthavatsalam and other high officials.

The 25,000 people of the villages located about 400 miles southwest of Madras had previously donated land for development through the "Gramdan" (village gift) movement of Acharya Vinoba Bhave, world-famous crusader on behalf of India's landless poor.

Father Pire said he would organize a small group of qualified men and women from several countries to work on the "Island" for a period of six years in cooperation with workers from India.

During the period, the local population will be trained to look after land and water development, improve farming methods, process and store agricultural products and organize poultry and fish-farming.

Father Pire said the "Island" would be named after the late Mahatma Gandhi to mark the centenary of his birth in 1969.

The priest visited here in response to an invitation from the

Indian government. He made his first visit to India in 1962 while returning from Chittagong (East Pakistan) where he set up Asia's first "Island of Peace" for a population of about 25,000 villagers.

He was given the Nobel award in recognition of outstanding service in Europe to rehabilitate war refugees who were then languishing in camps.

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Priest Author Dies at 62

Friar David Gannon, 62, widely known Graymoor friar, died Nov. 10, 1966 at Peekskill. He served in the Diocese of Rochester when in 1948 he undertook the direction of the renovation of Cook Academy in Montour Falls.

The Friars of the Atonement now conduct St. John's Atonement Seminary there. The Seminary was dedicated by Bishop Kearney in 1949. Father Gannon took a prominent role in the ceremony.

Father Gannon wrote his widely acclaimed biography, "Father Paul of Graymoor," at Graymoor, Garrison, N.Y. The book is now in its tenth printing.

Mission Listed For Teenagers

All Henrietta and Rush teenagers in grades 9 to 12 are invited to Guardian Angels Church, 2061 East Henrietta Rd., to participate in a mission to be conducted by Rev. Joseph Bernier during the week of Nov. 29, thru Dec. 1.

Father Bernier's talks will be geared to all aspects of teenage life. One of the more unusual features of the mission will be the singing of a Folk-Song Mass to enable the youth to participate in a contemporary mode. This mission has been arranged through the cooperation of the Catholic Youth Groups of Henrietta.

Family Life Lists Series

The Family Life Bureau in Elmira will sponsor a series of Four Pre-Cana Conferences starting Sunday, Nov. 27, with Conferences following on Sundays, Dec. 4, 11 and 18.

This series will be conducted at St. Patrick's School hall. Each conference will begin at 8 p.m.

All Corning-Elmira area couples planning marriage before next spring are urged to attend.

Father Roy Kiggins, Dr. William Burke and a panel of married couples will explore Christian Principles and Family Life.

25 Years Ago

(From Catholic Courier files, Nov. 27, 1941)

The Catholic Chapel at Mac Dill (Air force) Field, Tampa, Fla. was dedicated by Chaplain William J. Gaynor, a priest of the Diocese of Rochester.

Bishop Kearney asked members of Rochester Diocesan Council, National Council of Catholic Women to join in a spiritual project for the boys from this area in service camps. "The Story of the Vatican," a motion picture filmed at the Vatican and narrated by Monsignor Fulton J. Sheen, was scheduled for showing at the Little Theater by Rochester Council, Knights of Columbus.

Greek Prelate To Visit Rome

New York — (RNS) — Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras of Istanbul, supreme leader of Eastern Orthodoxy, has revealed that he plans to visit Pope Paul VI in Rome next year.

An interview of the Patriarch in Istanbul by John Cogley, religion editor, was published by The New York Times.

Family Rosary Radio Leaders

Friday, Nov. 25 — Charles Long of Our Lady of Mercy parish.

Saturday, Nov. 26 — (Mass will be celebrated)—John Keenan, St. Charles, with workers from Bldg. 23 and 153, Machine Shop, Eastman Kodak Co.

Sunday, Nov. 27 — Joseph West, St. Michael's, Livonia Center.

Monday, Nov. 28 — Anthony Annunziata, St. James.

Tuesday, Nov. 29 — Frank Kinsky, St. Louis, Pittsford.

Wednesday, Nov. 30 — Victor Loutens, St. Anne's.

Thursday, Dec. 1 — John Vail, St. Augustine's.

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