

On a Hill Overlooking Canandaigua Lake

NOTRE DAME

RETREAT HOUSE



Notre Dame Retreat House, situated on high bluff overlooking Canandaigua Lake.

Bishop Sheen will dedicate the new Notre Dame Retreat House on the West Lake Road overlooking Canandaigua Lake, Sunday, July 9, at 3 p.m. He will celebrate an outdoor Mass and preach the dedicatory sermon. You're invited to attend the ceremony. Following the blessing rite, the Retreat House will be open to the public. This special section of the Courier gives you a preview of what you'll see there, articles on what retreats are for and the long tradition of the retreat movement in the Rochester Diocese.

Diocesan Retreat Story, A Memorable One

By THOMAS H. O'CONNOR

The "Tower of Grace," situated atop a near-mountain hill overlooking, towards the east, beautiful Canandaigua Lake, is the culmination of a laymen's retreat movement in the Diocese of Rochester which had its beginning in St. Bernard's Seminary.

As early as 1918, men of this diocese assembled once a year at the major seminary on Lake Avenue after students had gone on summer vacation. In those days the retreat began on Friday night and continued until Monday morning.

We had a reminder of one of those retreats in July, 1953 when Joe Kramer brought in a

picture of the men on the 1918 retreat. Men of all walks of life were in the picture. Bishop Thomas F. Hickey, later Archbishop and Father Terence J. Sheeley, S.J. of Mount Manrea were in the center. Many of the men shown returned to make a Day of Recollection at the Notre Dame Retreat House, 246 Alexander St. on August 16, 1953.

The Early Days

Recollections of the St. Bernard's Retreat are dimming but I can recall one I made in which the other retreatants made me the bellringer to wake everyone up. Now they have electric bells. I found it difficult to rouse some 175 men and some

wit, probably Neil Collins, saw to it I was presented with roller skates, — the toy size — at the Sunday afternoon meeting — to get around faster in the morning.

A closed retreat, according to a Father Donald Miller, C.S.S.R. in a feature article in the Courier said "is one in which you leave your home and all your ordinary occupations and reside at a monastery or retreat house for any where from two to five days."

St. Bernard's Seminary, available in student vacation periods, was not available, of course, for weekends throughout the year.

The story of the Retreat movement progressed from St. Bernard's to Our Lady of the

Lake Mission and retreat house, on Seneca Lake, near Geneva, to 246 Alexander St. and now to the Notre Dame Retreat House, Foster Road, Canandaigua.

On to Geneva

In early 1942, Bishop Kearney gave the Redemptorist Fathers the assignment of setting up a centrally located retreat

house and Father John F. Murphy, C.S.S.R. was put in charge. The imposing estate of H. E. Hovey, prominent Genevan was purchased by the Redemptorists. It was a striking structure capable of accommodating 40 men.

Situated on Lochland Rd., with a rolling landscape to the lake it soon attracted men from all over the diocese. Father

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