



Rabbi Michael L. Kunz of Congregation B'nai Israel leads people in prayer at memorial services for Dr. King held at St. Mary's, Auburn.

REACH To Help Rural Poor

In an effort to deal effectively with the root causes of rural poverty, Secular Mission, the rural action program of the Rochester Diocese, has established the Rural Education and Cultural Horizons (REACH).

REACH will set up programs in the fields of health, housing, employment and education in consultation with the sociology departments of area colleges and working with specialists in the problems.

REACH will be manned by full-time volunteers in a VISTA type program. Volunteers will receive a stipend acquired through private donations and will be housed in the REACH center in Perkinsville, N.Y.

Father Timothy Weider, in announcing the project, said,

"The REACH program applies social problems in an age when people need to experience Christ, not merely hear about Him."

A letter to the Editor, in which Father Weider details the poverty of the rural people he serves and the value of a Christ-centered program in the depressed areas of the diocese, is printed on page 6.

While government and foundation funding are applied to the administration of REACH as well as the REACH volunteer program, the donations of Christian churches are crucial to its success.

REACH covers 15 parishes in Steuben County. Other phases of the diocesan Secular Mission work are for people of Tompkins, Tioga, Seneca and Yates counties.

Volunteers will get on-the-job training and it is hoped they will include graduating high school seniors and collegians this summer.

Priests leading the Secular Mission work are: Father Weider based in Perkinsville, Father John Hempel in Penn Yan and Father John Gormley in Newfield.



Parishioners participate in discussion group at Immaculate.

Immaculate Conception

Inner City Success Story

By MONICA REEVES

For many years, the Plymouth Avenue Circle in Rochester's Third Ward has been silent witness to the general decay of the graceful, turn-of-the-century residential neighborhood in which it is located.

The once showcase-homes, with their pillars and verandas, have fallen into neglect and disrepair. The wide concrete walks are cracked and cluttered with beer cans and broken coke bottles. Houses that used to have dignity now wear fluorescent pink and black "Rooms for Rent" signs.

There have been darkness and silence around Plymouth Circle these many years.

But today a new voice is being heard across Plymouth Circle and into the Third Ward and Rochester as a whole. For in case you don't know, Immaculate Conception Church is staging a comeback. It may just be the success story of the inner city this year.



One of Immaculate's younger parishioners enjoys Sunday morning coffee hour.

Although statistics can't tell the whole story, they can frame the picture in which Immaculate is "doing its thing."

For a decade the parish has been losing people who moved to the suburbs. In the past year, however, it has gained at least an equal number of parishioners. Some 357 families are now registered and contributing to Immaculate (financially or by way of active involvement). Of these, 216 families are residents of the parish area and 141 reside outside the parish limits.

In searching out factors contributing to this influx of people into the parish I came across many. But the Sunday liturgy is the most obvious one, and perhaps in some way representative of the new vitality that pervades all that is going on at Immaculate.

There are only three Sunday Masses, which represents a reduction from five. Father Robert Kreckel, pastor, says "This was a practical measure which has improved our sense of community. With five Masses, everybody was sort of rattling around in a large church. With three, and especially the middle one at 10 o'clock, there are enough people to give a sense of community strength."

There is a different tone about each of the Masses. "We try to meet the different needs of the people who comprise our parish," Father Kreckel explained.

100% Participation

The 10 a.m. Mass is the magnet for Catholics who want to participate 100%. This Mass is "a celebration" in every sense of the word. A choir situated on the left side of the sanctuary leads the congregation in up-to-the-minute hymns to a tempo set by guitars, bass and tamborines.

A working team of 15 lectors and commentators is the result of a request sent out by Father Kreckel for volunteers. "They follow a schedule they've made themselves, which lists their assignments three months in advance," he commented.

The interesting note here is that although no "way out" liturgical innovations have been effected at Immaculate, there is a progressive mood and an unmistakable, although not a definable, sense of community to the worship.

It's a combination of factors that produce this elusive quality: the music, the informality of the congregation and the relevant, to-the-

point sermons of Father Kreckel and his assistant, Father Paul Brennan.

After Mass each Sunday, parishioners and visitors gather in the school for an informal coffee klatch and conversation. Since many here are involved with Rochester's inner city, the urban crisis and possible solutions to it, is a topic likely to crop up. Everyone seems to be alert, articulate and sensitive to the needs of the minority groups.

Meanwhile, in a smaller room off to the side, there's an informal discussion going on. St. Bernard's seminarians (on loan for the Sunday) start off the conversation with comments about the sermon but soon everyone has joined in and the topic under fire broadens. The participants range in age from approximately 20 to 45 years of age and come from all fields: social work, engineering, teaching.

The Parish Finances

Sunday offerings and other contributions have shown a sharp increase in recent months, probably due to the upped attendance at Masses. Comparing the fiscal year ending in June 1967 with the current one to end in June 1968, the increase will be \$18,000. In addition to this, the Diocese of Rochester subsidizes Immaculate to the tune of \$24,000 a year. (This is true of most of the inner city parishes, in varying amounts.)

The School

A tuition-hike for the school has brought in an additional \$5,000 this year. Nobody is turned away, however, for lack of tuition since the parish and interested individuals have provided a sufficient number of scholarships to cover such cases.

The whole tuition raise and its successful collection can be attributed to the new school board. They decided that a raise was both necessary and feasible, so they set about explaining it to parents and collecting it.

There are currently 280 students enrolled at Immaculate; four out of five are Negro children and two out of five are non-Catholics. Seven Sisters of St. Joseph and five lay teachers make up the faculty which Sister Helen, principal, contends is "one of the best in the inner city."

A unique feature of the school, which has no hesitation about experimentation, are three "opportunity" classes. These are special groups for youngsters who are having learning problems, and need the special attention of smaller groups.

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3 Faiths Participate in Memorial

Representatives of the Protestant, Jewish and Catholic faiths participated in Memorial services for Dr. Martin Luther King Sunday, April 7 at St. Mary's Church in Auburn.

The interfaith program began at St. Mary's at 2 p.m. with Monsignor James Cuffey of St. Mary's, Rabbi Michael Kurz of Congregation B'nai Israel, Rev. Pickney Johnson, pastor

of Roosevelt Baptist Church and Richard F. Kuenkler, associate pastor of First Presbyterian Church and president of Auburn Council of Churches, leading the services.

Afterwards, clergy, city officials and other marched from the church to Memorial City Hall where Mayor Paul W. Lattimore and Pastor Ernest Matthews of the Church of God in Jesus Christ spoke.

More Housing Urged As King Memorial

Rochester's Catholic Interracial Council (CIC) this week backed city Mayor Frank T. Lamb's proposal for a memorial to Dr. Martin Luther King, but urged that the most fitting memorial would be HOUSING.

The CIC's executive board, meeting last Monday (April 8), pointed out in a letter to Mayor Lamb that such a memorial would answer the most critical need of the poor whom Dr. King championed.

Following through on the suggestion, the CIC leaders urged the City Council to press ahead with "whatever action is necessary" to get housing erected for the poor. They suggested the possibility of 100 per cent tax abatement to non-profit groups interested in building public housing. Noting that such a tax abatement was unprecedented locally, the CIC board insisted that "unusual situations" demand "unusual actions."

Only by such action, the CIC committee concluded, will Rochester's poor people be convinced of the city's dedication to the ideals for which Martin Luther King died.

The CIC board at the same meeting unanimously voted to support the 12-point social action program adopted by 300 Rochester clergymen last Friday.

Key points in these recommendations included: an appeal for area churches and synagogues to donate 10 per cent of their expenses, benevolences and capital funds to support economic development programs for minority groups; a plea for local department stores to develop job opportunities for 1,000 Negroes; support of the Poor People's March on Washington (April 22) organized by the late Dr. King; backing of FIGHT'S Black Feather Campaign and setting up gun collection centers in churches and synagogues.

Mrs. Lorraine Plotter, CIC president, appointed a three member committee composed of Father Paul Brennan, Mrs. Alma Greene and Mr. Paul Brayer, to discuss implementation of these recommendations with the Catholic Diocese of Rochester, the Jewish Community Council and the Rochester Area Council of Churches.

Mrs. Plotter stated that the committee has been directed to discuss Project Equality with the various church community leaders. She added that the CIC board expressed its strong support for Project Equality as an effective means of carrying out the social action program adopted by the 300 area clergymen.

Holy Spirit Opens Up In Penfield

Almost 2,500 parishioners attended the first Masses conducted in the Church of the Holy Spirit, Penfield, last Sunday.

The morning Masses were just one part of the ceremonies marking the opening of the Church. In the early afternoon an Open House was held at which time parishioners were given formal tours of their new parish home. The open house was followed by an Ecumenical service attended by leaders of other area churches and also 700 parishioners.

Formally participating in the Ecumenical Service were: Rev. James Moss, East Baptist Penfield Church, Rev. Carl Vanderburg, Penfield Methodist Church, Rev. Richard Nygren, Penfield Presbyterian Church, Rev. George Anderson, Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd, Webster, Rev. Charles Griffin, Webster Baptist Church, Rev. James Metzger, Episcopal Church of the Incarnation.

The Ecumenical Service consisted of selected Scriptural readings and the accompanying responses by the congregation. Reverend Mr. Metzger gave the sermon.

Holy Spirit parish was founded three years ago. It is bounded on the North by Route 104, on the East by Jackson Road, on the South by Atlantic Avenue and Irondequoit Creek on the West. The church is located on the corner of Plank and Hatch Roads. The building will serve as both Church and Parish Hall and also has classrooms for Confraternity of Christian Doctrine sessions.

Prior to the opening of the Church this week Holy Spirit parishioners had to travel to Mercy High School each Sunday for Mass which was conducted in the school's auditorium. Formal dedication of the Church of the Holy Spirit will be held in the summer.

Memorial Service in Greece Church

Greece Baptist Church was crammed to capacity last Sunday night when 570 people gathered to pay tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King.

Choruses of "We Shall Overcome" and "The Battle-Hymn of the Republic" issued from the church on Long Pond Road. Monsignor Robert A. Keleher, pastor of St. Charles Borromeo Church led the congregation in a litany of "confession and commitment" and after the ecumenical service people stood in line to sign a housing statement. There were about 200 signatures, according to the Rev. Mr. M. DeForest Lowen, pastor of the host church.

Several Negroes were in the congregation, which consisted chiefly of members of the 21 churches of Greece-Negro people taking part in the service were Canon St. Julian Simpkins, Mrs. Calvin Dash, a singer, and Mrs. Ellen Stubbs, who spoke as a newcomer to the suburban town.

Msgr. Roche Explains Closing of School

The scheduled June closing of Most Precious Blood School was prompted by a long-standing diocesan policy that "a program of quality education cannot be sustained with double-grades." Monsignor William M. Roche, diocesan superintendent of schools told protesting parents of the parish this week.

Eight grades for 165 pupils are conducted in four classrooms of the 13-year-old school building. Three Sisters and two lay teachers constitute the staff. Nearly all the pupils are bused to the school twice daily in a parish bus driven by the pastor himself, Father Sebastian Contegiacomo.

When Monsignor Roche informed Father Contegiacomo on April 4 that the Pastoral Office and the Diocesan School Office expected the small school to close this June, it was planned that the children could all be accommodated in Holy Apostles and St. Anthony's parish schools.

"It is not a question of putting children out of a Catholic school. We know that the Precious Blood pupils can be accommodated elsewhere," Msgr. Roche said. "Most of them live closer to larger neighboring parochial schools than to Precious Blood."

"The critical teacher-shortage makes this step necessary for good education," the superintendent said.

The parish is not intending to enlarge its classrooms and could not staff the full eight classes if it tried to, he regretted.

The announcement of the school's closing was to have been made by Father Contegiacomo after Easter, it was decided. But the story leaked out and a meeting of parishioners on April 9 resulted in a protest statement sent to Bishop Sheen and Msgr. Roche.

Msgr. Roche stated that in recent years four other parish schools have been closed by diocesan order because a double-grade situation resulted in "sub-standard quality."

McQuaid Four Win Debate

Four eighth-grade debaters from McQuaid Jesuit High School captured the Campion Debate League championship last Sunday to end the league's season.

The McQuaid team, composed of Gary Pudup, Richard Sheridan, Gary Schreck and Thomas Schwartz, defeated the "B" squad from St. John the Evangelist, Rochester, in the final round. St. John's "A" unit took third, while the "A" team from St. Ambrose placed fourth.

Priests' Council To Advise on Appointments

Bishop Sheen has invited the Priests' Council of the Rochester Diocese to assist the Pastoral Office in the June appointments of priests.

In his letter, read at last week's monthly meeting of the Priests' Council, the Bishop noted that he had been considering ways of "broadening the shoulders of the Pastoral Office to make it easier to carry the cross of shepherding."

Noting that the Priests' Council had been formed to assist the bishop by their counsel, the Bishop mentioned the forthcoming June assignments of pastors, assistant pastors and priests in specialized work, and invited the Priests' Council to assist in the task.

The Priests' Council has indicated its willingness to aid the Pastoral Office in this work, according to Bishop John E. McCafferty, president of the Council. The group has set a special meeting on Monday, April 22, to devote more time to considering the best means of implementing the Bishop's request.

Bishop To Preach At Cathedral

Bishop Sheen will preach twice Easter Sunday at Sacred Heart Cathedral. He will be principal celebrant and preacher at the 10 a.m. Mass and will speak also at the 1 p.m. Mass.

Concelebrants at the morning Mass will be the rector, Very Rev. Father John S. Hayes; his assistants, Father Eugene P. Sweeney and Father Philip J. Bollette, and Father Michael C. Hogan.

The bishop will conduct the Good Friday liturgy at 1:30 this afternoon and will celebrate Mass Holy Saturday at 8:30 p.m., following the Easter vigil service that begins at 7:30.

PAT ANSWERS

Do you have questions about parish-life, customs and traditions which bug you? The famous HELP! column doesn't know everything. Try PAT ANSWERS! . . . But don't ask PAT about faith or morals. Simply write in your concerns and hang-ups about living in the family of God . . . Address: PAT ANSWERS, 35 Scio Street, Rochester 14604. PAT'S answers will not necessarily reflect the opinion or policy of the Editor, or of the Diocese.

Q. I would like to know whether the publicized theologian Father Hans Kueng is still a practicing Catholic priest, and if so, why doesn't he wear the Roman collar and clerical clothes of a priest? Also why is he teaching at a Protestant seminary in New York?
 —R. L. M., Auburn

A. As far as we know Father Kueng is a priest in good standing with his Bishop in Austria. Although it currently looks strange here, many priests in Europe wear ordinary secular collar and tie in public with their superior's permission. Father Kueng is teaching in Union Theological Seminary in New York City, because in this ecumenical era they wanted him for his particular skills in theology and could afford to bring him here.

Q. My parents will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary soon. Do I have to know somebody in Rome to get them the Pope's blessing?
 —Grateful Son, Elmira

A. No, but you ought to know your pastor, or theirs, well enough to request procedure. A request for a papal blessing usually must be accompanied by a declaration that the persons for whom the blessing is asked are practicing Catholics. A reliable firm for furnishing the blessing-scrolls is Bruno Del Priore, Via di Porta, Angelica, 33, Rome, Italy.

Q. Being a neighbor to a church involves extra traffic noise at Sunday Mass time — that we can live with. By what must the young assistant start a playground on the parking lot? That basketball hangboard under our window is maddening.
 —Rectory Neighbor, Auburn

A. The parish priests tell us that

so many parents complained that the kids had no place to play (nearest playground one-half mile away with dangerous street crossings) that they felt guilty-leaving the parking area stand idle. They agree a time schedule will be worked out to preserve some quiet for you. Better have the kids on a basketball court — than in another court.

Q. How can a concerned parent get some youth programs going in our parish? We have the facilities, and lots of kids, but there is no organizing.
 —Mrs. R. D. T., Rochester

A. Your pastor tells us he would be glad to discuss this with you if you will bring in another dozen concerned parents needed to supervise any good program. His past experience has been that too few good-hearted people try to do too much until the whole thing collapses. But he's willing to try again. Round up the workers — and good luck.

Q. I know several elderly people who cannot get to Mass in inclement weather. Do any parishes have pickup programs for this problem?
 F. K. L., Rochester

A. We know of two churches where young high-schoolers who drive are organized into pools to transport at least three elderly people apiece to church each Sunday. It seems as though any parish organization could make a roster of folks who need rides to church and schedule specific members in the same neighborhood to pick them up each week. Or the parish group might collect a small fund, hire scheduled taxis to pick up four such persons, deliver them safely and return them with very little weekly expense.