



Courier Journal Photo by Laurence E. Keefe

### Meeting with Mercy Nuns

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan meets with the executive council of the Sisters of Mercy at their Blossom Road convent. Talking with the bishop at December 20 meeting are Sister Therese Richardson (l), Sister Mary Bonaventure Hall.

## Laverne Sees Parochial Aid This Year

The State Legislature will pass a new parochial aid bill this year that will enable the state to distribute the \$33 million budgeted for that purpose, State Sen. Thomas Laverne told a joint meeting of the Iroquois Middle School and the St. Thomas Home-School Association last week.

Laverne, who is chairman of the state education committee and a member of the Fleischmann Committee, prefers a bill which contains every possible attempt that hasn't been tried yet, figuring that student bene-

fit, parent benefit or any other tax relief will probably hold up in the constitutionality test.

He believes that it is only fair that if the Supreme Court is going to rule against all aid to private schools, the private schools should know it and know it soon so they can stop hanging on, waiting for money.

He stressed that the constitution guarantees the freedom to choose where a child goes to school. "Unless some parents get assistance their opportunity to choose will be ended, since it is inevitable that the increase

in tuition will be so much parents won't be able to do it," he explained.

After many pro and con opinions were voiced by the audience, Laverne said that it is in the interest of public education that parochial schools survive for pure financial reasons. "If there isn't some aid to private schools, there will be a sharp decline in Catholic schools and public schools would suffer. If you really are interested in public education, you will see to it that private education survives."

## Courier Fund Aids Wayne County Work

Father Sebastian Falcone received \$3,167.50 for the needy through the Courier-Journal Christmas Fund, he reported this week.

The money has been given to the families whose circumstances he described in pre-Christmas editions of the newspaper.

The 204 readers who responded directly to Father Sebastian's appeals provided \$300 more than he had last Christmas time for his work among the rural poor of Wayne County.

The amount they contributed was in addition to the \$14,300 received by Catholic Charities. In all, more than 1,600 families were helped through the fund to a happier holiday.

In an accounting of disbursements, Father Sebastian mentioned a down payment on a car for a man who had to have

one in order to work; a \$200 fuel bill paid for a family hopelessly in arrears, and \$250 for furnace repairs for another family. In the last case, he said, the mother had worked six weeks in a food processing plant in a vain attempt to meet this extraordinary expense, and then had become ill.

Twenty-eight families received food and specific items of clothing that could not be found in the used clothing bank.

Father Sebastian, a Capuchin friar who teaches at St. Bernard's Seminary, works with "five or six people in the field, who keep in contact with about 48 families. We visit 22 of them regularly every month," he said. There were more cases of extreme need to deal with this Christmas than in 1970, he reported, yet it was possible to put away \$400 for emergencies.

## Laity's Work Praised In School Consolidation

"I see the future of Catholic education being shaped by involvement of parents and inter-parish cooperation. This merger is a good example of both," Father Daniel Brent, superintendent of schools, said of the plan to reorganize Our Lady Queen of Peace and Our Lady of Lourdes schools.

"A group of parents from both parishes, working with the principals, did all the work," he said. "It is a great tribute to the interest of the lay people."

Under the plan, kindergarten through third grade will be housed at Our Lady Queen of Peace, and fourth through eighth at Our Lady of Lourdes. The faculty will remain at the current total of 25 and nearly the same facilities will be used.

Donald Mack, chairman of the consolidation committee, said it all started a year ago when Father James F. Slattery, pastor of Our Lady Queen of Peace, "came to the Home School Association with the problem; namely—a decrease in enrollment—and asked me to work on the situation and make

recommendations to him on my findings."

"Neither parish has a parish council, which was one of our problems," Mack said. He and Father Slattery contacted people who they knew were interested and the consolidation committee set to work to smooth the path for the merger concentrating on such areas as curriculum, transportation and use of space.

Mack checked into Brighton's statistics and found that there are not many pre-school age children there. "We had to make the school attractive to get a bigger percentage of those children that are Catholic," he said.

Consolidation is not new to either school. "It will be further consolidation actually," Sister Boniface, Lourdes principal, explained. "Five years ago we consolidated the seventh and eighth grades at Lourdes."

Sister Boniface believes mergers are a very helpful trend that afford a real educational advantage.

## Human Development Office Seeking Bids for Aid

The Office for Human Development is inviting bids for aid from area groups involved in alleviating poverty problems. Proposals must be submitted by Feb. 1.

Criteria for proposals are:

- They must come from a bona fide organization of or for the poor.

- They must be directed toward one of the root causes of poverty.

- 50% of those benefiting

from the proposal must be from low income groups.

- At least 50% of those involved in planning and implementation of the project must be from low income groups.

- It must serve needs not already met or inadequately met to date.

Applications for grants are available from Sister M. Josepha, Office of Human Development, 841 Genesee St., Rochester, N.Y. Phone number is (716) 328-6400.