

School Prayers

Drawing Crowds

Cavendish, Vt. — (RNS) — Participation in voluntary prayers at the Proctorsville Elementary School has increased more than 500 per cent, the woman responsible for the religious gesture reported here.

Mrs. Thomas Pomer, a member of the Cavendish School Board, said there were 20 participants when the prayer exercises began in early September compared with a present average of 109 of the school's 145 pupils. They go into school five minutes before the beginning of classes and take part in "religious exercises incorporating patriotism," Mrs. Pomer said.

The Vermont Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union has threatened court action to test the legality of the school prayer program, but no complaints have been heard from local residents.

Hard-to-Beat Combination

Elkhorn, Wis. — (NC) — Owner Bob Clark described Padre Joe, a sentimental favorite whenever he's entered in a harness race hereabouts, as "a nondenominational horse."

Clark explained: "He was raised by a Congregationalist, who was married to a Baptist. Later he was trained by a Catholic who was a convert from the Episcopal church. Now he's being trained by a Methodist."

During the annual harness races at Elkhorn Fairgrounds, Padre Joe had a new driver — Father Joseph F. Hanauska, pastor of St. Patrick's parish here. Padre Joe breezed to wins in two events with Father Hanauska holding the reins.

Mrs. Clark, the owner's wife, said the horse is named for Father Hanauska. Not only that, but 10 per cent of the purses Padre Joe wins go to St. Patrick's parish. Whenever the nondenominational horse goes to the post, he's well backed by hard cash — plus plenty of prayers.

"I named Padre Joe for Father Hanauska because he's a nice guy and takes an interest in the horse," Clark said.

School Group Disbands

San Francisco — (NC) — The four-year-old Association of Catholic School Superintendents of the United States' Catholic Conference (USCC) met here Nov. 24 for its biennial meeting, and in its first action, decided to disband the organization.

Functions of the association will be taken over by the superintendents' department of the National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA), also holding its national meeting here. Membership in the two superintendents' groups largely overlaps.

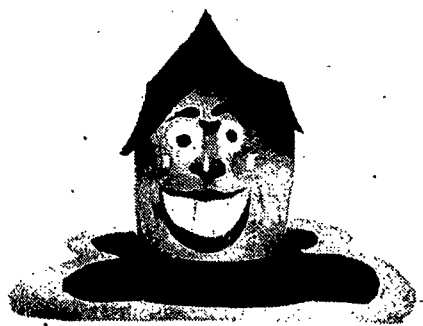
Dr. Edward R. D'Alessio, director of the USCC's elementary and secondary education division, said the superintendents' association had become "superfluous, needlessly duplicating the work of the NCEA's superintendents' department."

MISSIONER, 95, DIES

Techny, Ill. — (RNS) — A concelebrated funeral Mass was sung Nov. 7 at Divine World Seminary chapel here for Father Adolph Burgmer, SVD, a pioneer Divine Word Missionary and patriarch of the Techny Community. Prior to his death Nov. 5 at the age of 95, he was the oldest Divine Word missionary in the U.S.

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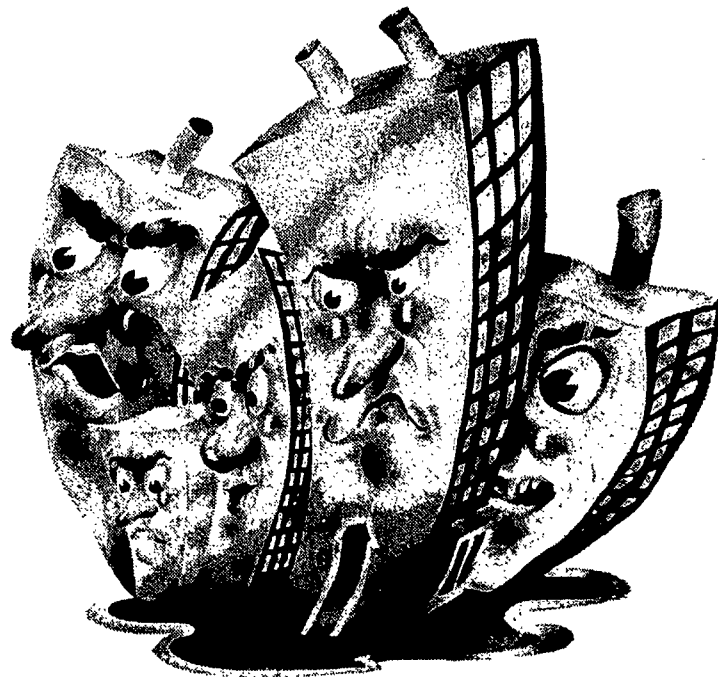
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