



Above, Sister Pius, SSJ, helps a child in her class at the present location of Holy Childhood school, Marilyn McGlynn goes over an arithmetic lesson, below

left, with a pupil. Father Bauer, below right, listens to Bishop Hogan's homily at the Mass dedicating Bosco House to the service of the handicapped.



Bringing Religious Education to the Handicapped

When Bishop Joseph L. Hogan dedicated Bosco House, Sunday, Sept. 12, to the spiritual care of handicapped people, he also announced relocation of the School of the Holy Childhood to the former St. Andrew's Seminary building.



Sister Seraphine, principal of Holy Childhood, was very excited by the news. "At our present building at 215 Andrews St. there is no room for expansion, we have used every closet. The only play area here is a small, black-topped area, out there we will have wide open grassy spaces for play, and a chapel also.

"Work on the move to old St. Andrew's started after it was no longer used as a high school," she explained. "Actually it was through the efforts of Bishop Hogan, who has special feelings for these children. I'm just so proud the Church is giving them the dignity they deserve by giving them a new school."

Holy Childhood, founded 25 years ago, is a mission of the Sisters of St. Joseph. It pioneered in the field of special education in this community, and it is open to mentally retarded children of all races and creeds.

"We try to have each child reach their potential," Sister Seraphine explained, "to be as independent as they can so they can be self-supporting or partially so throughout life. When children are 16 we try to place them at part time jobs and hopefully upon graduation they get full time positions."

The present school has a capacity enrollment of 79 pupils, with children coming from 17 outlying districts. There are six nuns and seven lay teachers who teach vocational subjects such as: woodworking, sewing, cooking, hair dressing and physical education.

"We will work closely with Father Bauer, director of social education, who will be located at the Bosco House," Sister Seraphine continued, "though when we move depends on the amount of renovating that is necessary."

Father Charles Bauer has been director of special religious education since June 1, and has been living at and renovating Bosco House with a staff of volunteers since July 1.

According to Father Bauer, "The Bosco House will serve as an ecumenical worship, resource and information center and as a meeting place and workshop for priests, seminarians, nuns and lay people in promoting the spiritual care of the handicapped and the emotional support of their families.

"It will be the pilot center for the religious

education of the mentally retarded who are not otherwise cared for, and for the training of their catechists. From it will spring the satellite centers which will eventually serve the handicapped in all regions of the diocese."

Father Bauer stressed that the big project to be worked on immediately is a diocesan survey of the handicapped.

He is now organizing a "brain-storming session" to take place Oct. 5, for the heads of all the agencies for handicapped in the city, to give the program an ecumenical thrust, and "I want to assuage for their anxieties; we are starting to function."

Concerning the relocation of Holy Childhood, Father Bauer said: "They are going to be helping me more than I am them. I'll be the chaplain but the nuns are well versed in this field and very well organized."

He explained that he will concentrate on the needs of the deaf and the mentally retarded in the beginning, but will be glad to involve physically handicapped and the blind in an incipient sort of way until he has a staff to work exclusively with them.

Father Thomas M. Erdle works among the deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology and will work with the Bosco House also. He celebrated the first Mass for the handicapped, Sunday, Sept. 19.