

3 Auburn Parishes OK School Merger

By MARY ANN GINNERTY

Auburn — Parishioners of Holy Family, Sacred Heart and St. Alphonsus parishes voted Palm Sunday in favor of consolidation of their three respective elementary schools by 1,568 to 657.

Implementation of the target date September 1972 was approved by a vote of 1,300 to 899.

Public meetings discussing proposals had been held, but the need for registration and the deadline for applying for busing with public schools were the reasons given for the early vote on consolidation.

Several proposals had been under consideration, but the one adopted calls for Holy Family and Sacred Heart to house Kindergarten through grades 4 and serve the north and south sections of the city respectively. St. Alphonsus will be established as a middle school housing grades 5 through 8.

The current enrollment total for the three schools is 1,741. Projected enrollment figures under consolidation are based on present enrollments and are subject to change based on busing considerations. It projects Holy Family with 268, Sacred Heart 218, and St. Alphonsus, 508.

At a public hearing last week, Msgr. Arthur Ratigan, chairman of the Tri Parish Parochial Education Program steering committee (Tri-PEP) stated the budget for the operation of the three-school system would be about \$337,000. This proposed budget is about \$23,000 lower than any current figure for the operation of the three schools. Cost per pupil for each parish in 1972-73 would be \$340 per pupil.

In addition to savings, St. Alphonsus Principal Sister Mary Dorothy, reporting for the academic committee, indicated consolidation could promote co-operation, community, and involvement, strengthen the religious education program, achieve basic economies through central purchasing, hiring and placement of teachers to better advantage.

Sister Mary Dorothy indicated the middle school arrangement would assure that the children will go to the comprehensive high school from a broader base. They would have experience in departmentalization and working independently in a learning center.

Other areas of development would include continued progress programs, teacher stimulation by working together, and physical education for all children.

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She looked to specialization of the religious education program by training religious education teachers, the provision of more liturgy geared to age groups, and consolidation of the priests' services available.

The plan accepted is different from one proposed earlier which would have divided the schools to house primary, intermediate, and middle grades.

A breakdown of consolidation vote by parishes indicates Sacred Heart voted 307 yes to 48 no, Holy Family, 617 yes to 196 no, and St. Alphonsus, 644 yes to 440 no.

While approving consolidation, St. Alphonsus voted 600 to 484 against implementation in September 1972. Holy Family voted 555 to 231 in favor and Sacred Heart, 261 to 68 in favor.

Father Raymond Wahl, pastor, Sacred Heart, reported at last week's meeting that his parish was spending \$265 per pupil for the operation of its school and while it would jump to 340 per pupil under consolidation, he felt consolidation was needed as the way of salvation of Catholic education in the city. Sacred Heart anticipates a \$14,000 deficit this year.

Two additional parochial schools, St. Hyacinth's and St. Mary's are not included in the consolidation.

A study done 4 years ago by Englehardt, Engelhardt, and Leggett, educational consulting firm, recommended consolidation in some form. Since the recommendation was made, three schools, St. Francis, St. Aloysius, and Mount Carmel High School have closed.

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'Better World' Theme Of Auburn Retreat

Auburn — Traditional ideas were exposed to new light and shared by clergy, religious and laymen in a program of soul searching and growth recently as St. Aloysius was the scene for approximately 100 persons from the Auburn area who participated in the week long "Movement for a Better World" retreat.

Under the guidance of a retreat team, Father John Mitchell, S.J., Sister Mary Madden, and Mark Wilkins, the process was described as disturbing old traditions of compartmentalization and putting religion into perspective.

Retreat Leader Father Mitchell, explained traditional retreats are more reflective inward, and focus on the relationship of man to God, whereas the Better World Movement is more outwardly oriented to focus on horizontal movement and application of Christian principals in everyday life.

Clergy, religious, and laymen experienced the feeling of community and the enrichment of shared ideas. Comments heard bore out the broadening view of Christian and church as going beyond self-interest in salvation and parish bounds.

As bonds of understanding and communication grew, the retreat culminated by focusing on ways the fruits of increased self-awareness and commitment could contribute to the growing faith of the Christian community in the Cayuga Region.

Sister Mary Madden summarized the goals in her opening remarks that the broad goal was to think about the whole world, the human race, as one community; to examine what can be done to bring the message to the whole world, and how, as individuals, we are going to do it.

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, concelebrated Mass at the retreat's climax. Co-concelebrants were Msgr. James D. Cuffney, Msgr. Joseph J. Sullivan, Father Edward A. Shamon, Father Mitchell, Father John Mulligan, and Father Michael Conboy.

Auburn Area Notes

Weedsport — The Men's Club of St. Joseph's Church will serve a spaghetti supper Saturday, April 8 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Auburn — The Holy Family Home School Association Spring dance is scheduled Saturday April 8 from 9 p.m. to 1:30.

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