

The Rural Slums

'The American People Move!'

By PINCER LEAVEN

(This is the last in a three-part series describing the work of Project REACH in Steuben County, and the lives of those with whom it comes in contact.)

The potato fields have been cleared of their produce. The season draws to a cold end and the migrant families ready for the journey back to Orlando, Montgomery, Atlanta, Home. For many this has been a season of harvest hope, a season of contact with Project REACH (Rural, Educational and Cultural Horizons), a promising season of better lives ahead.

Answering the needs of the migrants, however, is only one avenue of REACH's activities. Now the seven VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) workers and Father Timothy Weider extend their focus to the rural poor indigenous to Steuben County. According to Bob Floersch, a VISTA hailing from the Midwest, the new programs and their extent will be shaped by the needs of the people in the area.

Dan Finn, a VISTA from Rochester, remarked that six of the rural poor have contracted with REACH for new, pre-fabricated houses. "We expect a lot more to join the program once these houses have been built," he said. This program is being carried out with the Building Trades students at Alfred University in conjunction with the Federal Housing Administration (FHA).

Perkinsville's clinic, which treated more than 50 migrant laborers and their families a week, during harvest time, will continue in operation. Presently five registered nurses and doctors voluntarily staff this well-equipped medical center for two evenings a week. To continue also in Perkinsville is the clothing distribution center, which provides donated garments at a minimal cost.

Responding to the needs of the community and a strong interest in volunteer work from Ithaca College, three VISTAs will open a center near Corning. Two VISTAs will continue work they and 13 students from Bishop Kearney High School (or KHS) began during the summer in Rexville. Father Weider and the remaining two VISTAs will continue to staff the Perkinsville center.

Father Weider once remarked: "The greatest resource of America is its people, rich and poor, regardless of socio-economic background. Indeed America is its people."

Volunteers come to REACH from across the nation. Of the VISTAs, who are stationed at REACH, Gabe Moorehead is from Colorado, Norma Martinez from Texas, Shirley Trevino and Carol Parker from California. Bob Floersch remains a mystery, calling both Missouri and Illinois "home."

From Rochester, there are both Dan Finn and Kathy Barrett. Of the others who participate in REACH on a day-to-day basis, they are too numerous to name. Unfortunately, because they come as the strength of a nation, idealism embodied in an ability to find concrete and constructive solutions to the problems of the poor. They come already engaged in programs such as VISTA, and they come as individuals. Some for an hour, others for days, a few for a year.

The people of REACH offer a promise to America: hunger and thirst for bread and justice CAN become a celebration of plenty. This promise can be fulfilled only if everyone takes up the challenge to become "the American people on the move!"



Participants in a special Mass for Puerto Rican migrant workers last Sunday in St. Michael's Church, Lyons, included from left: David Thurston, Lyons; Father Anthony Calimeri, East Rochester, coordinator for the diocesan Spanish Apostolate, and three of the 60 migrants from nearby work camps — Gregorio Maato, Williamson, and Michael Ramos and Joseph Feliciano, Aiton.

Mass Held for 'Migrants'

Lyons — Approximately 50 Puerto Rican "migrant workers" attended a special Mass in Spanish at 3 p.m. Sunday in St. Michael's Church and enjoyed corn tortillas, a Mexican bread at a following reception in the parish hall.

They were transported to the church from four "camps" in

Lyons, Marlon, Williamson, and Aiton by members of the diocesan Spanish Apostolate.

In a sermon at the Mass, Father Anthony F. Calimeri, pastor of St. Jerome's Church, East Rochester, and Apostolate coordinator, emphasized the importance of participation in the church liturgy.

General purpose of the occasion was to orient the migrants to parish church liturgy and hopefully to assist them in becoming acquainted with some of the parishioners.

The migrants, all men and most of them married with families in Puerto Rico, work in the fields and in canning plants from June to December.

Principal organizers of Sunday's gathering were David Thurston, Lyons, proprietor of a Rochester dry cleaning plant, and Milton Valladares, field worker for the Spanish Apostolate, which has its headquarters in Concordia Hall, 938 Clifford Ave., Rochester.

Individual and group singing in Spanish highlighted the reception.

Church in Cohocton To Note Anniversary

Cohocton — Bishop Fulton J. Sheena will be principal celebrant with four other priests at the Golden Anniversary Mass of St. Plus V Church in Cohocton, at 5 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 27. Bishop Sheena will also preside at the formation of the parishioners in reception in the parish hall.

Other events marking the celebration are: a Mass for deceased members and benefactors of the parish at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 26, to be celebrated by Father Herbert L. Stummer, former pastor, with the family being preached by the present pastor, Father James F. Baker, and a dinner-dance on Monday, Oct. 28, at the Vineyard, in Naples, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Bishop John E. McCafferty will be the guest speaker at the dinner-dance and the music will be by the Don Discoll Trio.

The people of Cohocton attended Mass in Perkinsville prior to the formation of the parish. Father William

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Kerner Report Next Topic in Racial Series

Father P. Paul Brennan, assistant pastor of Immaculate Conception Church, will discuss the Kerner Report on Civil Disorder at the fourth in a series of six Sunday meetings at 7:30 p.m. Oct. 27 in St. John the Evangelist's Church hall, Humboldt Street.

Continuing difficulties in "Unemployment and Under-Employment of Black Americans" were emphasized by J. Raymond Hensler at last Sunday's meeting.

He maintained that, despite some efforts, discrimination still exists, and that there has been very little progress in bringing the employment statistics of Negroes up to that of Whites, or in the advancement of Negroes versus Whites in jobs where they possess comparable skills.

More than 100 persons have been attending the series, which features a talk, a film and group discussion. Sponsor is the Catholic Interracial Council.

CORRECTION

Last week's Courier-Journal chart of parish contributions to the Propagation of the Faith contained this error: Holy Cross Parish of Rochester contributed \$2,567, on Mission Sunday, '67, rather than \$1,902, as printed. The Diocesan Mission Office regrets this inaccuracy.

Family Rosary

The Family Rosary for Peace program is broadcast each evening at 7 p.m. by Rochester radio station WSAY, WMOB-FM in Auburn, television cable companies Channel 5 in Hornell, Channel 8 in Elmira and 88.75 mc. in Corning. Those who will lead in recitation of the Rosary this week are:

Friday, Oct. 25—Charles DiSpensa Jr. of St. Monica's.

Saturday, Oct. 26—Mass will be celebrated.

Sunday, Oct. 27 — Thomas Grosadonia of St. Thomas the Apostle.

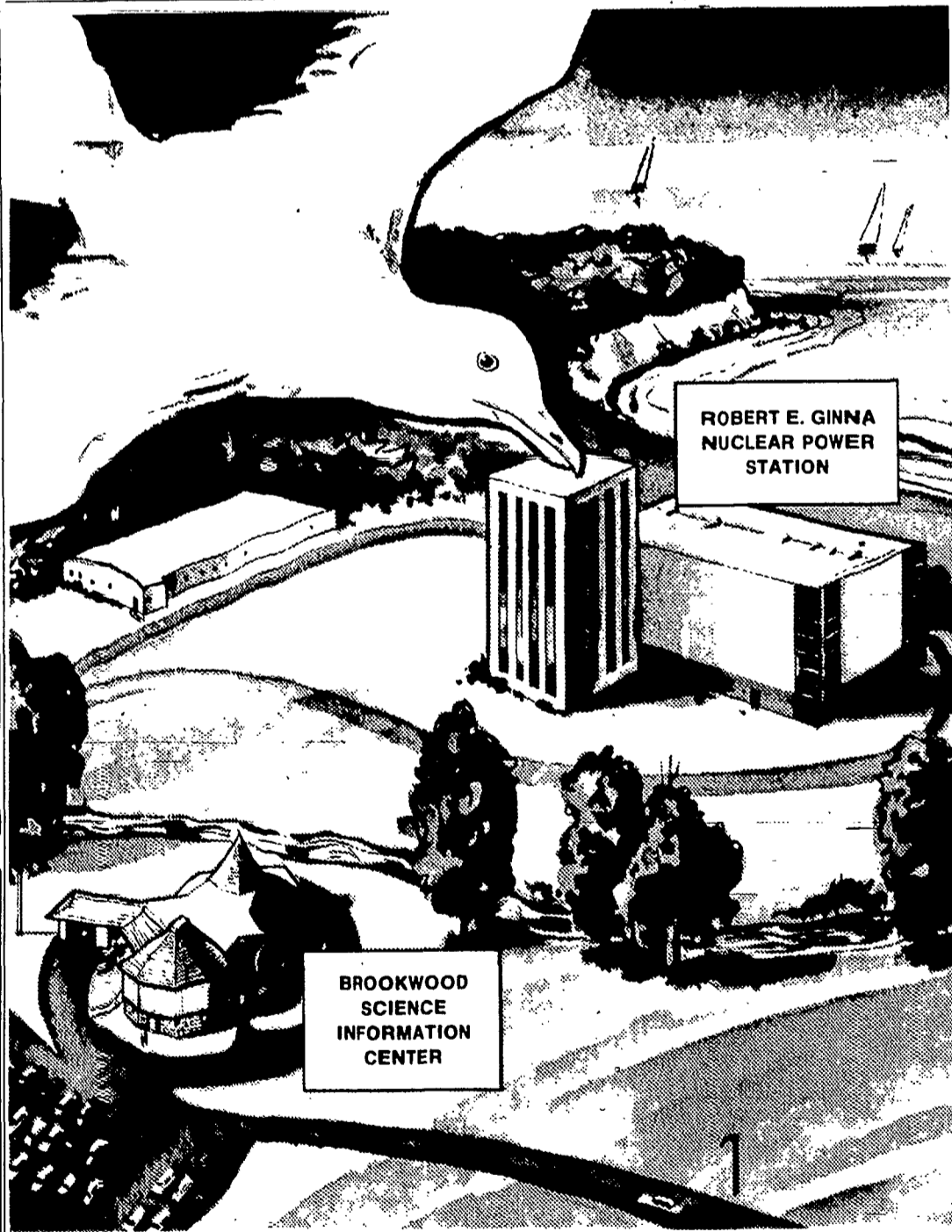
Monday, Oct. 28 — Frank Wolfe of St. Thomas More.

Tuesday, Oct. 29—A representative of St. Anthony's Nocturnal Adoration Society.

Thursday, Oct. 31 — Bishop James E. Kearney.

Forty Hours

Forty Hours devotions will begin Oct. 27 at the following places: Holy Family, and St. Joseph's, Rochester; Our Lady of Mercy, Greece; Genesee, Penn Yan and Waverly.



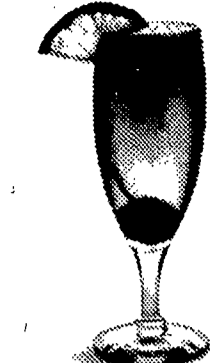
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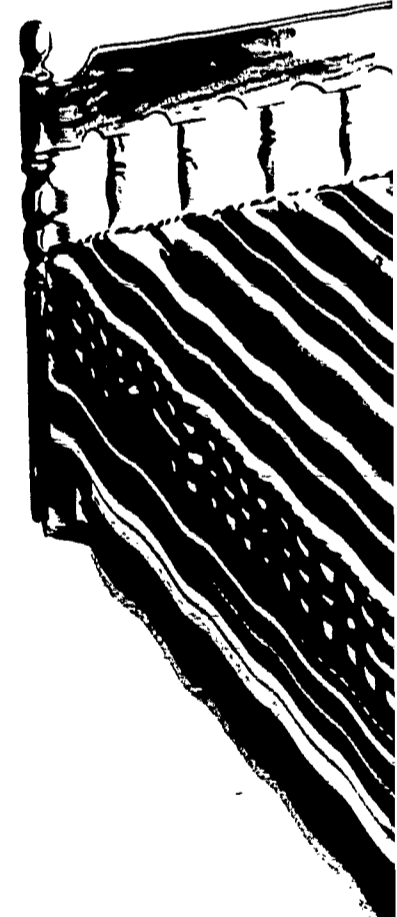
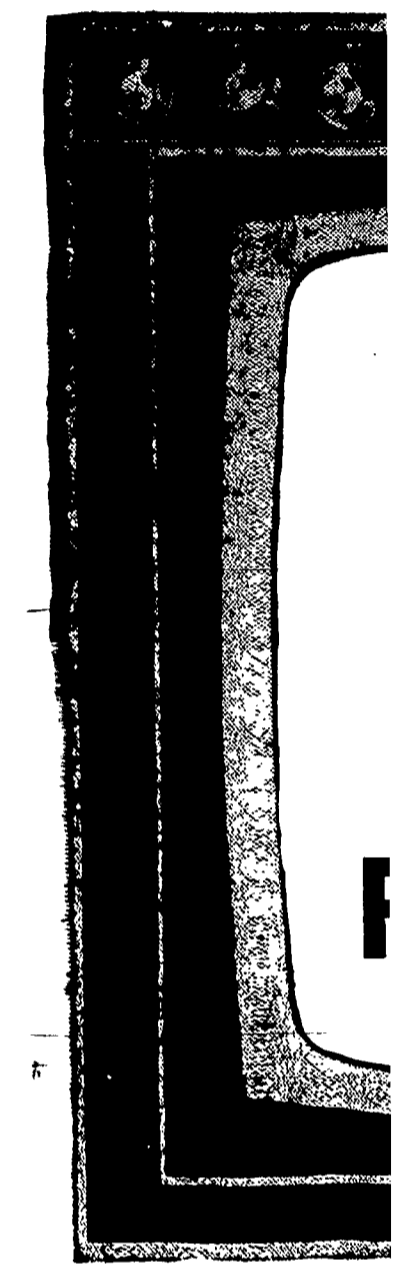
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