

Do Better 'Selling Job' on Schools

Catholic elementary schools should be maintained, upgraded where necessary, and there should be "a better selling job" done to justify their value not alone to the Church but to the community as well.

This was a majority consensus of nine pastors who spoke on "The Role of the Pastor in Administering the Elementary School" at a meeting Tuesday morning in Sacred Heart Cathedral Rectory.

Their comments were made at the monthly meeting of the Rochester Association of Catholic School Administrators. The majority of principals from 32 Rochester parochial schools attended. Sister Mary Sheila, SSJ,

principal of St. Stanislaus School, is association president.

While some speakers recognized the need in particular areas for reorganization of the parish school system, possibly in terms of consolidation or centralization, the majority felt that the parochial school, if it updated and if it is stressing its primary purpose to teach religion, will be supported by parishioners.

Two pastors, however, did indicate that perhaps there should be a reevaluation of parish priorities to judge whether the parish school justifies the percentage of parish funds allocated to it, when weighed against the many other parish needs.

Here's a capsule of some comments by the pastors' panel:

• Frankly, I don't know what we'd do without our school. . . . How otherwise could we give several hundred of our children a good course in religion — to say nothing of training in order and discipline. . . . How could we replace the spirit of our dedicated nuns? . . . If we continue to upgrade to make sure we're giving quality education, I predict a reversal of the trend toward rumors of phasing out.

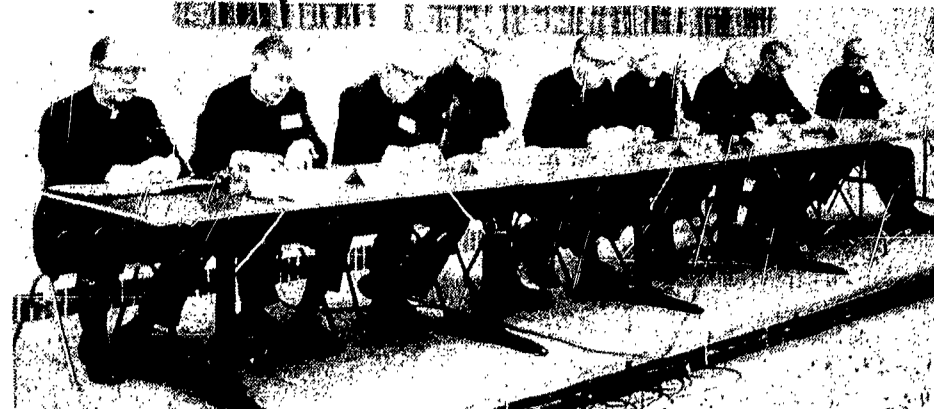
• Much depends on the school principal — she is a professional, and should be a leader. Only a leader can attract followers — the pastor, parents, parishioners. But she needs to be realistic about money.

• Too many of us are "running scared." We have a fine product but we have failed sufficiently to sell it. I for one believe the money is there.

• I feel we must insist on basic orthodoxy in our schools — that's what justifies them. Some of our teachers are getting a little "far out."

• I think there is a real value in parish school boards, but I feel also that there is need to establish some guidelines for such boards.

• It might be well to point out that some of our schools have been taking children from the inner city . . . and that, furthermore, several of our inner-city parochial schools already are well integrated, albeit on a neighborhood basis.



PANEL ON SCHOOLS — Pastors of nine parishes with parochial schools discussed their role in administering the schools at monthly meeting of Rochester Association of Catholic School Administrators on Tuesday in Sacred Heart Cathedral Rectory. From left are: Father Robert Meng, Holy Rosary; Father John Norris, Blessed Sacrament; Msgr. Arthur Ratigan, St. Ambrose; Father John Hayes, Cathedral; Father Edward Zimmer, St. Monica's; Msgr. Charles Boyle, St. John the Evangelist's; Father Edward Lintz, Nativity, Brockport; Father James Marvin, St. Joseph's, Wayland.

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Intensive Student Recruitment Aims for Full Chemung Classes

Elmira — Fighting a decline of nearly 1,000 pupils from parish school rosters in just five years, the Chemung County Catholic School Board this weekend winds up an intensive campaign to fill the first grades of every parochial school in the county next September.

Dr. Thomas Curran, president of the county school board, said his committee hopes that pupil registration in the Catholic schools this Sunday and all next week will guarantee "full classrooms this Fall."

"Last September our first grades in the eight parish schools of the county enrolled 163 fewer pupils than entered in 1964. This 'sales effort' to reach the families of youngsters about to begin school is our biggest attempt to reverse that steady decline."

Dr. Curran stated that an increase of registration for the lower grades in every parish school was necessary "to forestall having to close grades or even eventually close whole schools in our county."

The school board, using birth records and baptismal records covering the whole county, prepared mailing lists of all families of pre-school children. Principals of the respective schools sent these parents informational letters about the offerings of their schools and invited the families to see the schools at Open Houses for 1st grade and kindergarten during this past week.

Some schools entertained visiting parents and prospective pupils during the class day, others received the parents in the evening when they could meet the whole family and the parochial school board members.

Another thrust of school-promotion was a broadcast on WELM this

Wednesday in which Sister Mary Agnes Zimmer and Sister Janet Wahl, Mercy Sisters, made a public presentation of the educational work of Catholic schools in the Southern Tier.

Sister Mary Agnes, coordinator of Catholic schools for the area, explained that Catholic schools rate high in the estimation of the public school teachers and have unique facilities not known to many families.

She cited St. Mary's and the consolidated SS. Peter and Paul-St. Cecilia's schools for their "non-graded primary departments", Our Lady of Lourdes school for "student-tutoring program", St. Mary Our Mother school for a music appreciation program with elaborate tape-facilities, St. Patrick's and Lourdes schools for modern language courses and St. Casimir and St. Anthony schools for a "listening center" in the primary grades.

"We don't want to close any part of our local school system", Sister Mary Agnes said. "We may have to do some more consolidating of schools in the county to streamline our efforts and maintain quality. But to preserve the whole apostolate of Catholic schools our chief thrust each year must be to sell the program we believe to be excellent and steadily recruit children for the primary grades."

The success of a recruitment program in Our Lady of Lourdes last Spring persuaded the county board to make the present effort for first-grade enrollment, Sister Mary Agnes said.

Discussing the loss of nearly 1,000 pupils from the parochial schools in the past six years, Sister Mary Agnes cited three reasons: the "drain" of 7th graders into the public schools

junior-high program", "only two schools have kindergartens to act as feeders for the first grades" and "fewer children are being born in our Catholic families."

She predicted that the improved status of Notre Dame High School would help cut down the drain of parochial 7th graders into the public system.

"More parents in this area are aware of Notre Dame's strong recruitment program and its new 9th grade work-tuition program. The enthusiasm of its Board of Governors to reduce the debt and its faculty's Open Houses have made families more Notre Dame conscious."

Notre Dame is registering for the Fall this weekend and is aiming for a freshman class of 200.

Special Honor For Bp. Kearney

Retired Bishop James E. Kearney has celebrated St. Patrick's Day for 30 years with the Knights of Equity and Daughters of Erin and the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick.

This year, the annual get-together in the name of St. Patrick will be a testimonial to Bishop Kearney. The dinner dance will begin at 6:30 Tuesday night, March 17, at the Sheraton. County Judge John J. Conway will be toastmaster.

Mrs. C. A. Delanty, who has mustered an escort of young ladies for the bishop every year, has chosen Mary Ann Burrato, Colleen Galan, Kathleen Foster, Linda Graham, Peggy Murphy, Patricia O'Connell, Alice Ryan and Mary Ann Toftany.



WORKSHOP PRINCIPALS — Among leaders at Christian Formation workshop March 6-7 at Watson Homestead near Painted Post were (from left): Father Joseph Brennan, rector, St. Bernard's Seminary; Msgr. William Shannon, chaplain, Nazareth College; Margery Number, publicity chairman; Richard Wardell, program chairman; Auxiliary Bishop John E. McCafferty; Dr. Robert Hain, facilities chairman; Mrs. Francis Haber, book sales; Father Sebastian Falcone, OFM, Cap., St. Bernard's Seminary faculty; Father John M. Mulligan, assistant pastor, St. Patrick's, Corning, and director of Christian Formation Board for Southern Tier.

250 Attend Seminar At Watson Homestead

Elmira — Nearly 250 persons, including many priests and nuns, attended an "Age of the Spirit" seminar on Friday night and Saturday, March 6 and 7, in the Watson Homestead north of Painted Post.

It was the second annual such gathering sponsored by the Christian Formation Board of the Southern Tier.

Theme of the conferences was an examination of the Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments and in today's changing Church and world.

Leading the discussions were Father Joseph P. Brennan, rector of St. Bernard's Seminary; Father Sebastian Falcone, OFM, Cap., professor of Sacred Scripture at the Seminary, and Msgr. William H. Shannon, chairman of the department of religious studies at Nazareth College.

Bishop John E. McCafferty, principal speaker at the Saturday luncheon, termed the conferences "most inspira-

tional and most helpful in the need for continuing adult education."

The Church community, he declared, "is and always will be seeking and learning." In the search for truth, he said, "we seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit." As people obtain more realization of "the truth which has been taught to us," he added, they also must apply it to the problems of the day.

Bishop McCafferty and the three priest speakers concelebrated Mass to close the Saturday program. Music was provided by a folk group from St. Mary Our Mother Church, Horseheads.

The Watson Homestead is a "retreat and conference center" in a wooded area three miles north of Cooper's Plains. Owned and operated by the Western New York Conference of the Methodist Church, it has been made available to many groups in the region.

Jesuit Dinner Set Monday

McQuaid Jesuit High School will have its annual Jesuit Missions-McQuaid Benefit Dinner at the Flagship Hotel Monday, March 16.

In addition to raising money for the missions this year, a major portion of the money raised will be used to further education at McQuaid.

Bishop Martin Neylon, coadjutor of the Caroline Islands, will be the principal speaker.

About 70,000 people inhabit the 2,400 Caroline Islands. Forty-six Jesuit priests, Brothers and scholastics labor there as parish priests, teachers, counselors, community development leaders, builders, communications advisors.

Although McQuaid is a relatively young school, its reputation for providing a quality education is firmly established. However, McQuaid, like most non-secular schools, is faced with increased costs that constantly strain its financial situation.

Father William L. Reilly SJ, president of LeMayne College since 1964, will be toastmaster.

Basilian Jubilarians Honored

Fifty years of untiring labor in the sacred ministry was commemorated this week by two Basilian Fathers who have spent most of their priesthood as teachers at Aquinas Institute. Fathers Charles P. Donovan, CSB, a mathematics teacher at Aquinas for more than 30 years and John C. Spratt, CSB, a physical education teacher and presently coach of the Aquinas hockey team, were joined by hundreds of priests, former students and friends in the jubilee celebration.

The celebration began with a Concelebrated Mass of Thanksgiving on Saturday, March 7, the feast of St. Thomas Aquinas, at Sacred Heart

Cathedral. Concelebrating with the jubilarians were Bishop Hogan; Father Joseph Wey, CSB, superior-general of the Basilian Community and Father Donald Kuder, CSB, superior of the Rochester house. Bishop James E. Kearney and Auxiliary Bishop Dennis W. Hickey were in the sanctuary. More than 200 priests, including representatives of every Basilian institution in Canada, the United States and Mexico, attended.

In his homily at the Mass, Father Wey pointed out that for half a century the jubilarians had given their hearts to God and had performed distinguished service in the interests of the Church and their fellow men.

Bishop Hogan spoke briefly commending the meritorious priestly labors of the distinguished jubilarians and paid tribute to their perseverance down through the years.

On Sunday afternoon scores of alumni and friends feted Fathers Donovan and Spratt at Aquinas to climax the two-day celebration.

Both priests received Apostolic Blessings from Pope Paul VI. Telegrams of congratulation were received from Cardinal Terence Cooke of New York, Cardinal George Flahiff of Winnipeg, Canada, and Archbishop John Pocock of Toronto, a former student of both.

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