

The Modern School Library Holds More than Books

Last week the *Courier-Journal* looked at changes in high school education and the effects on libraries. Libraries no longer house only books; they have become "media centers." In this final article, libraries at Nazareth, Aquinas, Bishop Kearney are featured.

"Mercy High's media center is a dream." This has been the rather wistful comment of many librarians in high schools of the diocese less fortunate in space, personnel, and equipment. (Last week's article featured Mercy's "media center" with 23,000 volumes, 300 periodicals and extensive audio-visual equipment.)

But like the second eldest son in the fairy tale, denied an inheritance, but still resourceful and plucky, these librarians are dealing with limitations in innovative and creative ways.

Space was the problem at Nazareth Academy and Aquinas Institute. Both schools occupy old buildings, erected to fit the needs of a far simpler educational era.

Father John Whitley, CSB., director of Aquinas' library, faced three problems: accommodating increasing numbers of students doing independent study, providing facilities for use of audio-visual materials, and storing a-v equipment and printed matter.

His solution was to maximize the potential of existing space, by equipping one area to serve a variety of functions.

Last summer, wall-to-wall carpeting and an acoustical ceiling was installed, to cut down on noise, and to add to the number of students that the library could accommodate in quiet.

Next month, Father Whitley plans to move out the old bulky library tables, and to replace them with clusters of study carrels. Each carrel will contain an electrical outlet, and miniature screen, enabling students to study, read, research, or use audio-visual materials in the same place.

The library utilizes every inch of space. A counter extends from hard-to-use space under the windows. Here, Aquinas' film strip and record collection is displayed. Portable

carrels (lightweight three-sided screens) are available to students who wish to listen to records or view film strips in this area.

The purchase of a microfilm reader helps Father Whitley to store more periodicals needed for Aquinas' new specialized electives. Microfilm takes up little space, and is less costly than printed matter.

The library has the microfilm of articles from "Better Homes and Gardens" magazine, for example, necessary for a new course in consumer affairs.

The room adjoining the library holds Aquinas' audio-visual equipment. Aside from the customary projectors, camera, and tape recorders, Aquinas' collection, under the supervision of teacher Nicholas Cattat, includes a compact SONY TV camera and receiver.

An electronic piano, complete with earphones for individual practicing, makes this all-purpose room a music room as well.

Nazareth Academy faced similar problems with a different approach. While more elective courses and the trend to independent study placed greater demands on Nazareth's library, the school's enrollment had decreased.

Such a situation made decentralization of library resources a viable solution.

Nazareth created two resource centers, one for English, and one for theology, history and business. Each center is a renovated classroom seating about forty students. Each is stocked with books, pamphlets and magazines in special subject areas.

The centers are sunny, quiet oases, offering students a respite from the classroom. Each center has bulletin board space for the display of pictures and information pertinent to a special subject area, or exceptional student work.

Not only do these resource centers help Nazareth accommodate more students doing independent work, they also increase the effectiveness of the library. Sister Joseph Edward, SSJ., librarian, reflects that students will use material in the resource center to gain a

general familiarity with their subject, and then go to the library for more intensive research.

In another effort to decentralize library materials, Nazareth has prepared certain classrooms for only certain subjects. Some classrooms are used only for the teaching of American History; others may be devoted solely to literature courses.

By specifying the teaching function of each classroom, Nazareth can furnish each with special materials and equipment.

In this way, each classroom becomes a "mini" library and audio-visual center, stocked with the appropriate magazines, texts, maps, illustrations, and overhead projector.

Bishop Kearney High School in Irondequoit is a modern co-educational school whose bright, two-story library (main floor and mezzanine) should be able to serve the needs of its 1800 students.

However, Bishop Kearney's library, staffed by one full-time librarian, Sister Marie, SSND., does face a shortage of personnel.

Sister Marie's solution has been to foster and encourage the growth of Kearney's library club. Sister Marie trains each club member to operate all library machines, and to handle all library procedures.

Sister Marie praises the ability and responsibility of club members: "It doesn't make any difference what you ask the girls to do, they're trained to fit into any area in the library."

Many other high schools in the diocese are trying similar innovations to compensate for their shortages of space, equipment or personnel.

Certainly, imaginative planning can do much to improve a library. Libraries may also be aided by outside sources.



Sister Noreen gives Mary McDonnell some instruction in threading the filmstrip projector at Notre Dame High School in Elmira.

Catholic high school libraries do receive public money to buy books under Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This federal legislation recognizes the right of teachers and students in private schools to an equal share in state and federal funds for library resources.

Aid under Title II has been an appreciable help to students and teachers at Nazareth, librarian Sister Joseph Edward reports. Nazareth, in the city school district, has received funds to purchase 1,000 books, and some audio-visual materials in the five years since the act's inception in 1965, acquisitions surely beyond the school's library budget.

How much, if any, financial aid a Catholic high school may receive depends on the Title II allocation of funds to the school district in which the school is located.

These articles have just scratched the surface in exploring all the "brave new worlds" our diocesan high school libraries are now pioneering. What libraries will look like 10 years from now can't be foretold.

However, one thing is sure. Newer educational approaches and the growing use of technology in teaching, while bringing both problems and challenges, has forever obliterated the stereotyped woe of librarians: boredom.

Chemung Consolidation Clears Another Hurdle

Elmira—Acceptance of most proposals for consolidation of Chemung County's parochial schools moved a step forward last Thursday, Dec. 3, at a public meeting in Notre Dame High School here.

In "position" papers and statements by representatives of eight parishes, six supported the proposals, one took a neutral stand and another was reported to be "somewhat divided."

Nearly 200 persons attended the meeting, called to ascertain the feelings of parishioners. The consolidation proposals next will be discussed at a meeting Thursday, Dec. 10, of the Chemung County Catholic School Board, which may accept or alter them before presenting them to the diocesan Educational Task Force. The latter group then will make recommendations to Bishop Hogan.

Called a "regional plan," the proposals (described in detail in last week's *Courier-Journal*) would convert St. Patrick's parochial school to a junior high school (7th and 8th graders); phase out St. Anthony's four-grade school and convert use of the building to a religious education center for Catholics in public schools; provide for kindergartens in parochial schools in each of four city

quadrants, and close four grades in St. Cecilia's and open a kindergarten there.

The proposals should effect a savings of approximately \$72,000 in the 1971-72 school year, according to Dr. Thomas R. Curran, chairman of the county's Catholic School Board and a member of the Educational Task Force.

Admission of "division" in the St. Patrick's School Board came from Mrs. Claire Reidy, president. She said many parishioners disagree on the regional plan, but added, however, that if it is approved, they probably would have no serious objection to use of their school as a junior high.

A "personal minority report" was given by Dr. Walter Ervin, who said he would close one or two parochial schools and would not favor a junior high. "We must set up structures for future planning," he maintained, "and not continue to operate in a crisis situation." He closed his remarks with "a prayer for peace."

Sister Dominic, RSM., commented that consolidation would enable the Sisters to reach more pupils through better-averaged class enrollment.

Father Edward J. Foy, pastor of St. Cecilia's, regretted

the proposed closing of his parish school but indicated he favored what would be considered "best for the general district." A parishioner, William J. O'Brien, personally pleaded for reconsideration of the proposal.

Several speakers agreed that, provided further study and due deliberation was given the regional plan, they felt parishioners would continue to dedicate themselves to and sacrifice for what would be best for Catholic education in the future.

Bishop Hogan Has Pneumonia

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, ill with bronchial pneumonia, was reported considerably improved Monday.

Father Michael F. Conboy, Bishop Hogan's secretary, said the Bishop has been told by his physician to remain at his Columbus Civic Center residence until at least Dec. 15. His busy schedule of engagements has been canceled.

Bishop Hogan marked his first year as seventh bishop of the Rochester Diocese on Nov. 28. He has traveled throughout the diocese many times during the last 12 months.

Basilian to Be Ordained To Priesthood Saturday

A Rochester Basilian, Rev. Paul Francis O'Connor, CSB, son of Mr. and Mrs. Francis J. O'Connor of 8 Marigold St., will be ordained to the priesthood on Saturday, Dec. 12, in Sacred Heart Cathedral at 10 a.m. by Bishop Hogan.



REV. O'CONNOR

Father O'Connor is one of several Basilian Fathers who will be ordained Saturday in home parishes throughout the country.

A 1959 graduate of Aquinas Institute, Father O'Connor was born in Akron, Ohio in 1941. Upon moving to Rochester with his parents he attended Sacred Heart Cathedral School and Aquinas Institute. After high school he entered the novitiate of the Basilian Fathers at Pontiac, Mich., and made his first vows as a religious in 1960. The following year he began his college studies at St. John Fisher and was awarded a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1964. He was then appointed to the faculty of Aquinas Institute where he taught from 1964 to 1967. In 1970 the University of Detroit conferred on him a Master of Arts degree in English.

Father O'Connor pursued his theological studies for three

years at St. Basil's Seminary in Toronto. His fourth year of Theology was spent in teaching part time at Aquinas and studying at St. Bernard's Seminary in Rochester.

Father O'Connor will offer his first Mass, a concelebrated liturgy, in Sacred Heart Cathedral on Sunday, Dec. 13 at 1 p.m. The sermon will be preached by Father Joseph Dorsey, CSE, vice president of St. John Fisher College.

There will be a public reception for Father O'Connor on Sunday in the parish hall immediately after his first Mass.