

School Principals

Improve Skills By Role Playing

Dr. Glenn Immebart's workshop for parochial school principals is loaded with problems.

That's what makes it so effective. The two-week session also utilizes "role playing" to a high degree.

In fact, the principals who take his workshop, currently running at Nazareth College, are asked to "become" a mythical "Sister Monica" who is starting her first assignment as principal.

"Sister Monica" is located at St. Stephen's School in the town of Madison in the state of Lafayette. The school, the town and the state are as mythical as Sister Monica.

It's all part of a well worked

out technique to help school administrators sharpen their ability to face problems, assess them and solve them.

Dr. Immebart, who teaches Educational Administration at the University of Rochester, has run two such workshops for parochial students this summer. The first ran from July 31 to August 11; the second started on August 14 and concludes today, August 25.

They are patterned after similar "role playing" workshops he developed in the training of public school administrators.

How It Works

Principals taking the course are given five bulky brown envelopes, which contain most of the materials they need to live in Sister Monica's shoes during their fortnight course.

The first envelope is full of background material, mostly material left by the outgoing principal for her successor, to help the newcomer get oriented.

The next three are "in-basket" material, such as the principal might find on her desk on a typical day. They are dated August 30 (before school starts), Oct. 23 (a few weeks after the new principal takes over) and mid-March, when she is well settled in her new job.

The "in-basket" material presents an intriguing medley of typical school situations, a note from the janitor about repairs needed, letters from irate parents, communications from neighboring public school officials — the whole gamut. After telling "Sister Monica" that she now has two and a half hours to take appropriate action on the items, the directions stress:

"Be yourself, Sister Monica. Behave as though you were really on the job. Do not write descriptions of what you would do, write instead, the actual letters, notes and memos. Do not say what you would do, do it."

After the principals-in-training finish disposing of their in-basket challenge, they discuss each others' solutions, and are graded on their efforts.

"This is very helpful," said one principal last week. "You think you've handled the matter well, but after hearing a half dozen other approaches, you realize that there are better ways of going about it."

Father Daniel Brent, associate superintendent of Catholic schools, and a veteran himself of Dr. Immebart's course two years back, added, "It makes you more thoughtful about handling problems. You don't act so quickly on your past as-



SOFT SELL — DUBIOUS RESPONSE! In principals' simulation workshop program, Father William Schifferli tries to convince principals that a (mythical) school bequest be used for a meeting room. His listeners, all principals, seem unconvinced by his argument. From left they are Sister Judith, St. Stephen's, Geneva; Sister Mary Ellen, St. Andrew's, Rochester; and Sister Angela, Nazareth Hall, Rochester.

sumptions, and you begin to look for longer-range answers."

It was Father Brent's enthusiasm about the potential of this "role playing" device in training administrators, that led Dr. Immebart to suggest such a course for Catholic school principals.

Setting the Stage

To make sure the setting was realistic, Dr. Immebart and several of his graduate students did a survey of a school that was felt to be typical. Good Shepherd school in Henrietta was chosen for the survey.

Father Brent then invited a group of eight principals to act as a screening panel to help set up such a workshop geared to parochial school problems.

The result is the "St. Stephen's School Principalship" with all its attendant problems.

Dr. Immebart uses a bagful of audio-visual devices to make his workshop as real as possible. The principals are even given an audio-visual "tour" of the school and community in which "Sister Monica" is supposed to be stationed.

To keep things as true to life as possible, there are even unexpected interruptions. The principals may be struggling through their "in basket" when Dr. Immebart will stop them, tell them that the next voice they hear — on tape — will be the school secretary, who may say something like:

"Sister Monica, I'm sorry to bother you, but there's a student in the office, crying and all upset. She wants to see you right away."

So "Sister Monica" squares her shoulders, takes a deep breath and turns to meet a new problem!

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3 Basilians Assigned to St. John Fisher

Three Basilian priests, including a native Rochesterian, have been assigned to the faculty at St. John Fisher College.

Father William C. Marceau, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Marceau, 428 Electric Ave., will be an instructor in the Modern Languages Department at the college.

Fathers Leo R. Sands and Paul Broadhurst, both of Toronto, will become members of the Fisher Theology Department.

A graduate of Aquinas Institute, Father Marceau was ordained in 1957. He received his B.A. degree from the University of Western Ontario in 1952 and his M.A. from the University of Laval in 1965. Presently completing a doctoral program in French at Laval for the past year he has been in Paris, France, working on a thesis concerning the writings of St. Francis de Sales. Father Marceau has taught at Assumption High School, Windsor, Ont., St. Michael's College School, Toronto, and at Aquinas.

Father Sands attended St. Patrick's College, Ottawa, and received his M.A. in Speech from the University of Michigan. St. Michael's College awarded him the S.T.B. degree in 1960. For the past year he has been a full-time student in the graduate school of theology at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He has taught theology and English at St. Michael's College School.

Father Broadhurst comes to Rochester from Rome, Italy, where he has been a student at the Pontifical Antheum Angelicum since 1964. He received the licentiate in sacred theology there in 1965 and has been engaged in scriptural studies since that time. He also holds degrees from St. Michael's College and the University of Toronto. Father Broadhurst previously taught at St. Michael's College School and Aquinas.

Challenge: Turn Problems into Opportunities

By MSGR. JAMES C. DONOHUE
Director, Department of Education, U.S.C.C.

It was John Gardner, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, who said, "We face a series of great opportunities brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems." If he had been speaking about the state of

education must seek extraordinary reorganizational means to fulfill the teaching mission of the Church.

2. We must explore the role that Catholic education can play in resolving the great social dilemmas of our time. Foremost among these is "The Crisis in Black and White." If our schools will remain in the cities and wherever possible continue to grow and develop in the cities, in partnership with public education they can be a unique force in reducing racial isolation in the schools.

3. Catholic education must mean more than the institutionalized school. The day may well come when the institutionalized school is a very small part of Christian education (but not, I hasten to add, until we have truly explored its potential).

I am a great believer in the idea that individuals and institutions thrive best when threatened that excellence would be mediocrity were it not for the demands placed upon us.

American education — and especially American Catholic

education — has always been frail in the face of fads. I wonder if the greatest fad to come along in the history of the American Church is not the one that begins, "Let's phase out Catholic schools and become involved in a more meaningful apostolate."

Institutions do not plan to fail; they fail to plan. And if there is one crying need of Catholic education today, it is research. Unless someone soon speaks out from a base of empirical knowledge and tell us where we should be going, we

will muddle our way to insignificance.

I am optimistic enough to believe that the signs point to the fact that my fellow Catholic educators are beginning to grasp the opportunities. Because of their leadership, the future of Catholic education looks brighter than it has in many a day. And with that in mind I close with another quotation from John Gardner, "Leaders worthy of the name contribute to the continuing definition and articulation of the most cherished values of our society."



MSGR. JAMES DONOHUE
"wrestle with the great opportunities."

Catholic education in 1967, he could not have made a more telling point. I believe that Catholic education (and I speak here of the total teaching mission of the Church in America) will fulfill its destiny only when we courageously rip away the disguises and wrestle with the great opportunities.

Among these great opportunities:

1. We must deal with change; deal with it — not sit and wait for it. Create it. Produce it. But more than that, monitor it — take a moral and responsible stewardship for change. This means facing the fact that there is no rational alternative, but — that Catholic

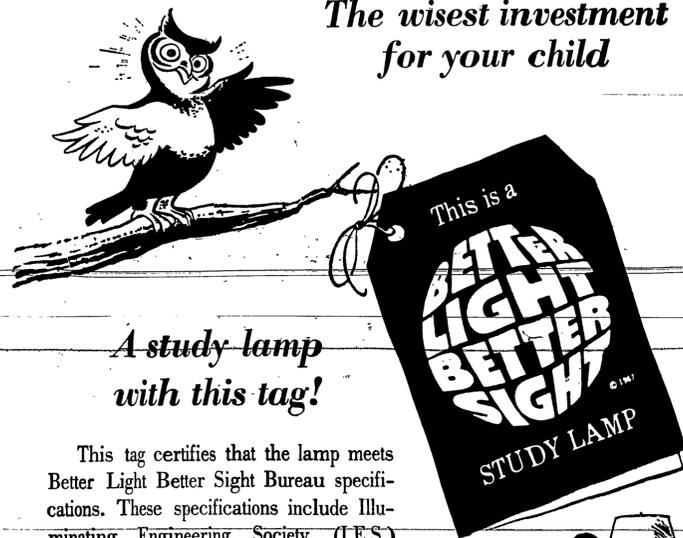
Parents Still First Educator

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school apostolates for social reform. Retraining would take years even when it would be practical at all. Meanwhile, schools are abandoned, there is a great thrashing about looking for new approaches to Christian education, and another generation or two of the educationally deprived will continue to be hemmed in by ignorance.

I would rather suggest that our first efforts be involved in eliminating "educational lag." That is, we must bring the forces of Catholic education to bear on today's problems. Parents can be the most helpful group in eliminating educational lag. They are currently meeting the problems connected with living in industrial America, and should be in the best position to predict with accuracy the kind of intellectual equipment the child should have when he emerges from school. It is senseless to think that all of the research should come from educators. Educators are not infallible, and can use a great deal of help from parents in tailoring schools to meet the needs of the child.

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