

The Bishop Sheen Housing Foundation

'Beyond the Barge Canal'

By CECELIA VIGGO

Poor housing doesn't stop at Rochester's city limits; it's a problem affecting many communities in the diocese. For this reason, the Bishop Sheen Housing Foundation is taking steps to extend its help to areas "beyond the Barge Canal."

In its first action outside Rochester, the foundation has loaned \$1,800 to assist the organization of a unit in Geneva.

Bishop Hogan also has expanded membership on the foundation's board of directors to include representatives from all parts of the 12-county diocese.

The board of directors now consists of 18 Rochesterians, and 8 members from outside the city. Rochester representatives are Bishop Hogan; Father James Moynihan, diocesan chancellor; John Ritzenthaler, diocesan comptroller; Father William Charbonneau, director of Catholic Charities; John Mitchell, Council of Social Agencies; James Porcari, Metropolitan Housing Foundation; Jorge Colon, Ibero-American League; Mrs. Alma Greene, Catholic Interracial Council; Mrs. Phyllis Donahue, Office of Human Development; Msgr. William Naughton, St. Anne's Church; Roger Quinn, Marine Midland Trust Co.; Augustus Niles, Schwartz Realty; Paul Flynn, Gannett Co., Inc.; Mrs. Edward Carson; Mrs. Jerome Cook; Father Joseph Dailey; Robert Macon.

Board members from outside the city are Fred J. Farrell, Jr., Auburn; James H. Hanrahan, and J. Gerald Griffin of Hornell; Paul Miller, Three Rivers Foundation, Corning; Mrs. Charles Miskell, Geneseo; Paul Rubry, Palmyra; John O'Malley, Geneva; and Father Timothy Weider, Project REACH, Perkinville.

Father John Hempel, director of the Office of Human Development, and chairman of the foundation board, described the move into Geneva and the expansion of the board of directors as part of the foundation's "thrust beyond the city" to deal with rural housing problems and housing shortages in other diocesan communities.

Father Hempel commented



FATHER VENTURA

that the 60-member Geneva unit was formed largely through the efforts of Father Gerald O'Connor, of St. Thomas More Church, who has worked with Geneva's Puerto Rican community for several years. He felt that Father O'Connor's efforts were especially praiseworthy because "although not assigned specifically to Geneva, he took the initiative to do something about housing" in this area.

So far, the Geneva unit has helped finance down payments on homes for two families. New proposals drawn up by chairman Joseph B. Town Jr. and Father Gennaro Ventura, pastor of St. Francis de Sales Church, would propel the Geneva unit in new directions: as a corollary to its work in housing, the unit would begin an education program for those in poor housing.

Father Ventura observed that Geneva's housing problems are similar to those in Rochester. He said that education must be a vital part of the foundation's work, because those suffering most from the housing shortage in Geneva are on "low-income because of either a language barrier or educational deficiency."

Geneva's Puerto Rican and black communities, especially, include many persons who have moved there from rural areas

and find it difficult to adjust to the demands of city life.

Better housing conditions are not enough to solve the problem. These people must be channeled into the mainstream of community life. "You can build a house, and put a family into it," Father Ventura affirms, "but that doesn't guarantee you're going to change them."

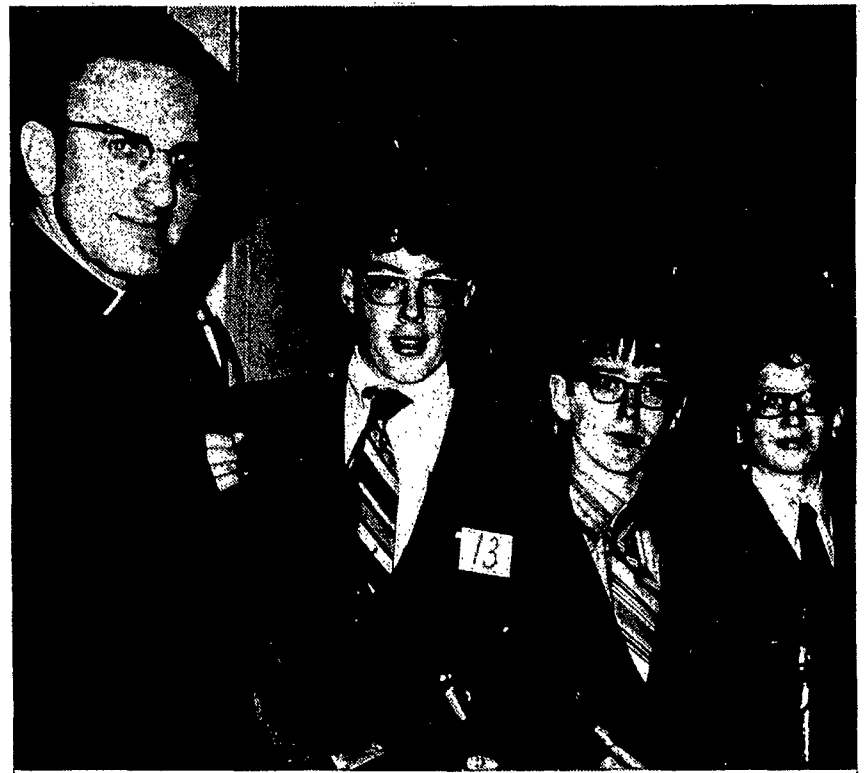
The proposed education program would recruit volunteers from St. Stephen's and St. Francis parishes to teach the basics of home and family management. For example, handymen would instruct those in poor housing on how to make simple repairs; homemakers would give sewing and cooking lessons. The program may also include topics such as "where to go for help in emergencies" and "how to shop sensibly."

Father Ventura explained that the program will be "two-pronged — aimed at both the educator and those educated." He commented that in order to be effective teachers, volunteers "must understand the mental outlook and background of the person helped."

Both Father Ventura and Town felt that the education program, if successful, will go a long way towards securing community approval and support.

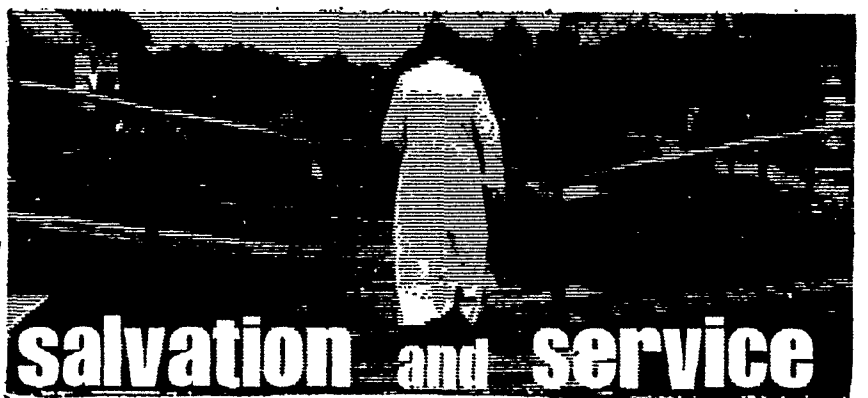
Father Hempel hopes that Geneva will be the first of many areas outside Rochester to receive foundation help.

He commented that the housing foundation has met in Geneva, Perkinsville, Auburn, Elmira, and Ithaca, so "people will realize that we are willing to move" outside Rochester. Board meetings in all areas of the diocese are often inconvenient for members, but Father Hempel feels that it has a necessary psychological effect: it demonstrates interest in the problems of the particular areas.



Win Scholarships

Father Albert Gaelens, Aquinas principal, presents first-place award to Charles Lill of 786 Oakridge Drive who won the eighth annual forensic competition worth a scholarship of \$1,800 to the school. Kevin Skerrett of 603 Laurelton Road was runnerup and will receive a \$900 Aquinas scholarship.



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Are You a Peacemaker?

Peace has as many meanings as there are kinds of strife of which to be freed. Peace of mind and spirit is freedom from mental anguish, despair, and ignorance. Peace is also freedom from physical and social strife: disease, poverty, and underdevelopment.

Our Lord said, "Happy the Peacemakers" — blessed are those who relieve the causes of strife; blessed are those who see their brothers in need and do something to change their plight. Christ showed the example for spreading peace. It was Peace He wished His followers to give to the world; it was by being makers of peace His followers would be called "Sons of God."

Who, then, are the Christian Peacemakers of today? Missionaries can certainly be called peacemakers because their entire lives are dedicated to bringing this Christian message of freedom to others. Like Christ, the Prince of Peace, they heal the sick, teach the ignorant, forgive the sinner, and preach the Good News of salvation to the poor.

The calling to be a peacemaker is not exclusive to the missionary, but is the vocation of every Christian. Every follower of Christ, as our liturgy points out, should give to one another the sign of peace. Does not Christ speak to each of us in the Mass with the words: "Go forth in peace to love and serve the Lord?" What then can your family do to share the peace of Christ with the entire Family of Man?

I would propose the best contribution each family could make is to pray and sacrifice together for those missionaries who cannot be peacemakers for the world's suffering-poor without this spiritual and financial support of the "peacemakers back home."

The Society for the Propagation of the Faith exists for this purpose. It is the Holy Father's own society designated for the support of the entire Missionary Church. Through Family Membership in the Society your family annually supports some 135,000 missionaries — 100,000 mission schools — 1,000 hospitals — 2,374 orphanages — 127 leprosariums — 867 homes for the aged — 51,000 native seminarians — and in all over 819 mission dioceses dependent on the Society for their very existence.

This first month of this new year is FAMILY MEMBERSHIP MONTH! We beg each and every family of the United States to do their share this year in bringing the reality of Christ's Peace to a world so much in need. At a time when the "generation gap" is too often evident, we beg you to unite your family in this common cause of Peace through missionary development.

Please begin today by sending a family sacrifice along with this column! Become Family Peacemakers for Christ by joining the Society for the Propagation of the Faith (\$6.00 for Yearly Family Membership — \$100.00 for Perpetual Family Membership) this month in your parish or enclose your enrollment with this column. Please — join with me today in being a Peacemaker for Christ!

SALVATION AND SERVICE are the work of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. Please cut out this column and send your offering to Reverend Monsignor Edward T. O'Meara, National Director, Dept. C., 366 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10001, or directly to your local Diocesan Director, Rev. Joseph F. Reinhart, 50 Chestnut St., Rochester, N. Y. 14604 12/30/70

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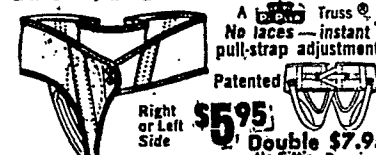
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