

A Parking Lot Comes Alive

By JOHN DASH

Near almost every church there lies a stretch of asphalt, empty and hot in the summer sun. For five days a week, week after broiling week, it cradles only the occasional car and the inevitable small boy on a bicycle following the locust's drone. Parking lot.

Father Edward Zimmer decided to change that situation. He's turning the two-acre parking lot next to his church, St. Monica's, 832 Genesee St., into a recreation area for the neighborhood kids; and, in the process, he's attracting both the City Recreation Department and the FIGHT organization.

About June 1, Father Zimmer sent out the word he was looking for basketball equipment. He scoured the local recreation equipment companies and got nowhere.

Then FIGHT's Al Lawson showed up at the rectory door. "Bernie Gifford sent me," he said. Since that day, FIGHT has been picking up the tab for remodeling the parking lot into a playground; and they have provided "two of the nicest young women as supervisors for the playground," Father Zimmer said.

The City Recreation Department took a look and they too decided to get into the act.

Since then Father Zimmer's plans have grown. St. Monica's lot, he hopes, will have not only the two half-courts and one full basketball court, but also a volleyball court, a badminton court, a baseball lot and swings.

But, he points out, it's not all laughter and lightness. A next door neighbor called to ask: "Just what kind of a Christian minister do you think you are?" And the time between promises and action seems to sag in the heat. "So right now, I've got on my working clothes and I'm going out and paint the lines on the basketball court myself."

"These kids run up and down Genesee Street all day. They haven't got a place to play. And they're not destructive," Father Zimmer said, itchy to get moving on a small metamorphosis that may add hope to the joy of a long summer afternoon.

SUMMER COURSE

Sister Mary Caroline Donohue, SSJ., of the Nazareth Academy faculty, has completed a four-week workshop in adult basic education reading programs.

Courier and the Parish

Many times pastors come up with ideas that are so worthwhile that other parishes may be interested in trying them. The Courier-Journal from time to time will describe some of the more unusual projects.



Father Charles Reynolds (seated center), pastor of St. Lucy's Church, Retsof, meets with group conducting fund drive to reduce debt and complete church building. Pictured from left are: seated—Joseph Bucchi, campaign chairman; Father Reynolds and Tullio Troisi, cochairmen; second row—Paul Parks; Frank Spezzano, cochairmen; James Vasso, Alex Cichelli, Joseph Troisi, James Christiano, Paul George; rear—James Cooney, Frank Aliannel Jr., John Craft, Roy McCracken.

Retsof Church Drive

Retsof—Parishioners of St. Lucy's Church here, a mission of St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Leicester, will be asked to pledge funds toward reduction of the mission church's debt and completion of their five-year-old church building.

Minimum goal of the drive is \$40,000 in three-year pledges,

according to Father Charles R. Reynolds, pastor.

Men of St. Lucy's will visit parishioners Sunday, Aug. 27, to seek pledges. Assisting in the conduct of the campaign is Foley Associates of Rochester, national Catholic fund-raising organization.



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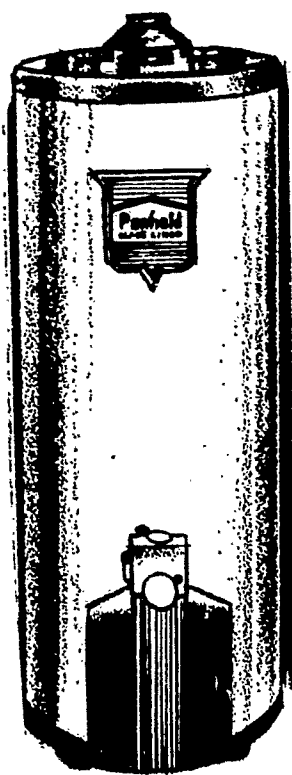
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