



The "more subtle" poverty of a Santiago middleclass block is in back alleys like this one, near the house where Mercy Sisters Jane Kenrick and Janet Caufield live.

## Helping People Live Humanly

By MARGARET CONNOLLY

Where Sister Jane Kenrick lives now, summer comes in wintertime, and "middle class" means "poor," by U.S. standards.

The Mercy nun took her summer vacation up here in the snow. She spent Christmas with her mother, Mrs. James Kenrick of Ithaca, traveled around visiting other relatives and has been staying for several weeks with her sister, the school principal at Our Lady Queen of Peace, Sister Mary Karen, R.S.M.

She'll be glad, "except for the goodbyes," to go back to Santiago, Chile, on April 14. She hopes she can still get along in teenage-slang Chilean Spanish, the language of her work.

Sister Jane and Sister Janet Caufield live in a "white collar" neighborhood of run-down row-houses, where 60 to 70 dollars a month is the average family income, against a cost-of-living like ours. Five other Rochester Mercy nuns live in worse places in Santiago — in a suburban slum, for instance, where country

people settle in shanty-towns and the roads are made of mud.

"Our poverty in S. Andres parish is much more subtle," said Sister Jane. "It's behind walls, in back alleys and hidden courtyards."

But these material circumstances are incidental, like the fleas that bite everybody.

What matters is the hospitable, cooperative attitude of the neighbors, the way they take to religious instruction and community action enterprises. That's why Sister Jane is glad to go back.

Seven Mercy nuns from the Rochester Diocese are living in three Santiago parishes, working with Columbian Fathers from various parts of the world. A 20-minute walk from St. Andrea is S. Catalina, a middle-class settlement of 70,000, where the living has been improved by government housing.

The first Mercy outpost, established four years ago, is in a slum of 100,000 people that has grown up around S. Luis Church, nine miles

out from the center of the city. That's where the rural poor crowd in, driven from the land by the drought, hopeful of finding work in the city.

Mother Marv Bride, lately back from a three-week visit to Santiago, spoke of the material progress she said had been made there since her last visit—2½ years ago. She spoke of the schools and apartments that had been built and the rapport the Sisters had made with the poor Chileños.

She stressed that the sisters' work was "evangelization," more than social services.

"They are helping people to live humanly," she said.

Sister Jane described an elaborate structure of vicarates and deaneries that brings together all the local and international clergy and religious in continuing discussions of their activities.

In the city, there are five vicars with the power of bishop, yet a Roman collar is a rare sight, she went on.

"The priest's collar is like the Sister's veil, a real barrier that in the mind of the people separates the church from the world, from reality.

"So we don't wear veils down there. People avoid nuns that wear habits. There is a memory of childhood.

"One young man told me he had been to Mass so much as a child that it should last him the rest of his life. Another spoke of the days when grandmother insisted on his attending three Masses every Sunday. A mother I had just met confided that she hadn't gone to Mass in five years; she had faith, she wanted to come back."

These are the people who are forming discussion groups and CCD classes, to learn how to teach their children.

The Saturday-in-the-church-hall concept of catechism is on the way out. Children that play together gather around somebody's kitchen table for religious instruction any day but Saturday, and somebody's mother is the teacher.

This is what Mother Bride meant by living "humanly."

Her sisters are in a "very positive frame of mind, very hopeful," she found, "even though they are aware that they may never see the real fruits of their labors."



Religious training of youngsters begins with their parents, in the Santiago Mercy Sister's course. Here, Sister Janet Caufield sits in on a neighborhood class run by the mother at her left.

## Sex Education: An Objective View

This is the third and final article in a series on the diocesan sex education syllabus used in parochial elementary schools. The COURIER-JOURNAL hopes that this objective analysis of the goals of the material used in the program may clear up misunderstandings of the purpose and content of the sex instruction which has provoked wide controversy in several communities of the diocese.

The authors of the diocesan sex education syllabus — a committee of doctors, parents, nuns and priests headed by Dr. Gerard Guerinet, Rochester physician — said clearly in their text that sex instruction should be given through a sequence of "understandings," building gradually from one grade to the next.

Beginning with grade one the teacher is assigned responsibility for communicating a few basic understandings per year — a minimum of one, a maximum of five.

The program is not to be considered a "course." The teacher is charged to "build gradually from fundamental concepts of growth and family to a reasonable grasp of human sexuality and the serious responsibilities God attaches to it."

Criticism of the syllabus, flaring from the contention of many parents that "too much information is given too soon," has broadened into charges that children should not be instructed in such personal matters in a school setting and that only parents should teach the "facts of life" because some elementary teachers, especially nuns, are not equipped to convey this material.

This article is intended to discuss objectively the material in the syllabus for classroom use for grades 6, 7 and 8. (The syllabus for grades 1 through 5 was described in the Courier-Journal for 3/28/69.)

The basic understanding considered in the 6th grade is the mystery of life-conception. The special role of the man and the woman in creating new life in union with God receives quite detailed coverage.

The syllabus states that "the act of reproduction is an act of love" and that "husband and wife express their love by a physical union." The teacher is expected to show that because the marital union can result in conception, "it is a thing of beauty when performed with love and in the context of marriage."

Presentation of the wonder of God's providence in arranging that the sperm and the ovum could come together necessarily involves information about such words as semen and intercourse and again brings up the proper names for male and female organs spoken of in earlier grades.

Pro and con discussion on the merit of the sex education program in diocesan parochial schools continued this week unabated in public forum, private debate, radio opinions, newspaper articles and editorials, and letters to editors.

Highlighting recent meetings on the topic was a gathering of nearly 800 persons Mar. 28 at Mercy High School auditorium which was marked by little of the emotional outbursts of earlier information sessions.

Principal speaker was Sister Ruth Agnes, S.S.J., one of the authors of the sex education syllabus. Dr. Gerard T. Guerinet, Rochester gynecologist and chairman of the diocesan committee on sex education and Father Daniel Brent, assistant Superintendent of Schools, answered questions.

Sponsoring the meeting was the Rochester Association of Catholic Laymen, whose members after the forum adopted a resolution urging continuance of the program "as now presented."

The group, which has nearly 500 members, also asked that a similar

emphasis in this section is not on physical processes of intercourse but on the fact that a man and a woman, united by love and marriage, are the "instruments of God's creation" and that their bodies function to complement one another as God planned it.

Their sexual union is as much a sign of their spiritual closeness to each other as of their mutual love and physical passion, the syllabus says.

The formation of new life in the mother's body through the union of the sperm and the ovum leads to "a very complex and wonderful process" of pregnancy, the 6th graders

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program be devised for Catholic children attending public schools, to be included in the diocesan religious education (CCD) program.

The RAEL under the chairmanship of Paul Brayer, kept control of the meeting, in an effort to avoid verbal clashes, by ruling that questions had to be submitted in writing and selected for answers.

As the period drew to a close, three women from Auburn left the auditorium in obvious disagreement with the format. They identified themselves as Mrs. Yolanda de Rosa, Mrs. Carm Giannettino and Mrs. Jean Scala, members of St. Francis of Assisi Church where controversy over the sex syllabus first developed some weeks ago.

Also objecting was Mrs. Richard Benzoni of Victor, chairman of a group called Parents Against Unacceptable Sex Education.

Father Brent perhaps allayed some feelings when he noted that there is a continuing re-examination of the syllabus. He said three changes probably will be made at the close of the

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## The Inner City and Education

By FATHER RICHARD TORMEY

Rochesterians have been reading about a dispute between the FIGHT organization representing many black citizens and the City Board of Education.

Twice in recent weeks FIGHT leaders were unable to get the floor as they wished at public meetings of the School Board. The issues they intended to air — grievances about the quality of education in some inner-city schools and a request for authority by the black community over the educational process in their own neighborhoods — were not publicly heard by school authorities.

Black people, and a large number of white supporters, claimed that the rigid agenda and impersonal ground rules at the Board meeting arbitrarily silenced them.

News coverage on the Board's meetings by Rochester's daily papers stressed the disruptive tactics used by the Rev. Mr. Franklin Florence and other FIGHT leaders, and have not given puzzled readers a clear exposition of the issues at stake.

The COURIER-JOURNAL, believing that procedural rules should govern blacks as well as whites in any democratic community meeting, holds that the growing concern of Rochester's black community for their children's education should be recognized by the entire city.

If there is a case of racial injustice to be proven by facts, or school renovation which can and should be authorized for the benefit of all inner-city children, the black leaders charges deserve to be heard. Poor people understand their tactics, but the whole community should listen to their complaints no matter how unruly they may seem to others within or outside of a School Board meeting.

Just what are the issues? What are the main areas in which inner-city residents believe they have a justifiable complaint? We asked these questions of black and white parents this week. Here is their consensus, without documentation:

• The majority of children being taught in five inner-city schools are below their grade-level as compared with pupils in other schools and in other parts of the country.

• Inner-city students are being poorly prepared for higher education. Because they do not learn adequately, there are almost as many discouraged dropouts from the elementary schools as from the high schools.

• The culturally-deprived child, the underachiever, the slow-starter, both black and white, — who need remedial attention — are being neglected in many schools.

• Incompetency of some inner-city school principals and teachers to deal with unique school problems should be investigated.

• The excuse that "the conditions of ghetto life" make it impossible for the Board to upgrade the schools for the black children or Puerto Ricans is unacceptable.

• Changes in school structures, such as the junior high proposal for West High and Jefferson, should not be made without consulting the pupils' parents in the neighborhood.

Documentation of these complaints from a small segment of the inner-city community and treatment of an overall demand for decentralization of school authority as demanded by black leaders of FIGHT will be printed here next week.

(To be continued)

## Requiem Mass Held For Fr. O'Donnell

Dansville — Funeral Mass for Father John C. O'Donnell, pastor emeritus of Sacred Heart Church, Perkinsville, was concelebrated Monday noon in St. Mary's Church here. Bishop Fulton J. Sheen was principal celebrant and delivered the eulogy.

Bishop Sheen termed Father O'Donnell "a man of ideals, a lover of the poor and sick... never one to think of himself when someone was in need."

Father O'Donnell, 70, died Thursday, March 27, 1969, in Dansville Hospital. Burial was in Holy Cross Cemetery here.

He had served five years as an assistant pastor, 17 years as a teacher at Aquinas Institute and St. Andrew's Seminary, and 20 years as a pastor before his retirement Aug. 30, 1965.

Born Dec. 4, 1898, in Auburn, the son of the late Terrence and Mary Smyth O'Donnell, he attended St. Mary's School there and Auburn Academic High School. He pursued priesthood studies at St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's Seminaries, and was ordained June 9, 1923, in St. Patrick's Cathedral by Bishop John Gregory Murray.

Father O'Donnell served as assistant at Sacred Heart Church, Rochester, until September, 1928, at St. John the Evangelist's Church, Clyde, until August, 1928, and at St. Patrick's Church, Elmira, until October, 1928.

He taught mathematics at Aquinas Institute from October, 1928, until June, 1937, and at St. Andrew's Seminary from September, 1937, to February, 1945.

He was appointed pastor of St. Patrick's Church, Dansville, in February, 1945, serving until June, 1959, when St. Patrick's was combined with nearby St. Mary's Church. Father O'Donnell then served as pastor at Sacred Heart Church, Perkinsville, until his retirement.

Father O'Donnell was a nephew of the late Father Patrick Smyth — and of the late Sisters M. Pauline and Rose Miriam of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Mass concelebrants included Msgr. John M. Duffy, pastor emeritus of St. Augustine's Church, Fairport.



FATHER O'DONNELL

Geck of St. Ann's Home, Rochester; Father Raymond Wuest, pastor of St. Mary's, Dansville; Father Francis Hester, pastor of St. John the Evangelist's, Spencerport; and Father Michael Conboy, assistant at St. Margaret Mary's Irondequoit.

Monsignor Duffy and Father Geck were classmates of Father O'Donnell.

Auxiliary Bishop Dennis W. Hickey officiated at the last blessing in the cemetery.

## Priests' Council Backs Sex Program

At the April 1st meeting of the Priests' Council of the Diocese of Rochester the following statement was approved:

1) We firmly support the concept that parents have the primary right to educate their children, and also the concept and necessity in the present day of a program of sex education in diocesan elementary schools.

2) We commend the diocesan program for its emphasis on the sanctity of human sexuality, and urge the cooperation of parents in the implementation and on-going effort of revision in such a common endeavor of home and school.

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