

# Elmira School Study Issued

Elmira—Diocesan history was made last week when Father Foster Rogers, assistant pastor of St. Patrick's Church, and Sister Helene Garvin, SSJ, diocesan director of parental education, presented their study, "Recommendations for Religious Formation in the Parochial Schools in Chemung County," to the county Catholic school board.

Their report, without precedent in the diocese, culminated a county-wide evaluation of how religion is being taught in the elementary parochial schools.

The six-month study entailed the analysis of questionnaires sent to all religion teachers in the county parochial system

and personal observation of 46 religion classes.

Sister Helene and Father Rogers made the following recommendations to the Chemung Catholic School board.

- That each parochial principal appoint one faculty member to be responsible for the contents, organization and teacher training for the school's religion program.

- That the board finance and sponsor two one-day teacher workshops during the school year, and arrange year-round lectures and seminars in theology and Scripture, for the continuing enrichment of religion teachers.

Father Rogers and Sister Helene also urge that the diocese appoint a "teacher of known competency" to supervise the religion programs of all diocesan Catholic schools, and to visit each religion class in the diocese annually.

Since Chemung County's Catholic schools will be consolidated next year, the report additionally recommends that all schools use the same religious education series as a basic text. Teachers would be free to use other published series as supplementary material.

Sister Helene commented that the recommendations reflected the desire of teachers for "ongoing assistance in religious education."

Father Rogers also felt that this kind of evaluation of religious education would be of benefit to other regional and local school boards in the diocese.

"The 'Come to the Father' series, the religion program recommended by the diocesan Office of Religious Education/CCD, and the one most frequently used in diocesan religion courses, presents an approach far different from that of the old catechism," Sister Helene said.

This challenging program, coupled with the new insights in contemporary theology, have led both teachers and principals to request greater guidance and supervision, and more in-service training, she indicated.

Father Rogers observed that the study was a very important "first step" in an area vital to the Church's continuation-religious education.

"The teachers in the county parochial schools, both lay and religious, impressed us with their great spirit and dedication," Father Rogers added.

"We hope that our study will be a point of departure not only for the implementation of our recommendations to the Catholic school board, but for the development of new methods and approaches to teaching religion in the schools."



Ramich, Frawley and Rodzia

## Chemung CYO Honors Three Laymen

Elmira — At a Mass and Communion Breakfast last week the Chemung County CYO honored three laymen. Mass was celebrated by Auxiliary Bishop John E. McCafferty.

Stan Rodzai received the Coaches' Appreciation Award. This award is made by fellow coaches in recognition of his

service to the overall program. Rodzai has spent close to three decades coaching the youth of St. Casimir's

Judge John Frawley and Carmen Ramich received Service Awards. Judge Frawley has served as President of the Chemung County CYO for 10 years and Ramich as Secretary for an equal period.

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