

New Religious Education Dept....Its Goals

Religious education of every child in the diocese is the responsibility of the newly-structured CCD-Religious Education Department. This is the first of a series investigating the goals and facilities of the department, and the views of teachers in the parish programs presently reaching 55,000 children in public schools.

By CECELIA M. VIGGO

Remember the kids with the lost look in their eyes who made their First Communion and Confirmation at the end of the line? They were the ones, we whispered to each other, who came from the "other school": the public school. A few years ago, a Catholic parent was judged derelict who sent his child to such a place.

Years pass, and along with "Hair", Vatican II, and the Women's Liberation Movement, time has also brought what might be termed the "public schooler's revenge".

For today, if you put all the Catholic children who attend public school at the end of the line, they would extend nearly all the way up to the front.

Two out of three Catholic children of school age are enrolled in public elementary and high schools. No, the rate of derelict parents has not increased alarmingly.

It's just that rising parish school costs, shortage of teaching-Sisters, and a more ecumenical crop of parents have all tended to make the parochial school as we now know it a rather shaky proposition. Catholic attendance in public schools is growing every year.

The Confraternity of Christian Doctrine (CCD) has the burden of providing religious instruction to some 55,062 Catholic children in public schools of the Rochester Diocese. And this staggering job does not touch 36,000 other Catholics who are enrolled in neither parochial schools nor CCD programs.

The problems facing CCD are innumerable. However, they may be grouped under three separate headings:

- CCD must find ways to supply enough teachers and materials to more and more students. This entails contending with a mind-fix of the diocese, parishes, and parishioners who are accustomed to thinking of the parochial school as main instrument of religious education and entitled to the largest share of Church funds.

- CCD must respond to the challenge of Vatican II. No longer is the memorization of the Baltimore Catechism sufficient. For contemporary theology stresses the need for a

personal response to the gospel in the life of each Christian.

- CCD must reach today's young people. How does a teacher approach these youngsters, knowledgeable beyond their years, due to the constant exposure to radio and television, and accustomed to the freedom afforded by a more permissive age?

The diocese and individual parishes are slowly making headway towards the solution of these massive problems.

The Pastoral Office recently reorganized its Department of Education, and merged the offices of CCD and Religious Education in parish schools under the directorship of Father Daniel Holland.

This merger goes a long way towards securing a redistribution of diocesan concern as well as resources which recognize CCD's growing role in Catholic education.

Father Holland speaks strongly for the importance of CCD as equal partner with the parochial school in religious education. He recently told the Diocesan Task Force on Education: "Planners of diocesan and parochial action have a responsibility to face the issue of guaranteeing the religious edu-

cation of every child in every parish."

The Diocesan Department of Religious Education-CCD has recommended modern texts, written in response to Vatican II, which try to develop (over the eight-year span of primary education) a gradual relationship between the growing child and God. The CCD library in its Columbus Civic Center office offers the most modern teacher-manuals and audio-visual aids, geared to more demanding religious education programs.

In order to handle these more extensive and more complex programs, the Department of Religious Education-CCD has advised that each parish hire a "religious education coordinator" a fulltime educator who would plan for and supervise the religious education of all parishioners.

Many parishes, aided by the guidance, resources and teacher training programs offered by the diocesan CCD office, have updated and augmented their CCD programs. Most innovations reflect the spirit of Vatican II, and are aimed at attracting more young people.

Most teachers agree that CCD must be able to "sell itself to the young."

"I think you have to have

something special that meets their needs," affirms Mercy Sister Marie Lynch. Speaking from experience at St. Paul's parish in Webster, she says: "Somehow you have to make an attempt to reach them as individuals, and a class situation is not always the way."

Many other CCD directors have reached the same conclusions.

Instead of holding structured religion classes at the end of the school day, many parishes, among them St. Cecilia's and St. Salome's in Irondequoit, and Good Shepherd Church in Henrietta, have scheduled longer sessions in the evening or on weekends.

These evening classes have a discussion-oriented format, and work especially well on the high school level.

Meeting at the homes of CCD teachers, bringing in guest speakers, using films and records in class, granting young people a say in planning CCD meetings: these are some of the other innovations CCD groups are trying.

Future articles will outline the activities and policies of the new Department of Religious Education-CCD and several specific parish programs which show imagination and promise.

St. Bernard's Alumni To Honor 4 Bishops

Tributes to four bishops, particularly retired Bishops James E. Kearney and Walter A. Foery, will highlight the biennial meeting of St. Bernard's Seminary Alumni Association which will bring approximately 400 clergy to Rochester Oct. 27-28.

Bishop Kearney will be marking his 86th birthday and his 38th anniversary of ordination as a bishop on Wednesday, Oct. 28. He retired as Rochester's fifth bishop in 1966. Bishop Foery, 80, a Rochester native and a St. Bernard's alumnus, was a Rochester pastor and was Bishop of Syracuse for 33 years before his retirement last August.

Also to be honored are two other bishop-alumni of St. Bernard's — Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, who became Rochester's seventh bishop in 1969, and Bishop David F. Cunningham, who succeeded Bishop Foery in Syracuse.

Bishop Lawrence B. Casey of Paterson, also a St. Bernard's alumnus, will attend the meeting. He is president of the alumni association.

Alumni sessions are scheduled at the seminary on Wednesday morning, and at the Flagship Hotel beginning at noon.

A Pontifical Low Mass will be celebrated in the seminary chapel at 10 a.m. in memory of Msgr. Wilfred T. Craugh, who spent 43 years of his 46 years in the priesthood as teacher, rector and rector-emeritus of the seminary prior to his death last Aug. 16. An alumni business meeting will follow.

Luncheon is scheduled at the Flagship at 1:45 p.m., to be followed by separate meetings of alumni classes.

Both Bishop Kearney and Bishop Foery remain active in retirement.

Genial Bishop Kearney, who continues to give talks and attend ceremonies around the diocese he headed for 29 years, was ordained to the priesthood in New York City in 1908. He was consecrated Bishop of Salt

Lake City in 1932 and was transferred to Rochester in 1937.

Many of his talks reflect concern about "extremists in liturgy and theology," and an urging for devotion to the Blessed Mother. In a 1968 interview he declared:

"I have the utmost confidence in the Blessed Mother of the Church. Pope Paul, in naming Our Lady 'Mother of the Universal Church,' anticipated that the Church would need the heart of a tender Mother and the strong arm of a heavenly Queen."

Keen of mind and alert to today's news, the Bishop reads a great deal, often visits rectories, enjoys invitations to school and parish functions, visits hospitals and attends many funerals. He continues a years-long practice of walking to maintain health and vigor.

Bishop Foery, born in Rochester July 6, 1890, was ordained in old St. Patrick's Cathedral June 10, 1916. He served as pastor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church and subsequently of Holy Rosary Church before being ordained Bishop of Syracuse Aug. 18, 1937.

Bishop Cunningham was ordained June 12, 1926, and was named Auxiliary Bishop of Syracuse in 1950. Bishop Casey, ordained June 7, 1930, in old St. Patrick's Cathedral, was named Auxiliary Bishop of Rochester in 1953 and Bishop of Paterson in 1966.

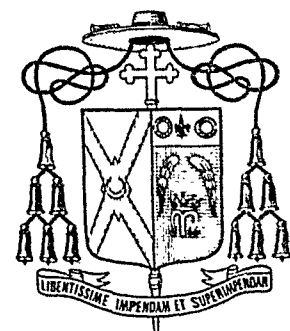


BISHOP FOERY



BISHOP KEARNEY

Diocesan Appointments



Father Joseph O. Gorman, to assistant pastor, St. Mary's, Canandaigua.

Father Eugene M. Lower, to assistant pastor, St. Mary's Church, Waterloo, from St. Jerome's Church, East Rochester.

School Panel to Seek Grass Root Opinions

Diocesans who have opinions on the future of the parochial school system may speak their mind to the Bishop's Task Force on Education at seven area hearings scheduled between Nov. 3 and 17.

Meetings set for Rochester, Auburn, Corning, Elmira, Geneva and Dansville will seek out the "local point of view" on educational matters.

The Task Force which has been digesting statistics from the Donovan Report, the School and Society Survey and other data, intends to hear the opinions of all parochial educational leaders before submitting its recommendations to Bishop Hogan at the end of November.

Rochester meetings will be held at St. Charles Borromeo School Hall on Nov. 3, at St. James Church Hall on Nov. 4, and St. Anne's School Hall on Nov. 5. All hearings will begin at 8 p.m.

Auburn parishioners may speak to the task force at St. Mary's School on Nov. 11; Corning area people at St. Mary's on Nov. 12; and Dansville residents at St. Mary's School on Nov. 12. Dates and places for the Geneva and Elmira gatherings have not been decided.

The Task Force is a 20-member board of laymen, religious and priests, appointed by Bishop Hogan "to develop priority guidelines for the school system's problems, to look to the welfare of all religious education and to recommend diocesan action."

Four lengthy meetings discussing the overall prospects of the schools' future have already been held in an attempt to formulate advisory guidelines for the entire 92-school system.

The area-meetings have been in the plans of the Task Force since their work began because "parochial expression about the future welfare of the schools will play an important role in its final recommendations," according to Father Daniel Brent, diocesan superintendent of schools and chairman of the Task Force.

Pastors, principals, school board members and parish council members have been invited to the area meetings by a letter from the Schools' Office to the pastors. Other individuals who wish to speak at the hearings may do so for five minutes if they submit their remarks in writing.

Among the questions the Task Force wishes opinion on are: Is there inter-parochial co-

operation in this area? What is the present financial situation of your school? What are the long-range building needs among these area schools? Are Sisters necessary for a "religious" school?

Bishop to Talk On Sacraments

Recent guidelines regarding first reception of the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist, and the role of parents in preparation, will be outlined by Bishop Hogan in a radio talk at 7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 31, over a seven-station network.

The Bishop's talk, aimed to reach parishioners throughout the diocese, will be broadcast over Station WSAY, Rochester, WRLX, Auburn, WCYI-FM, Corning, Channel 10 of Elmira TV cable facilities, Channel 6 in the Auburn cable area, Channel 5 in the Hornell area and Corning cable outlet 88.75.

FORTY HOURS

Forty Hours devotions will begin Nov. 1 in the following places: Holy Family, Our Lady of Mercy and St. Joseph's, Rochester; Genesee, Penn Yan, Waverly and Webster.