

Priests' Senate Hears Priorities

Parishes with a large land area should consider donating part of it for erection of apartment houses for the elderly.

This was one of scores of proposals and suggestions advanced by speakers at a "priorities meeting" of the diocesan Priests' Senate Tuesday night, May 5, in St. Thomas More auditorium.

Four priests, a Sister and 12 laymen addressed the 17-member Priests' Senate, representing clergy throughout the diocese, at a three-hour session.

Suggested priorities for diocesan attention included such topics as the problems of the poor, the Catholic education system, housing, parish administration, more lay participation and more hospital chaplains.

Bishop Hogan, at the close of the meeting, expressed appreciation to the speakers, remarking that "Bishops today are no longer required to be good speakers as they are expected to be good listeners." He noted that several of the proposals submitted already have been under discussion by diocesan officials.

More than 200 priests, Sisters and laity attended the session. Speakers and topics included:

Father John J. Hempel, director of the Diocesan Office of Human Concern, who declared the Church should be a catalyst to aid problems of the poor—"a Church not only of theology but also of sociology, of understanding, mercy and concern." He proposed expansion of the secular ministry

and countywide task forces to deal with housing, education and welfare problems.

Father John Skvorak, chairman of the Priests' Association of Rochester, who presented PAR proposals for establishment of a Diocesan Pastoral Council and task forces to aid in forming Parish Councils, changes in procedures of selection of Bishops to provide a greater voice for clergy and laity, and consideration of suggestions on limited tenure for priests, special ministries for certain priests, and a greater lay voice in clergy assignments.

Father Daniel P. Tormey, chaplain of Rochester General Hospital, who declared the Church is "losing ground" in its mission for care of the sick and dying because of their increasing number. He advocated assignment of more priests, on either a fulltime or parttime basis, as chaplains to the many hospitals and nursing homes in the diocese, and special training for such chaplains.

Father Laurence Tracy, representing the social action committee of the Priests' Association, who urged maintenance of diocesan and parish subsidies and services for the inner city apostolate, and suggested formation of a diocesan planning group for quality integrated education.

Sister Marietta Hanss, RSM., who advocated formation of a Sisters' Senate on Education, representing all women's religious communities serving in the diocese. This group, she maintained, could undertake a thorough study of Catholic education and make recommen-



Sister Marietta Hanss, RSM. (left, at microphone) was one of 17 speakers to address the diocesan Priests' Senate and audience on May 5 at a "priorities" meeting in St. Thomas More auditorium. Seated at table in foreground are Auxiliary Bishop Dennis Hickey, Bishop Hogan, Auxiliary Bishop John McCafferty and Father James M. Moynihan, diocesan chancellor. Members of Senate are seated at the table behind the Bishops.

dations to diocesan officials. She declared that the aim to maintain the Catholic school system should be seen as broader than the question of finances, and should include "consideration of the needs of the Christian family."

Ronald F. Proud, of St. Francis Xaxier Church, who suggested mandated Councils in every parish which would have some decision-making powers; use of modern media in teaching the faith, such as film strips at Masses; discontinuance of the stipend system, with offerings to go to the parish treasury.

Mrs. Robert Joynt, a religious education teacher in St. Louis parish, who proposed that, if it becomes financially necessary, there be a "phasing out of Catholic elementary school grades one through six" so that funds will be available to maintain the secondary schools, improve inner city schools and expand the religious education programs for

adults and for Catholics attending public schools.

Carl Loewenguth, of St. Augustine's parish, who urged a concerted drive to rouse "the Catholic silent majority" to press for tax assistance for parochial schools.

Joseph Mercier, a member of the diocesan Confraternity of Christian Doctrine lay board, who maintained that "young persons have widespread rejection of religion because we have failed to provide a viable renewed theology—a new and more effective program," with professional coordinates.

Frank C. Philippone Jr., a member of St. Theodore's Parish senior housing committee, who suggested a diocesan advisory board to study the use of diocesan and parish land for construction of housing for the elderly.

Robert J. McLaughlin, president of the Rochester Association of Catholic Laymen, who described "the most important

objective of the immediate future" as the establishment of "a true Christian social conscience" and a greater realization of the "social dimension of the Gospel."

Edward J. Lum, chairman of the education committee of the Rochester "Northwest Housing Task Force," who stressed the Church's responsibility in housing and racial problems.

Donald Burke, chairman of the religious formation board of Holy Name of Jesus parish, who advocated the setting up of such a board in every parish, which "should assume full responsibility for the entire religious program within the parish."

Other speakers included Joseph E. Cilano of St. Francis Xavier parish, George A. Kuipers, representing the New York State Citizens for Educational Freedom, Daniel E. De Palma, coordinator of the Rochester Cursillo Movement and Fred W. Armbruster.

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Conferring on arrangements for state Catholic Daughters of America convention slated in Rochester May 18-22 are Mrs. Frank J. Donahue of Brockport (left) and Miss Marguerite Sullivan, monitor, of Batavia.

CDA Meeting Expected To Bring 300 Here

More than 300 delegates from throughout the state are expected at the 32nd biennial convention of the New York State Court, Catholic Daughters of America, to be held Monday through Friday, May 18-22, at Rochester's Flagship Hotel.

Bishop Hogan and Father Louis Hohman, rector of Becket Hall, will be among convention speakers. Program highlights include:

Monday—2 p.m., district deputies' meeting; 4 p.m., registration; 8 p.m., reception and entertainment by Rochester Gas and Electric Corp. Girls' Chorus.

Tuesday—11 a.m., Mass, Sac-

red Heart Cathedral, Bishop Hogan; 6:30 p.m., dinner, Flagship ballroom; speaker, Bishop Hogan.

Wednesday—9 a.m., business session; 12:30 p.m., luncheon; speaker, Father Hohman; 2:30 p.m., business session.

Thursday—9 a.m., business sessions, elections; 2:30 p.m., business session; 8 p.m., installation of officers; 9:30 p.m., reception.

Friday—8:45 a.m., tour of Kodak Park and luncheon.

Masses for delegates will be celebrated at 5 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday in the hotel's Stuart Room.

Mt. Carmel High School to Close

By ARTHUR P. FARREN

Auburn—Announcement here Friday that this city's only Catholic high school will be closed next month because of declining enrollment had a hammer-blow effect on a large portion of the area's Catholics.

More than 690 boys and girls currently attend Mt. Carmel High School, which is staffed by 17 Carmelite priests and brothers, 15 Sisters of St. Joseph and five lay teachers.

Shock and dismay at the apparent finality of the decision highlighted a three-hour, emotion packed meeting Friday night of more than 1,000 parents and students in the school's gymnasium. Some students were in tears as they pleaded that the school be continued.

Announcement of the closing was made by the Very Rev. Lawrence J. Mooney, O. Carm., of New York City, prior of the order's New York Province. He termed the decision irrevocable.

Father Mooney declared that facts and statistics had been carefully discussed recently with Bishop Hogan and diocesan officials.

Many parents and some Auburn priests, however, appealed for a meeting with the Bishop.

Father Mooney explained that while finances are a problem, "all the answers focus on the situation of student enrollment."

Enrollment for 1969-70, he said declined by 60. Projections reveal a decline of 100 for the 1970-71 school year, and a steady decline through 1974, so that by the latter year the total registration would be down close to 400. This would demand, he contended, "an increase in tuition of such magnitude that the less affluent Catholic parent could no longer afford to send his child to Mt. Carmel."

"Mt. Carmel High School was opened to serve all the Catholic children of Auburn," he declared. "The Carmelite Fathers and Brothers have always kept the tuition at a level (\$250) that almost any Catholic family in the City of Auburn could afford."

They "long ago decided," he continued, "that should the day come when they no longer could serve all the Catholic families of Auburn, they would close Mt. Carmel High School. That day has arrived."

Pupil enrollment in Auburn's Catholic grammar schools, he pointed out, has steadily declined. The base of Mt. Carmel's pyramid, he said, "is shrinking and will continue to shrink."

Another reason, he noted, is that the City of Auburn is building a new \$9 million high school, and that more than half the children graduating from the parochial schools have decided to attend the new school.

Mt. Carmel will have an approximate \$30,000 deficit this year because of low tuition and less enrollment, and a further decline would bring greater deficits in succeeding years.

Father Mooney said that the school, to operate effectively, should have an enrollment of 750 students.

Msgr. James D. Cuffney, pastor of St. Mary's Church, read a statement signed by Auburn priests which declared they "deeply regret the closing."

"The suddenness and finality of this decision disturbs us as much as the decision itself."

He then declared that, if the decision was "irreversible," the priests make the following proposals:

• That Bishop Hogan, Father Mooney and other diocesan officials "meet with the priests of Auburn and representatives

of the Catholic parents to discuss the future of religious education on the high school level in Auburn."

• "We request that the Sisters of St. Joseph and the Carmelite Fathers leave five Sisters and five priests to continue their dedication to the religious training of teenagers."

• A thorough reorganization of the present high school religious education programs in Auburn be undertaken.

Father John Nacca, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Church, announced he had not signed the statement.

Father Daniel Brent, diocesan superintendent of schools, who was in the audience, endorsed the proposals, said he would do what he could to implement them, and also advocated consolidation of the city's Catholic elementary schools.

The Carmelites have given no indication what they plan to do with the building. The school and 59 acres of property are owned and controlled by the order under a contract with the diocese.

The story of Mt. Carmel goes back to 1952 when Catholics and others of the Auburn area pledged more than \$500,000 toward its construction. Costs approximated \$1¼ million, with Auburn parishes pledging half the additional amount and the Carmelites the remaining half. The school was opened in 1955. The parishes also pledged to finance a \$300,000 classroom wing addition in 1957.

Meanwhile the Auburn Board of Education called a special meeting for Monday night, May 11, to discuss the Mt. Carmel closing.