

Priest Sees Role in "Front Lines"

By MARY ANN GINNERTY

Auburn — "Bringing Christ into the front lines when there is trouble and psychic pain, and combining the skill of psychology and theology to alleviate this pain," is how Father Bennett Devine, OFM Cap., describes the pastoral counseling program at Iona University which he has undertaken after

22 years preaching missions and giving retreats.

The Cayuga Family Center is providing the supervised field work placement in counseling as field work is an integral part of the Iona University program. The three-year course is composed of supervised counseling experience in an accredited counseling setting and five class

hours each week at Iona University in New Rochelle. James Eckert, social worker, is the supervisor at Cayuga Family Center, the agency which adopted this name last year when Catholic Family Center and Family Service of Cayuga County, Inc. united under Robert McAvo, executive director.

"The purpose of the pastoral counseling program is to provide the psychological approach to people's problems as well as the theological approach to solutions," explained Father Devine. "Today there is a growing awareness that beneath moral problems people have in relation with God, family and society, there may be psychological problems which need to be resolved."

A man of humor, fervor, practical and dynamic, Father Devine, superior at the St. Fidelis Friary in Interlaken and pastor of St. Francis Solanus Church, has had 22 years experience preaching missions and retreats. He became increasingly aware in more recent years that the approach to spirituality had been transferred from self-discipline to living lives of personal fulfillment through commitment.

He explained that it is difficult to attempt to preach God's word to people with the expectation they will be influenced in their lives until you have an understanding of these people and their feelings. They need to be psychologically conditioned. "The priest needs to start where they are at and build a bridge to where they should be."

Ashkenazy To Give Eastman Concert

Soviet pianist Vladimir Ashkenazy, acclaimed internationally as one of the greatest keyboard interpreters of our time, will be heard here on Friday, Jan. 14, at 8:15 p.m. in the newly renovated Eastman Theatre.

He has selected works of Franz Joseph Haydn, Robert Schumann and Sergei Rachmaninoff.

Ticket sales are being handled by the Eastman School Concert Office, 26 Gibbs Street, 275-3037.

In 1956, at the age of nineteen, Ashkenazy won first prize in the highly competitive Queen Elizabeth Competition in Brussels, with a unanimous decision from a panel that included Arthur Schnitker, Emil Gilels, and Robert Casadesu. Since then he has made global tours in recital and concert every year. This season Ashkenazy will appear in more than forty cities in his seventh North American tour.

Ashkenazy's performance is a special presentation by the Eastman School of Music, in its 50th Anniversary festival.



\$1,000 Gift

Cakes to cookies, dues, and other fund-raising activities contributed to the \$1,000 contribution from the St. Aloysius Altar-Rosary Society presented to Father Edward A. Shamon, pastor, St. Aloysius, at the society's Christmas party. Making the presentation were officers of the society, from left, Miss Helen Ganley, president; Mrs. John Techman, financial secretary; Mrs. Mark D. Roser, treasurer; Father Edward Shamon, and Mrs. Walter Adams Jr., vice president. Absent, Mrs. Edmund Fleszar, secretary.

JOHN DOSER

Scholastic Notebook



James Hatch, Gates-Chili principal whose term of office as Monroe High School Athletic Association president ends this year, isn't at all upset at the prospect of leaving office.

Hatch, to be succeeded by Greece Arcadia principal Paul Fauth, said the county league has firmed up into three divisions for all sports for the next four years, ruling out, it would seem, any room for experimenting on a league basis with Rochester Catholic schools.

Hatch also confirmed that a voice vote at a recent Section 5 meeting whether to hold a referendum among its member schools would not have passed except for votes from sports chairmen and some athletic directors.

When the actual referendum was held, only school administrators were eligible to vote and they secretly voted the referendum down.

The referendum, if it had passed, would have permitted Catholic schools to participate in Section 5 Tournaments on a two year experimental basis.

Similar votes have been held in other Sections of the state and at least two that we know of, Syracuse and the Southern Tier, have admitted Catholic schools to membership on the two year experimental basis.

Hatch said "I know how I was told to vote as president of the Monroe County League," indicating that he voted no, reflecting the wishes of the majority of schools in the league.

He agreed essentially that if the vote were left up to coaches and athletics directors only, the Catholic schools would probably be members of Section 5.

The real culprits are the public school administrators who make the decisions and to whom, naturally, all coaches and athletic directors must report.

Several county athletic directors have confided that if the Section were operated by them instead of administrators, Section 5 would be more of a leader, not a follower, in the state.

Section 5 administrators also voted down a ninth football game last fall where most of the other 11 Sections in the State passed it.

The strange part of all this is that the Section refused to even try the proposal on an experimental basis. It's fair to ask how then these administrators propose objectivity and open-mindedness be demonstrated in the classroom when it is clearly ignored in the principal's office.

The Section had only to try the experiment, set up rules which Catholic schools had to observe (relative to transfers, boundaries, etc., etc.) and hold the Catholics to account. If any Catholic school or its coaches violated the rules, the Section had the option not to continue the experiment.

We agree with Ray Laws, Channel 13 newscaster, who said public school administrators should be taken to task for unsportsmanlike conduct.



Father Devine feels the pastoral counseling approach differs from the traditional counseling role. Training in the seminary focused on solving moral theology problems by quoting and applying moral law. Through the pastoral counseling approach, emphasis is on reconstruction of value systems and religion offers the motivation.

He pointed out that religion tells us what to do, but doesn't tell us how to do it. The counseling program philosophy is that today's clergy must have greater understanding and ability to help their flock overcome emotional barriers, teaching them to love one another, and

above all, to love God and his works.

Father Devine sees pastoral counseling offering "mediation between psychology and theology."

At the Cayuga Family Center, he commented that so far in counseling non-Catholics, he has not found the Roman collar an obstacle or psychological barrier, but rather an invitation to confidence.

Faced with the tough schedule as graduate student, pastor, work at the friary and with the missions, Father Devine wouldn't have it any other way as he continues being in the front lines where the action is.



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