

The Christian Family Movement Explores

This year nearly 100 young couples in the Diocese of Rochester gather at one another's homes to discuss the many facets of the revolutionary character of American culture in the '70s.

These couples, and at latest count, the oldest couple are in their mid-forties, belong to an international organization known as the Christian Family Movement.

The CFM is an ecumenical organization despite the fact that their chaplain locally is Father Bernard Dollen, of Holy Ghost Parish, and their origins in Chicago, were Catholic.

Members describe their movement as a family apostolate which engages in Christianizing their family life and all other areas of their lay environment.

Parish or district groups of five to seven couples meet every two weeks in the homes of the members, follow an outline meeting plan, pray, and carry their discussions into action.

In the Rochester diocese, actions varying in scope and effectiveness have been undertaken—some of short duration, others are continuous in nature. "CFM families plan a parish picnic, bring food to an ill neighbor, renovate homes for the poor or disabled" are actions recorded in the minutes of the diocesan CFM federation.

When parish representative couples meet or report

at the diocesan level (referred to as the federation) they tell of continuous endeavors as sending food, clothing, and books to the poor of Chemung or another group reports placing its members on committees which deal with the relocation problem caused by the East Rochester Urban Renewal Project.

These actions, however did not develop without planning. Members involved in these actions first observed the problems. In the case of the Chemung project, couples wrote to, read about, and interviewed individuals to get opinions about the distribution of food and aid to the poor of our country. From their finding, they judged that their moral obligation was to help those whom they found to be in desperate need. They acted by motivating children and parents alike to assist with clothing and food drives, collect rummage sale items, and used furniture. The parish became involved and in turn the entire community.

The Urban Renewal Committee work developed in the diocese from an observation: "No family is an island." Judging their community needs, they decided to act with their friends to fulfill those needs.

Throughout the diocese the efforts of CFM units have developed and made possible the One Church-One Family Project. The main idea of this service is to help needy families become aware of various community resources. They have provided for lectures and panel discussions on marriage, the generation gap and sex education, all aimed at sustaining the family unit.

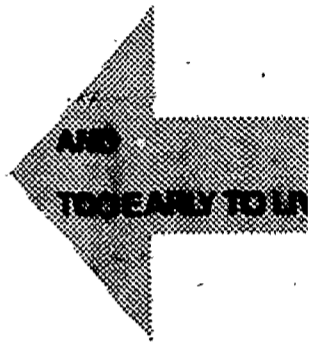
Some families partake in a Student Exchange Program, taking foreign students into their homes for six to eight week periods. Some build Nativity scenes or present the story of the Nativity to young children. The entire CFM family recreates through a service of love.

The tone of CFM is not all one of labor. Members bring their families together for social functions when the CFM family picnic turns into fun-loving chase with babies, small children and teen-agers participating. These same children assist the parents in their CFM actions, they become involved.

This complete family involvement is vividly observed at Notre Dame University where every two years, Mother, Dad and the children attend the international convention and spend a weekend of renewal listening to outstanding theologians and national personalities, and actively participating in workshops and seminars with persons all over the world.

The decision to become members of CFM necessitates an understanding between a husband and wife that this spiritual commitment and sacrifice of time and sometimes money will create a keen awareness of Christ's world and its needs. Because of what they learn, they will be better equipped to interpret the world to their children so that they too will understand and be able to assist in the Christianization of their environment.

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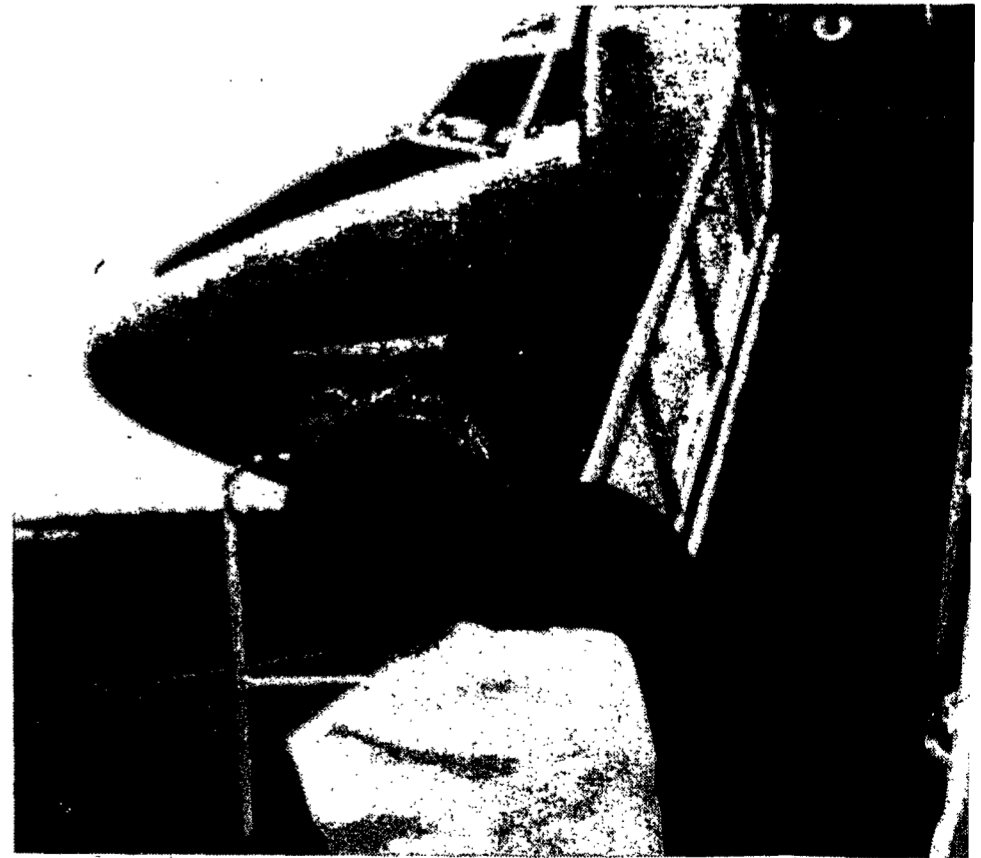
The Griffin children are getting ready for Jesus' Birthday Party at St. Christopher's Parish. The CFM actively collected canned food for the poor.



Father Bernard Dollen, CFM program, listens a



The CFM group of Holy Ghost Parish have started a coffee hour after two masses each Sunday.



It's a sad moment of parting for Mary Carmen Antone as she bound for her native home, Mexico. Miss Antone was a summer Gates-Chill under the cooperative egis of CFM and Intercambio dantes. CFMer Mrs. Helen Sullivan of Rochester was