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Transfer of Sisters To Other Apostolates Felt in Parish Schools

Shifting of Sisters from elementary schools to diocesan apostolates and to high school faculties is the principal reason 51 fewer teaching nuns will be in the parochial school system next fall.

Figures released this week by the superiors of the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Sisters of Mercy contradicted a Rochester newspaper article that "Sisters leaving their orders" and retirements were chiefly responsible for the decline of the religious faculties in the parish schools.

From the present elementary school staffs of both communities, eight Sisters, at the request of diocesan authorities, will be assigned to catechetical and special parochial work and 10 will move up to teaching duties in the various high schools conducted by the Sisters.

About 6 will take non-teaching posts, like nursing and administration within their orders, and 5 will be sent away for college degree programs, the report said.

About 8 Sisters are slated to receive deserved retirement from all teaching and 2 or 3 will be granted temporary sick leave, the communities announced.

The two communities, which together supply more than 500 of the teaching Sisters presently serving in elementary schools of the diocese, informed diocesan officials several months ago that 21 Mercy Sisters and 30 Sisters of St. Joseph would not be available for grammar school faculties next fall.

Pastors were notified by the Diocesan School Office which parishes would have to hire lay teachers to replace the nuns.

Attrition among the Sisters in grammar schools has been increasingly worrisome to pastors because 55 Sisters had to be replaced last year

and 25 in the fall of 1967. Lay teachers last year numbered 700 in parochial schools, topping the religious teachers for the first time in diocesan history.

Motherhouse spokesmen for the Mercy Sisters and the Sisters of St. Joseph emphasized that releasing teaching Sisters from the elementary classrooms at their own request for other duty has been community policy for several years. But it has restrictions.

Volunteers for other apostolates are welcomed, it was revealed, but only a few Sisters can be released at a time.

"A Sister just can't be allowed to drop her teaching role unless the community's needs and the diocese's requirements are respected," one superior stated.

In the past five years, both communities have been requested to transfer a number of excellent grammar school teachers to non-school duties (social service, CCD tasks, inner-city ministry, parish-assistants) as the diocese set up new apostolates. The trend away from the classroom will probably continue, the superiors admitted.

Another factor in personnel placement, important to the two communities, is the growth of their own high schools: Nazareth Academy and St. Agnes, Mercy High and Notre Dame, Elmira. They feel obligated to maintain strong Sister-faculties here as the schools grow because these institutions are "a vital source of both revenue and vocations" for the community. (They co-staff but do not own Cardinal Mooney, DeSales in Geneva and Mt. Carmel in Auburn.)

"Their academic prestige is expensive to maintain but we could not combine with present institutions if we increased our faculty with lay teachers," a Motherhouse spokesman said.



Kim Adams, Ithaca College freshman from Winchester, Mass., shows a Perkinsville boy how to throw a bowling ball during a day of entertainment for 120 Project Reach children at the Ithaca campus.

Abortion Bill 'No' 'Victory for Life'

(From Courier-Journal Services)

For the third straight year, New York State's legislature turned down a bill to loosen the state abortion law. The vote, in the Assembly on April 17, was 78 to 69 against any change in the law.

With its defeat in the Assembly, the bill will not be debated in the Senate, and thus is dead "for" this year.

(In Washington State last week, a bill liberalizing abortion legislation died in the Senate Rules Committee. Four other state legislatures — in Florida, Minnesota, Michigan and Colorado — still were considering similar legislation.)

The New York Assembly's refusal to adopt loosening legislation was called "a victory of life over death" by the Right-To-Life Committee in Albany.

Edward J. Golden, committee chairman, declared that "to destroy the unborn because they might be a care to some who do not want to care

will not be legal in New York... We congratulate the wisdom of those who voted in favor of life, and earnestly hope that our state will always prove itself a haven for the helpless, the weak and the innocent."

Proponents of abortion liberalization had tried to equate all opposition in terms of the church, had refused to admit the presence of life in the fetus, and had insisted that approval would not lead to further permissiveness for only the perfect to be granted the right to life.

The measure would have added new grounds to the present law, which permits abortion only when continuation of the pregnancy endangers the life of the mother.

The defeated bill would have permitted abortions when:

- There was substantial risk that the continuing pregnancy would gravely impair the physical or mental health of the mother.

- The pregnancy resulted from (Continued on Page 3)

Priest Celibacy 'In', Abortion Shift 'Out'

Houston — (RNS) — The National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB), at its closing session here, adopted a statement upholding celibacy in the priesthood and condemning the liberalization of abortion laws in all states.

On celibacy, the bishops cited current "systematic opposition" arising against the celibate life of priests and said these efforts "create further confusion and unfounded speculation among many, especially some students for the priesthood."

Bishops of other countries, they said, have indicated in consultations with American bishops that "the heritage of priestly celibacy will be in no way abandoned or compromised."

The bishops reaffirmed a commitment to celibacy made two years ago, emphasizing "even more the theological, ascetical and positive elements of the spiritual witness" of priestly celibacy.

Their statement on abortion said there is a recent and growing concern for human life, as shown by a "crisis of conscience" over the war

in Vietnam, the re-examination of capital punishment and ethical questions raised by the transplant of human organs.

At the same time, the bishops' statements said there has been a widespread effort to liberalize present laws "that generally prohibit abortion."

The statement recalled the bishops' pastoral of last November which urged that "society always be on the side of life" and that it "never dictate, directly or indirectly, recourse to prevention of life or to its destruction in any of its phases."

"We restate with strong conviction and growing concern our opposition to abortion," the bishops said.

They affirmed their "social responsibility" to the victims of rape, to the causes of "maternal disease and fetal abnormality and to provide all women with proper education and material resources "to choose motherhood responsibly freely in accord with our basic commitment to the sanctity of life."

Pope's Geneva Plans Surprise Observers

By MSGR. G. HIGGINS
(NC News Service)

Rome — Pope Paul VI's announcement that he will go to Geneva around the middle of June to address the 50th anniversary meeting of the International Labor Organization seemed to take most people in Rome — including experienced Vaticanologists in the press corps — completely by surprise.

Some people in Rome reacted at first rather negatively to the Holy Father's unexpected announcement. I heard several Americans say, for example, that by going to Geneva for the ILO conference the Holy Father will be getting himself and his office too deeply involved in politics. In their view, he should stay out of the political arena altogether and should lend his prestige only to those organizations which are concerned in

one way or another with religious matters.

These people think of the ILO as a kind of worldwide federation of labor unions, deeply involved in partisan politics in their respective member countries as well as at the international level.

In point of fact, the ILO is nothing of the kind. It is a tripartite organization representing, in the case of each of its member countries, labor, management and the government. Its purpose is to achieve higher standards of social justice for the world's working people by means principally of international agreements or "conventions."

These agreements or "conventions" — covering wages, hours, working conditions, health standards, freedom of association, etc. — are adopted, after prolonged study and debate at the annual conference of the organization, but they do not become legally binding in the case of any given member nation until they have been ratified by the appropriate legislative body of that particular country.

Surely it is most appropriate for the Holy Father to lend the prestige of his office to an organization of this kind, all the more so in view of the fact that so many of its resources now are being channeled into the so-called "third world" — where, in the absence of strong trade unions, they are so badly needed. It should also be noted that this will not be the first time that the official Church has publicly thrown its support behind the ILO.

In Cornell's Shadow: Ithaca Collegians Do a Good 'Thing'

(Special to the Courier-Journal)

Ithaca — While bitter racial confrontation splitting one campus here last Saturday made national headlines, students at Ithaca College were arousing campus-wide concern for poor rural families in Steuben County.

Some \$2,000 was collected by a 56-hour weekend marathon on the campus radio station, WICB, for the Perkinsville "Project Reach," directed by Father Timothy Weider in the Secular Mission Apostolate of the Rochester Diocese.

Donations came from individuals, clubs, fraternities and sororities on the campus, from students' parents as far away as Bermuda and Long Island and from many Ithaca-area listeners.

Ithaca College's interest in the migrant families and rural poor some 80 miles west of the South Hill campus, began last June when Father William Graf, Newman Club chaplain at the college, and Daniel Baker, senior chemistry major, formed the "Perkinsville Steering Committee" to help the needs of migrants and rural poor in housing, health and education.

Father Weider came to lecture on campus, VISTA workers from his project at Perkinsville were invited to discuss their work and groups of

collegians began to spend weekends in the Steuben County area studying the social apostolate and offering personal assistance.

Fifteen students (not all Catholics) and Father Graf constituted the Committee which helped support for Project Reach blossom on campus.

An "Anti-Poverty Tutorial Program," once a week, for credit, attracted many students. A work-study program in Perkinsville will use 10 Ithaca College students between Aug. 20 and Nov. 1 running the five day-care centers Father Weider and associates have established.

Students begging gifts for the rural poor manned the WICB microphones from Friday evening until 2 a.m. Monday. The radio appeal directed by senior John Beach and sophomore Thomas Caprano had an original goal of \$500, but as campus enthusiasm

(Continued on Page 3)

Marital Case Streamlining Is Requested

Houston — (RNS) — Annulment and other cases in U.S. Catholic marriage courts will be processed in a maximum of six months, rather than the present minimum of two years, if new rules adopted here by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops win Vatican approval.

The bishops meeting here approved 28 new norms aimed at simplifying and speeding marriage court procedures in this country, but voted to keep them secret until Rome has ruled on them.

Spokesmen for the bishops, however, have divulged three of them. These reduce the number of decisions from three to one, call for judgments based purely on the evidence, and make all evidence available at all times to the attorney for the petitioner.

Father Thomas J. Lynch, Hartford, Conn., canon lawyer and past president of the Canon Law Society of America stated, "I believe that if all these norms are confirmed by the Holy See, even the most difficult cases can be cut to six months. Today, even the simplest cases require a minimum of two years, and borderline cases can drag along for three or four years."



Bishop Fulton J. Sheen and Bishop John J. Morkovsky, Auxiliary of Galveston-Houston Diocese, inspect the lunar module at the Space Center in Houston, during a sight-seeing tour arranged for Bishops attending the semi-annual meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops last week.

ON THE INSIDE	
Bishop Sheen	6
Catholic Charities	12
Letters	6
Commentary	19
Diocesan	7
Editorial	6
Entertainment	14
Sports	19
What's Happening	10

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John Beach, Ithaca College senior, helped run the 56-hour radio marathon on campus station WICB which raised \$2,000 for poor rural and migrant families in Steuben County last weekend.