

Many Religious Communities of Women Serve

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from Carondelet, Missouri, to establish a convent, novitiate, girls' academy, and a small orphanage. Today, the Sisters of St. Joseph, who are the largest group of women religious in the diocese, staff 57 elementary schools, 4 high schools, Nazareth College, St. Ann's Home, St. Joseph's Villa, and St. Joseph's Hospital and School of Nursing in Elmira.

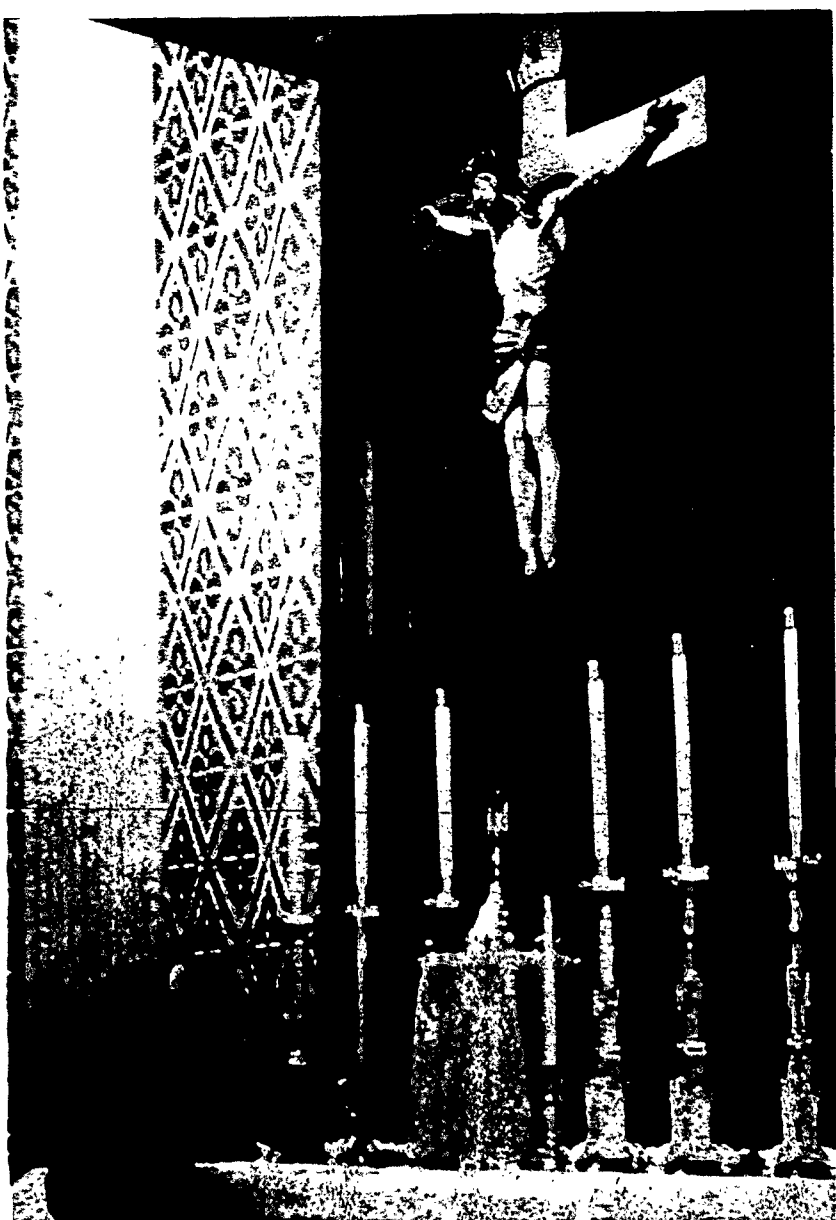
Sister Mary John, the director of public relations for the Sisters of St. Joseph, comments, "Next summer, our Sisters, will hold a General Chapter. As a community, we have been preparing for this Chapter by extensive research and some preliminary experimentation for over two years. Much of our remote future will depend upon the Chapter's decisions.

"In general, we believe that that Chapter will undoubtedly opt for further and wider experimentation in both our apostolic works and our life-styles. By such inquiring we hope to discover more clearly the roles to be filled by religious women in the contemporary church and world."

Since 1857, when Mother M. Xavier Warde established a convent adjoining St. Mary's Church on South Street, the works of mercy have been the core of the apostolate of the Sisters of Mercy, Rochester's second largest community of religious women. In addition to twenty-nine elementary schools, the Sisters of Mercy are engaged in the education of the students of three high schools, and also staff St. James Mercy Hospital and School of Nursing in Hornell, New York.

This congregation, in the past six years, like the Sisters of St. Joseph, has expanded its works beyond the classroom and hospital to service in the foreign missions and to parish assistant work.

"I have no doubt that we will stay in the schools as long as they stay with us," states Sister Mary de Pazzi the chairman of the Sisters' of Mercy Chapter Apostolate Commission. "In other words, as long as there is a need for the Sisters of Mercy to be teachers in the Diocese of Rochester, education will continue to be one of our main apostolates.



Chapel of Carmelite Convent, Jefferson Rd.

"I believe, however, that the apostolate of parish assistant, that is, the type of work in which a Sister serves as an aid to a parish pastor, will be a strong counterpart of the teaching apostolate in our diocese.

"It seems to me that the Sisters of Mercy in the next century will serve the diocese in the ways in which the needs of the diocese dictate to us. This will, I believe, inevitably lead us back to performing the same types of works in which our foundress, Catherine McAuley, and the first Sisters of Mercy engaged."

The Missionary Servants of the Most Blessed Trinity, known to most Rochesterians as The Trinitarians, have worked in the areas of home visitation, catechesis, and recreational work in underprivileged neighborhoods since their arrival in the diocese in 1926.

Presently, the Sisters are taking part in the newly organized "super parochial" program which includes the parishes of St. Anthony of Padua, St. Patrick's, Holy Apostles, and Holy Family. This program calls the Sisters to join their services with

On the Horizon . . . a More Mobile Church

(Continued from Page 38A) and with its expanded social action role, will need greater participation from its laymen.

It is providential that when laymen are most needed by their Church they should be more eager and anxious for a greater role in its work.

Laymen have already gained places of responsibility in diocesan chanceries where such as business acumen is in particular demand.

The layman's role is already seen in many parish councils and school boards.

His liturgical participation now includes roles such as lectors, singing leaders and even preaching on occasion.

But in the future, laymen will take on more significant responsibilities, perhaps including complete administration of schools, financial directorship of parishes, running parish activities, and social action. All of which would allow the priests to concentrate on the spiritual care of their parishes.

In conjunction with a permanent diaconate, such setups would

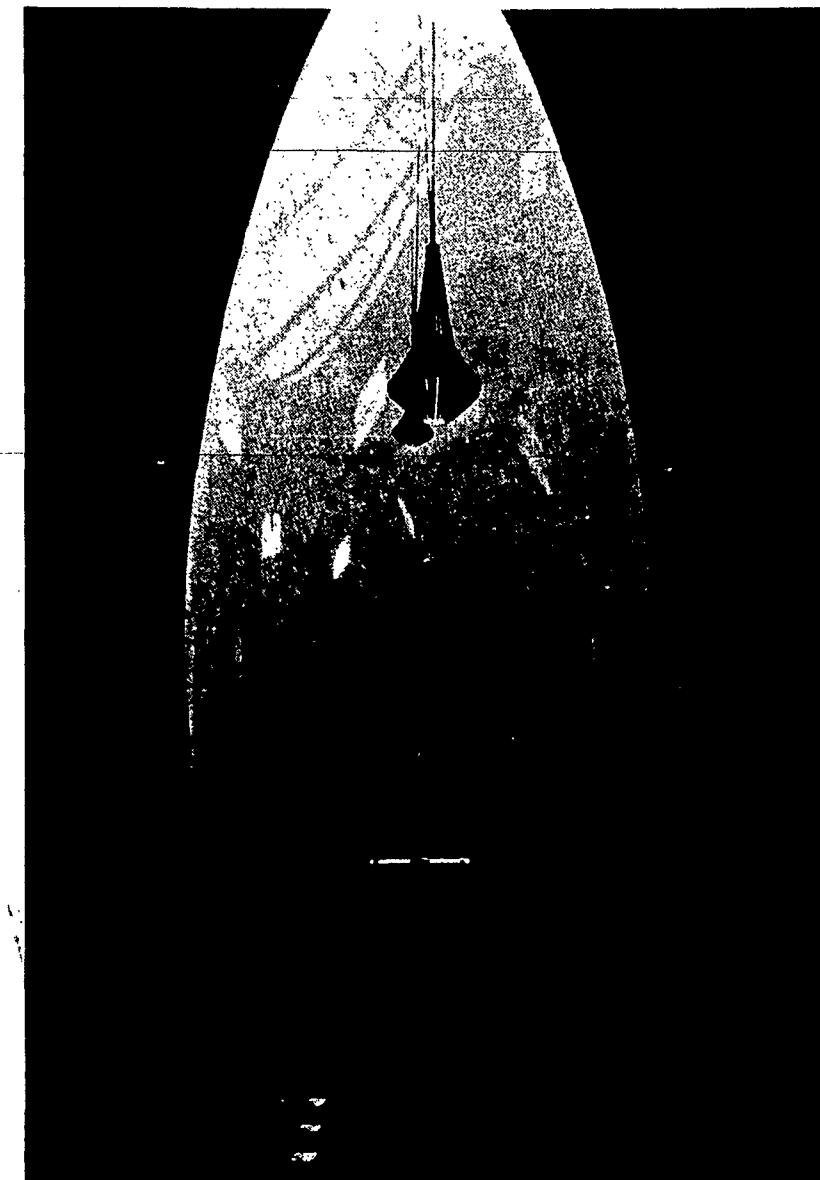
enable most parishes to operate with only one priest.

Shortage of priests is not the only personnel deficiency confronting the Church. With more Sisters wanting a hand in social action, there is a shortage of teaching nuns. This requires the hiring of a large number of lay teachers.

As the diocesan historian, Father Robert McNamara, points out in his "The Diocese of Rochester, 1868-1968", one of the main reasons for the troubles facing the parochial school system is the increased government aid made available to public schools—enabling them to out-strip parish schools in equipment and, even more important, to pay better salaries for qualified teaching personnel.

The federal government has been lenient in granting financial assistance to non-public schools, but in New York State the Blaine Amendment forbids any aid directly or indirectly to private schools.

Instead of retreating in the face of such formidable opposition, Bishop Sheen on Sept. 6, 1968, made a ringing plea for the strengthening and expansion



The new architecture of St. John the Evangelist's on Ridge Road is symbolic of the modern spirit of the diocesan laity.

of parochial systems for the good of the nation even more than for the good of the Church.

At present there is a moratorium on the construction of new parish schools in this diocese, mainly because the teaching ranks are spread too thin. The future undoubtedly holds the junking of the Blaine Amendment, thus providing the funds to reverse this situation—but when this will happen is the crux.

Let's take a hypothetical look ahead and envision the sudden closing down of all parochial schools, thus setting up an avalanche of extra students for the public school systems. This taxes the imagination almost as much as its accomplishment would tax the pocketbook.

But the Church is not dealing in conjecture. It is meeting the problem head-on with the expansion of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, where again the laity comes to the fore.

CCD is providing teachers for catechetical training to reach the 53,000 Catholic students in public schools in the diocese. Parochial schools and other space on church property are used for this (Continued on Page 72A)



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