

# Diocesan Adult Theology Program Reviews Year's Work

In an age marked by experimentation and change the average lay person soon finds it all but impossible to keep abreast of the latest "what" and "how" within the life of the Rochester Diocese. Among the many new programs in the spirit of Vatican II, one has completed its first year of existence: the Diocesan Adult Theology Program. What it accomplished will only be truly evaluated in the years that lie ahead. But here and now it has established a successful new element in the educational life of the Diocese of Rochester.

For the first time in the life of the Church in the United States, a diocese undertook and successfully conducted a program of adult religious education on a diocesan wide level aimed at the "average" lay Catholic, with a well qualified group of teachers, and offering courses in a wide variety of religious subjects that went beyond the catechism teaching. It was a concrete example of what can be accomplished when the people of God united themselves in a common effort.

The program began its diocesan life last September ('67) when courses were offered in Rochester, Auburn, Elmira and Geneva. Utilizing the available teachers in those areas, classes were given in Scripture, Liturgy, Moral Theology, The Church and in Psychology. The response was so great as to definitely establish the need and hunger for adult edu-

cation in religion among the laity.

This led to a winter session ('68) being offered in Rochester, Victor and Seneca Falls. Again the results proved that there existed a vast number of Catholics who would support a program of this type.

But it had become apparent that the diocese could never be conceived of as existing only within the large city. The life of the Church and the need of its people exist in all areas of the diocesan territory, in both small and large centers of population. With the invaluable cooperation of the Vicariate Board for Religious Education in the Southern Tier, the program came during Lent to Hornell, Horseheads, Apalachin and Bath-Hammondsport as well as to Otisco Springs and Newark in the Eastern Vicariate.

It was at this time that a valuable lesson was demonstrated in the field of religious education: cooperation among various elements in a diocese could be planned on in the future. There are many qualified and dedicated people who will here and now cooperate to bring about what is so badly needed!

On June 6, the final classes were given to complete the spring session of the program that came to Rochester, Auburn, Geneva and Corning. It brought to a close a dream that was given birth by the Spirit within the Catholic Church. The Diocese of Rochester has experienced the chal-

lenge of God's Word in our day, and has shown that a beginning has been made in answering that challenge.

The final statistics have been compiled and reveal that 1,419 lay persons enrolled in courses offered by the program during the past year. To this, one could add close to 300 Sisters. A good number of these were enrolled in more than one course so that the total class enrollment for the year was more than 2,000.

Though the largest number of these enrollments were in the Rochester area, the other areas of the diocese were not lagging behind in proportion, as is witnessed by the following: Elmira 150, Corning 107, Seneca Falls 79.

No picture of the program is complete without some mention of those who taught the various courses. They are: Rev. Albert Shamon, M.A., episcopal vicar for religious education; Rev. Sebastian Falcone, O.F.M., Cap., S.T.L.; Rev. Brian Murphy, O. Carm., M.A.; Rev. James Kelly, O.S.B., S.T.L., S.S.L.; Rev. Walter Nash, O.G.D., S.T.B.; Rev. Patrick Logan, S.T.L., J.C.L.; Msgr. William Shanon, Ph.D.; Sr. Joseph Michelle, S.S.J., M.A.; Mr. William McMahon, B.A., M.S.W., M.S.T.; Dr. John Martin, B.A., M.A., B.D., Ph.D.; the staff of the DePaul Clinic; the staff of Behavioral Science, Auburn Community College; staff of Psychology Department, Corning Community Col-

lege; and the co-directors of the program Rev. Cyrian Rosen, O.F.M., Cap., J.C.L. and Rev. Leopold Probst, O.F.M., Cap., S.T.L.

Together with these, mention must be made of all the pastors and principals who so generously offered their schools and parish facilities and of all the members of the various Vicariate Boards whose advice and effort was so essential.

The Diocesan Office for Religious Education is under the direction of the Episcopal Vicar, Rev. Albert Shamon. His generous cooperation and encouragement were vital in promoting the entire program. His remarks in this regard are indicative of the role of adult education within the future life of the diocese:

"In times past, a fatal tendency in the field of Catholic education was to equate religious education with, or limit it to, Catholic schooling. Schooling begins with school. Religious education is a cradle-to-the-grave affair; it must begin at birth and end at death. Therefore Pre-school and Post-school religious education programs are essential to the teaching mission of the Church.

"It is a wonderful blessing that our Bishop has been able to obtain the services of the Capuchin Fathers for the diocesan Adult Theology program."

Mrs. Martha Richardson, secretary of the program since its initiation,

recalls her impression: "As with many young Catholics who came of age before Vatican II, the Church seemed irrelevant to me. Catholics, laity or clergy, were not conspicuously involved in Christian endeavors in the community such as helping the poor, obtaining services for the disadvantaged; in short, caring about people. Vatican II opened a window but I would never have known it if the Capuchin Fathers had not brought it into my life through the Adult Theology Program." This sentiment was echoed by many who took the courses.

When asked for their comments, the adults who were enrolled in the program were enthusiastic: "I feel the classes have given depth to my faith and I am better prepared to defend it and can discuss it more intelligently," said one woman. Other remarks were: "we sorely need more knowledge"; "you can't imagine what these classes have done for me, honestly"; "Excellent material, Father, well given, thank you"; "this has been a rewarding experience"; "I know many others would enjoy the program if they only knew about it"; "there is much need for what you are trying to do."

In summing up, Fr. Leopold has this to say, "It is now a well established fact that adult religious education must become a central element in the life of the post-Vatican II Church. Yet this fact has not been as widely accepted as it should be.

It is perfectly obvious that there are large numbers of people in the churches who are not prejudiced, and for whom Christian ethics provide an important basis for love, understanding and compassion. The majority of church members, however hold religious and racial prejudices, and furthermore they deny the right of the churches to challenge their prejudices.

"The education of the adult is the only real solution. And such education can no longer be obtained on the individual parish level. This was clearly indicated in the Constitution of the Church in the Modern World where it states in paragraph 43, 'let the layman not imagine that his pastors are always such experts, that to every problem which arises, however complicated, they can readily give him a concrete solution, or even that such is their mission.'"

"So vast is the development of theology in our day and so complex the problems facing the individual Christian that only the qualified teacher can help him grasp what is being said and guide him in the formation of a good Christian conscience.

"No one has all the answers, and more than ever before the Christian must make his own decisions. This can only be done by associating himself more closely with the Word of God, not only through the Mass and the Sacraments, but also in the classroom."

## Vietnam Chaplains Praised

# No 'Sour Faces' Among Them

By Religious News Service

Louisville, Ky. — Memo to the 400 U.S. Army chaplains serving in South Vietnam: Your boss is proud of you.

Maj. Gen. Francis L. Sampson, the Army's chief of chaplains, said here that the war zone is served by "young, vigorous, deeply committed chaplains who are extremely well motivated to work with" America's fighting men.

He said Vietnam has the most effective group of chaplains he has seen "in 26 years of service."

Chaplain Sampson is a 56-year-old Roman Catholic priest who was paratrooper chaplain and jumped into combat three times — in Normandy and Holland in World War II and in Korea. He was twice captured by the German army and holds the nation's second highest military award for bravery, the Distinguished Service Cross.

The chief of chaplains was here to address a conference of civilian and military chaplains at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. In an interview, he spoke of his recent visit to Vietnam, made only a few months after his appointment.

"I came back exhilarated," he said, "just absolutely exhilarated." He described the chaplains "person-to-person" contact with the troops as second to none. "There's such rapport there — even more than in World War II or the Korean War."

Chaplain Sampson said chaplains in Vietnam are involved in a far different kind of a war than he experi-

enced in Europe and Korea. His ministry was primarily to large units of men, but war zone chaplains now minister to small groups widely dispersed. Some chaplains go from group to group, making as many as 15 stops a day, offering a prayer and a few words of comfort and inspiration, he said.

These chaplains are "not talking from a great distance" to hot, tired clusters of GIs, "or from behind a pulpit." Their "boots are just as muddy as the soldiers'" and they are "just as scared as the men are."

But Chaplain Sampson said Army chaplains are not discouraged by the war, nor are the men they serve.

He said he talked to "over 90 percent" of the 400 Army chaplains while in Vietnam. "I didn't see one sour face," he vowed. "I didn't see one chaplain who said, 'Get me out of here.'"

He added that chaplains will never be as close to congregations in future as they are now to their Army parishioners.

There are more than 1,800 chaplains in the Army, Chaplain Sampson said, adding: "We could double our chaplaincy today if we allowed everybody in that the denominations have ready to come in . . . all denominations are doing a magnificent job in the selection of chaplaincy candidate."

He said his office has on file 1,000 applications from older ministers "who want to go to Vietnam." But it "is a job that requires young blood," he explained.

Moral questions about the war that have divided Americans back home have not hindered the recruitment of chaplains in the U.S. or their assignment to Vietnam, Chaplain Sampson reported.

He said some peace demonstrations has gotten too much publicity, but that the morale and commitment of the soldiers in Vietnam have not been affected by it.

The Army's chief of chaplains also held that news reports from South Vietnam have given an erroneous impression of the Vietnamese people.

"They are not lethargic or uncommitted to the war," he said. "The average soldier cannot come home and recognize the news-media war as the war he was in."

## Rome To Send Envoy To Humanist Congress

Vatican City — (NC) — The Vatican will be represented at a congress sponsored by the International Humanist and Ethical Union in Hannover, Germany, July 14-19, advancing the Church's effort to establish contact with atheists and non-believers.

Pope Paul VI established in April, 1965, the Vatican Secretariat for Non-believers. Among the first groups to establish contact with the secretariat were members of various humanistic associations, and this in turn led to contacts with the International Humanist and Ethical Union.

## Respect Said Needed in Tense Times

Detroit — (NC) — Father Bernard Haering, C.S.S.R., one of Germany's foremost theologians, told some 500 priests here that the sacrament of Penance must become the "sacrament of reconciliation."

The Redemptorist, speaking at the Midwest Institute of Pastoral Theology in Sacred Heart Seminary here, said: "This is an age of change, an age of tensions. It is a time when we must bear each others' burdens, heavy as those burdens may sometimes be. Only reconciliation with God will carry you through the long period of tension ahead."

He added: "I would like a Church of tension in that it would be a pluralistic Church where tension would be a force for good, for deeper understanding. There can be tension without friction, for example, creative tension, but this supposes a growth in love that respects varied traditional, cultural and theological backgrounds. It respects that all are searching with fidelity for the living God and for His revelation. That is why violent renewal groups are not genuine renewal groups.

"If we use tensions merely for aggression, it will disrupt unity, but if we exercise mutual respect, dialogue is possible within tensions," Father Haering stated.

## Church Choirs Receive Praise from Pope Paul

Following are excerpts from an address Pope Paul VI gave to members of the eighth international meeting of Church Choirs in which he praised their activities in promoting sacred music:

This meeting gives us the welcome occasion to congratulate you, to tell you of the interest with which we follow your noble initiatives and to reaffirm all the respectful affection we have for those who, like yourselves, know so well how to employ their artistic talent in the service of the glory of God.

It is necessary to remind you that the task of church choirs at this time "has become more prominent and important," as the Sacred Congregation of Rites said last year in its instruction on Music and Sacred Liturgy.

Since the ecumenical council solemnly sanctioned the active participation of the Christian people in liturgical celebrations also in reference to religious singing, new ways are now open to the future of sacred music.

This does not imply a renunciation of the great musical tradition of the Church, a tradition, in fact, which the council called "a treasure of inestimable value," which "must be preserved and increased with all diligence," but rather it means an enrichment of this heritage since there are being added to it new elements and new values.

In other words, beloved sons, the Church expects from you the creation of new artistic expressions, a search for new musical forms, not



Pope Paul VI

unworthy of the past, so that choirs do not replace the people in liturgical prayer, but on the contrary aid and sustain their active participation.

As you see, an immense field of endeavor opens before you. Yours is a great responsibility, worthy of every noblest effort.

In closing, beloved sons, young and adult singers, we want to urge you to sing with the care of great technical perfection, and above all, with the full transport of your souls; because it is the heart, it is the soul which lends its value to the praise that issues from the lips.

## They Look To Future

# U.S. Cries Its Hunger Tells H

Washington — (NC) — fluent United States falls nate hunger among its poor try will face the "accusing of history," Msgr. Lawrence Coran, secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Charities here.

Msgr. Cororan testified before a House Committee on Education and Labor in favor of a House bill to establish a commission on

He asked that emergency taken to immediately feed and that the following steps be taken to eliminate the problem:

- Assignment of responsibility to an appropriate federal agency for the distribution of information on hunger and malnutrition.
- Administration of a \$600 million distribution program through the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.
- Provisions in all food programs to assure poor will have daily diets caloric and nutrient intake.
- Improvement of public programs to provide an additional income for those unable to work.
- Assumption by the federal government of the responsibility for the distribution of information on hunger and malnutrition.

## NCC Issues On Mixed

New York — (RNS) — on Protestant-Catholic inter- issued here by the National of Churches stresses that it must approach the subject with awareness that the Catholic is continuing to review it.

"If I Marry a Roman by Dr. L. Foster Wood, is of an earlier Council publication.

An insert in the book from material recommended by the Family Life Bureau of the Catholic Conference.

A large segment of "If I Marry a Catholic" is devoted to explaining the Catholic position on mixed marriages, especially raising of children.

It notes that a papal March 18, 1966, modified standards of the Church by a non-Catholic party to a marriage to give oral promises to the local bishop as to whether the promise would be required.

The same decree gave b

## Church - Minneapolis - (RNS) - he less prejudiced than non-Minneapolis. Poll.

The poll found that more Charles Glock and Rodney of prejudice in the nation.

Sixty-two per cent of are less prejudiced than in

Only 10 per cent hold prejudiced than non-attending difference between the two

Over-all, 25 per cent of tion that churches are a ca- nor disagreed.

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