

The Breaking Down of Barriers Between People

(Continued from Page 53A) the population of the area, from Italian-American, Catholic to a mixed black and white population.

Miss Mary Hannick, director, feels that with the government entering more and more into the picture, the outlook looks somewhat bleak for the private agencies such as the Genesee Settlement House, and she hopes that those coming into the work now will have the fortitude to deal with the problems, such as the de-emphasis upon moral values that is prevalent today.

"Perhaps we need a stronghold like Catholic schools were with not just an emphasis upon courtesy and love within the walls of the school but a transfer of these merits outside the walls. The same thing might apply to the church, not just church on Sunday, but Church whenever needed, even at 2 a. m. or 1 a. m., if a person needs to all those who represent church to them at those hours."

One of the newer centers in Rochester's inner city is the St. Martin de Porres Center on Clinton Avenue North, which

was opened in 1963 as a storefront inner-city family-service program for the neighborhood.

Recognizing the great material needs of the predominantly Puerto Rican population, Mrs. Margaret Muchard opened the Center, to which she now devotes full time effort, with the voluntary contributions of friends. Facilities provided include sewing, cooking, adult club, mothers' club, used clothing, evening study hall, choir, soup kitchen, free groceries, CCD classes, counseling.

At the height of its activity occupying twelve rooms, the Center served approximately 600 children and 35 adults.

The complexion of the neighborhood here has changed also. Originally 70% of the services were to Puerto Ricans, and now over 60% are to Negroes. However, the Center has always been operated as a non-sectarian, privately funded service to all in need.

Overcrowded conditions and lack of funds hamper the activity, though the demand for services is growing. The Center now has a volunteer staff of ap-



A group of pre-kindergarten singers get some accompaniment from a teacher in the Head Start program. Head Start is a program arranged for the education of disadvantaged youngsters about to enter kindergarten, or if not in school the previous year, ready to start in the first grade. The Head Start centers are staffed by teachers drawn from the neighborhoods around each center. Several diocesan institutions are among the centers and Mercy Sister Dorothy Keeffe is the local director of this federally-supported project.

proximately 50 junior and 100 senior volunteers, including many members of the neighborhood itself. All have a deep commitment to the "unstructured," non-professional, service-to-fellow-man philosophy.

Ecumenically, Immaculate Conception parish has been in the vanguard of the post-Vatican II church in Rochester, through the development of the community ministry under Reverend Larry Coppard, who was hired by the pastor, Father Robert Kreckel in 1967 to identify needs in the area, and to inaugurate programs to meet them. The ideal has not been reached as yet, but a beginning has been made. One need expressed by people in the area was a desire for religious education for the children; consequently, an ecumenical school has been set up at four different sites, and several hundred children are receiving instruction in basic Christian truths.

What of the future? Father Kreckel would like to have a person working fulltime in religious education, organizing and setting up curriculum, re-

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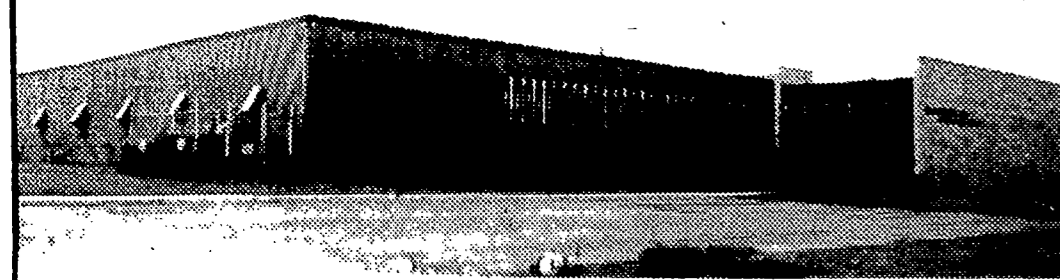
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