

# Is Parent Aid Answer in Pa.?

Harrisburg, Pa. — (RNS) — The U.S. Supreme Court ruling striking down as unconstitutional Pennsylvania's \$17.5 million-a-year aid to parochial and other private schools, stunned Roman Catholic officials, whose first reaction was that some church schools will be closed because of financial problems.

There were some indications, however, that new state legislation will be initiated to change the "purchase of educational services" approach negated by the court to individual grants to the parents of private school students.

Chief Justice Warren Bur-

ger, who wrote the unanimous opinion, said the Pennsylvania law, which had survived earlier state court tests, was illegal because it provided "state financial aid directly to the church-related school."

The private parochial school aid program in Pennsylvania had been expected to reach the \$30 million mark in the 1971-72 school year.

State programs providing auxiliary services for parochial school students, such as free bus transportation, health services, textbooks and driver education courses, are not directly affected by the Court ruling.

Howard Fetterhof, director of the Pennsylvania Catholic Conference, said the effect of the decision "will be very serious." About 470,000 Catholic school pupils in the state benefited from the purchase of teaching services aid program, he reported.

Catholic schools in Philadelphia and Pittsburgh will be especially hard hit. The Philadelphia parochial schools, prior to the court ruling, launched a campaign seeking financial aid from business and industry. State aid is currently at the rate of about \$30 per student per year.

The Pennsylvania program, launched in 1969 at the \$5 million level, paid for a share of teacher salaries, textbooks and teaching materials in subjects not of a religious nature.



A 'First' for the Senate

The Rev. Wilmina M. Rowland receive the congratulations of Dr. Edward L. R. Elson, chaplain of the U.S. Senate, after becoming the first woman to offer the opening prayer in the Senate. Miss Rowland, a United Presbyterian minister who serves with the denomination's Board of Christian Education in Philadelphia, asked God to help Americans to realize "that all wisdom does not reside in us..." (RNS).

## Catholic Schools Praised For Inner City Work

Benefits to the community of the inner city Catholic schools of Rochester are at least comparable to those of the public schools in the same area, according to an analysis recently completed by Edward P. Hart and Charles J. Hedetniemi Jr. of the Graduate School of Management of the University of Rochester.

According to the findings, no religious or racial bias is evident on the part of school administrators and a spirit of service to the community at large was noted.

The study's objectives were first to compare the non-monetary benefits to the community of the public schools in the low-income inner city areas of Rochester with the benefits derived from the Catholic schools in the same area; second to compare the costs of operating the inner city elements of the two school systems.

The non-monetary benefits considered were scholarships, pupil-teacher ratios, ethnic mix discipline, community control, high school completion, community use of school facilities and educational choice.

## National Pastoral Council Subject of Further Study

Washington — The steering committee which is carrying out a study on the feasibility of creating a National Pastoral Council for the Catholic Church in the United States will meet in Pomfret, Conn., July 23-27, to determine the future of its study.

The committee consists of 15 members of the U.S. Catholic Conference Advisory Council. The U.S. Catholic Bishops last year gave the council the task of determining whether a broad-

ly representative national body should be established to help the work of the Church in this country. Msgr. J. Paul O'Connor, chancellor of the Diocese of Youngstown, is the chairman.

The first step in the project was an interdisciplinary consultation which the committee sponsored at Mundelein College, Chicago, last August. Participating were specialists in theology, history, canon law and sociology and representatives of 97 dioceses and 36 national Catholic organizations.

Their deliberations and a summary of opinion on the concept of a national pastoral council were subsequently published by the U.S. Catholic Conference in an effort to solicit grassroots opinion.

The representatives were given six months, after the publication of these materials, to gather the reactions of the people of their diocese or organization to the idea of a National Pastoral Council and are now in the process of submitting their reports — with a July 1 deadline — to the steering committee.

These reports will be the basis upon which the committee will make a decision on the feasibility of a National Pastoral Council at its July meeting.

## Court Upholds Atheists in Adoption Case

Trenton, N.J. — (RNS) — In a unanimous decision, the New Jersey Supreme Court has ruled that a couple cannot be denied the right to adopt a child simply because they are atheists.

The court overturned a ruling by Essex County Superior Court Judge William K. Camarata who had ordered Mr. and Mrs. John Burke to return their two-year-old daughter, Eleanor, to the Children's Aid and Adoption Center.

Judge Camarata contended that the state constitution guaranteed everyone the right to worship "almighty God in a manner agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience." He held that the Burke's atheism would hinder that right of their daughter.

Burke formerly taught at Catholic-sponsored Seton Hall University in South Orange. Friend of the court briefs on behalf of the couple were filed by the United Methodist Board of Christian Social Concerns and the Division of Homeland Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

Chief Justice Joseph Weintraub wrote a separate concurring decision stating that the question of religion or lack of it should have no bearing on judging the fitness of prospective adoptive parents.

## Peters Heads Geneva K of C

Geneva — Robert L. Peters of William Street has been elected grand knight of Geneva Council 272, Knights of Columbus. Jack J. Hart Jr. is deputy grand knight. Robert C. Scherer was named to the board of trustees.

Peters, who works at Willard State Hospital, was deputy grand knight during the past year and has been chancellor and president of the K of C Home Corporation.

Wednesday, July 14, 1971



Raps Namath, 'Love Story'

The Rev. Bill Glass, a former pro football star turned evangelist, and Vonda Kay Van Dyke, a former Miss America, were two of the speakers at the International Christian Endeavour convention in St. Louis. During his keynote address Mr. Glass, once a member of the Cleveland Browns and now the head of the Bill Glass Evangelistic Association, teed off on pro football's Joe Namath and the money-making novel and movie, "Love Story." The evangelist declared: "Joe Namath, quarterback of the New York Jets, is a moral ignoramus for his public expression that pre-marital sex is not immoral. What he is saying is that God is all wrong." Rapping "Love Story," Mr. Glass cited use of profanity 23 times in the film plus the "flaunting of pre-marital sex on the screen." Miss Van Dyke, Miss America in 1965, received the society's Distinguished Service Citation during the convention. (RNS)

## 'Skepticism of Morality' Scored by Pope Paul

Vatican City — (RNS) — Pope Paul asserted here that the present age has become "resigned to a skepticism of morality," unable to affirm "objective, and stable truths" in the face of domination and aggression throughout the world.

Speaking during his usual weekly general audience, the pontiff said modern man can only "preserve and promote his own personality by remaining faithful to the divine evangelical model" which is Jesus Christ.

He declared that the fundamental criterion to protect the Christian characteristics of life in present times was indicated hundreds of years ago by St. Paul in the phrase, "live from the Spirit, walk according to the Spirit."

The pontiff declared that "through the magisterium and

the ministry of the Church it is not only possible but imperative to live from the Spirit with the discipline which must characterize the life of a Christian."

Stressing the need to direct one's life according to strict principles, Pope Paul said "the confusions and revolutions which our modern life is suffering derive principally from the lack of solid and fruitful principles."

"Unfortunately," he continued, "our age has become resigned to a skepticism of morality. We do not know how to affirm objective and stable truths, theories and opinions. And no longer having secure ideas necessary to give life its cohesive expression, we substitute temporary or personal systems . . . to save ourselves from the abyss of impractical anarchy."

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