

They 'Don't See Color Any More'

Black Girls in a White World

By MARGARET CONNOLLY

Most of us, when we were in high school, lived at home with our next of kin and spent a lot of time with neighborhood kids we had known forever. A broad-based social life developed at school and along the curbstones and sidewalks on the way.

A fact that escaped our attention at the time—and this is true for most of us who went to school a long time or a little time ago in upper New York—is that the world was populated almost entirely by white people.

Brenda Edwards and Shirley Peoples, aged 16, have lived in a sort of photographic negative of the home-school environment here recalled.

They are black, and they lived home down South with their mothers and fathers and sisters and brothers, and all the rest of it. For all practical purposes, though they had good reason to know otherwise, the world was black.

But they came North last September to attend Nazareth Academy.

Here they are, a million miles from home, boarding in Immaculate Conception parish with two black families they never had seen before. They spend the school day among about 900 white girls, and a handful of black ones, all Rochesterians.

How would a white youngster feel in a reverse situation?

These girls are homesick, but not unnerved. Indeed, their classmates must call them "cool."

"I don't see color any more," Brenda declared lately. "I thought before I came that I might be prejudiced. I didn't know how I would feel about white kids. I'd never known any, or given any thought to what they might be like. But I don't see people as white or black any more."

"Just people," Shirley affirmed.

Have people been nice to them?

They have, Brenda emphatically as-



Pursuit of a better education than they could get at home led these Selma, Ala., girls to Nazareth Academy. Pictured with Sister Annunciata, Nazareth principal, are Brenda Edwards, left, and Shirley Peoples, 16-year-old cousins.

serts. "Maybe even too nice," Shirley quietly interposes, and at that point the questioner has to wonder privately what life is like for local celebrities of this sort—the standouts. What reservations may they have about the attention they get?

Shirley speaks softly, slides a shy smile over her coolness.

Brenda is the more aggressive talker. The two are cousins, thoroughly adjusted to each other. In conversation, they work like a team.

They lost none of their poise for having to eat lunch with a strange woman and a few teachers, most of them strange, too, and all of them white, and what may be worse, "over 25." They never batted an eye when

Sister Helen, the vice principal, brought her lunch over to the round table and asked what was going on.

But then, they are used to the St. Joseph Sisters of Rochester from their grammar school days, in Selma, Ala.

"Selma, Alabama!" Brenda's tone makes the name sound like something you could pick up and inspect.

"I never knew what a place that was until I got away from it!"

"Just an ordinary little city . . ." Shirley interposed, and she laughed. If they had not known how famous their home town had become, for its civil rights struggle, they knew why its fame had spread: "We were in

those marches." Five years ago, they were 11 years old.

"One time I could see right from my house, people being beaten up in the street. I didn't join that demonstration," Brenda recounted.

"They tell us more people work here at Kodak than live in Selma," Shirley remarked. "Rochester's ten times as big," Brenda added.

"But Selma's different in another way," Shirley went on. "There's nothing like well, say Pittsford, Rich and poor all live together, in the city. There is no inner city, no ghetto."

The girls transferred to Nazareth from a Lutheran academy and junior college where they often felt called upon to defend the tenets of their Catholic faith.

"It was a very small school, all black. The only language offered was Latin," Brenda explained. "We wanted to get a better education, so when we were offered scholarships here, and our parents were for it, we came . . . But it really was a lot more complicated than that. Every day, Shirley would tell me 'Brenda, I'm not going,' or 'Brenda, I'm going!'"

They have enjoyed the experience of finding out "how other people live," in Brenda's words. But they hedge when asked if they'll come back for their senior year next fall. Homesickness deepens when the holidays approach.

"I know this: we're going home for Christmas," Brenda declared. "We don't know how yet, but we're going!"

NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

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New Principal Lauded By Bishop McCafferty

(See story on new diocesan school aide, Sister Patricia Donovan on Page 16)

Elmira — Warren L. Tessier, who will become principal of Notre Dame High School here on Jan. 5, is "a respected administrator" who "enjoys high respect in the community as well."

Such was the comment from Auxiliary Bishop John E. McCafferty last week, who added that "the appointment of Warren Tessier comes with altogether unclouded joy."

Warren succeeds as principal Sister Patricia Donovan, RSM., who will take a six-months' position as director of planning in the diocesan school office.

Bishop McCafferty said the appointment "is a move that will receive the unmitigated approval of Notre Dame and all the community. He has everything going for him. He has the respect and admiration of the student body for a variety of accomplishments which rate high with young people. He has been a sports coach, science teacher, and a respected administrator as vice principal."

"Some little reflection of the esteem in which he is held," the

Bishop's statement continued, "can be found in his recent election as president of Notre Dame's board of governors by the variety of business and community leaders who formed that board to strengthen and sustain Notre Dame."

Tessier plans to concentrate, with the board of governors, on their program to greatly increase enrollment for September, 1970, with registrations to be accepted in March. Present enrollment is 570, with accommodations available for at least 200 more students.

"It is in the realm of possibility," Tessier said, "that the modular system of scheduling will be introduced within the foreseeable future. This type of procedure will allow greater flexibility in course offerings, independent studies, team teaching and other innovations."

Tessier, believed to be the first layman in the nation to become chief school officer in an institution owned by a religious congregation, joined the Notre Dame faculty in 1962 and became assistant principal in 1964. The school is staffed by 23 Sisters and 13 lay teachers, and has a full-time chaplain, Father Michael Reagan.



Bishop Celebrates Farewell Mass as Pastor

Bishop Hogan, assisted by Msgr. Wilfred T. Craugh, rector emeritus of St. Bernard's Seminary, distribute Holy Communion at "farewell" folk Mass in St. Margaret Mary Church on Thanksgiving—parish where he had been pastor for 17 months prior to ordination as Rochester's seventh Bishop on Nov. 28 in Sacred Heart Cathedral. During sermon Bishop Hogan said it really was not a farewell, since you "still are my flock."

Br. Josaphat, Principal, Dies at 45

Brother Josaphat Chmielewski, CSC, principal of Cardinal Mooney High School, "looked upon himself as 'least in the kingdom of God,'" and saw his vocation as easier than the ordinary layman's, a colleague said at his funeral.

He had a "deep appreciation of people and their problems," Father Donald Haycock, CSC, Mooney chaplain, assured a congregation that packed Our Mother of Sorrows Church last Saturday afternoon for Brother Josaphat's last rites.

The principal, 45, died unexpectedly at school on Nov. 26, 1969.

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan was principal celebrant of the requiem Mass. A congregation of 1,000 included about 200 priests and Religious.

Concelebrants were Fathers George Wood, Thomas Reddington, John Whalen, John Murphy, Leon Hart, CSB, Burton Smith, CSC, Emmett Murphy, John Hedges, Michael Conboy and Joseph Cersitz, S.J.

In the sanctuary were Auxiliary Bishop Dennis Hickey and Brother Elmo Bransby, CSC, provincial of the Eastern Province of the Brothers of the Holy Cross. Members of the Student Council at Cardinal Mooney formed an honor guard.

Brother Josaphat, a native of Detroit, entered the Holy Cross congregation in 1943 and recently celebrated the 25th anniversary of his religious profession. He received his bachelor and master of science degrees from Notre Dame University, taught in schools in Albany, New York, Monroe, Michigan and Warwick, Rhode Island, and served for six years as principal of Holy Cross High School in Flushing, Long Island. He also taught for two years at St. Leo's College in Fort Portal, Uganda, East Africa, prior to his assignment as principal of Cardinal Mooney High School in July, 1969.

Brother Josaphat is survived by two brothers, Brother Felician Chmielewski, CSC, of Warwick, R.I., and Joseph Chmielewski of Detroit, Mich., and a sister, Sister Mary Karen of the Franciscan Sisters of St. Joseph of Harper Woods, Mich.

Burial was in the novitiate cemetery of the Brothers of Holy Cross in Valletta, N.Y.



Representatives of Priests' Senates and Associations from dioceses throughout the New York Province gathered in Rochester Nov. 24-25 for second convention of Priests' Councils of New York. Pictured at Flagship Hotel during sessions are, from left: Father Michael O'Heaney, Priests' Association, Albany Diocese; Father James F. Larkin, Priests' Senate, Syracuse; Father Bernard McGee, Association, Buffalo; Father John Byrne, Senate, New York; Father John Fagan, executive secretary of Priests' Councils of New York, Rockville Centre; Father Angelo Caligiuri, Senate, Buffalo; Msgr. Charles V. Boyle, Association, Rochester; Msgr. George A. Cocuzzi, Senate, Rochester; Father Almerico DiCerbo, Senate, Albany.

Conesus Seminary Sold

An as yet unnamed Rochester businessman and his associates will purchase the Divine Word Seminary (St. Michael's Mission), a 30-year-old formation and training center for Divine Word missionaries.

The announcement of the purchase bid, in excess of \$1 million, was made Monday by Very Rev. Msgr. Donald J. Ehr, provincial superior of the eastern province of the Society of the Divine Word. The society is based in Washington, D.C.

Msgr. Ehr also said that the society "desires to remain in the metropolitan Rochester area in order to continue to serve the Rochester Diocese."

Msgr. Ehr reported the sale is being effected through Larry Terry Realty, who refused to disclose the identity of the purchaser.

According to Msgr. Ehr, the seminary complex, which includes the seminary, farm buildings and 3,000 acres overlooking Hemlock Lake, Conesus, will be converted into a rest and convalescent home. Msgr. Ehr, however, further announced that the O'Neil-DaVinney and winery on the

property will continue to be operated by a California firm, in the same manner as it has been over the years.

During the past 10 years, the Society of the Divine Word has been centralizing its training programs in other parts of the country. In September 1968 the high school for aspirants to the brotherhood was merged with the society's high school in Erie, Pa., and this past summer the brother's novitiate was closed temporarily.

For these reasons, Msgr. Ehr said, the seminary has been "in a transitional stage for some years."

According to Father Robert Hunter, SVD, administrator of the seminary, the complex now houses 2 priests and 14 brothers. He also reported that the Livonia School District uses the school building as an elementary school.

Father Hunter said he hoped that a few members of the society would remain on the complex to provide services in the Chapel and maintain the grotto, a popular site for pilgrims.

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- ROAST TURKEY, CRANBERRY SAUCE \$4.50

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