

## In the Midst of Tragedy

# 'We Are Building a Real Parish Community'

By DICK BAUMBACH

West Elmira — More than 100 homes of parishioners at Our Lady of Lourdes Church were damaged by the recent flood which swept the Southern Tier of the diocese.

In an effort to help the families who suffered losses as a result of the flood, parishioners have banded together to reconstruct the homes.

All the parishioners affected by the flood are eligible for the special program. The project includes purchasing materials to rebuild the homes, plus supplying manpower to get the job done.

The idea was conceived by members of the parish's Holy Name Society. Society members and teenagers do the physical labor, while the women of the parish prepare weekend lunches for the workers.

The program is generally conducted on Saturdays and Sundays, but several parish members have also been working at the various homes when they finish their normal employment.

Father Francis Davis, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes, says the program will probably continue until "the snow begins to fly."

He said that over \$6,000 had been donated to rebuild the homes.

The actual work on the residences is done on a volunteer basis. "They have to tear out walls and floors to let the houses dry out. That's what is taking a long time. Some of the homes are now fairly dry so that work is commencing on rebuilding the structures," the pastor said.

Many of the 100 homes are still in unlivable condition and displaced families are being housed everywhere from the parish's convent to the school hall. Other families are residing with friends or relatives.

Another program underway for flood victims in the parish is a furniture exchange. Father Davis said anyone in the Elmira area with furniture they no longer need can contact the rectory regarding the possible donation of the material. Flood victims are then matched up with the donors and are responsible for picking up the furniture.

Concerning parish property, Father Davis reported "absolutely no damage. We were one of the lucky ones."

"I believe that we and St. Casimir's were the only parishes in the Elmira-Corning

area which did not sustain any flood damage. As I said we were both lucky."

The pastor believes the parishioners have grown closer as a result of the tragedy.

"Looking to the long range aspect I believe we are building a real parish community. One that will last and last."

"The flood might have taken

away some of the material things we had, but it strengthened the church members in a way where they are all working together as one family," Father Davis concluded.

## Despite Founder's Death

# Bosco House Continues Work

The sudden death of its founder will not stop the work of Bosco House.

The house was founded by the late Father E. Charles Bauer to bring religious education to the handicapped and retarded children of the diocese.

## Nazareth Offers 'Flood Relief'

The trustees of Nazareth College have given the administration authority "to assure that no Nazareth student who wants to return or enter the college this fall is deprived of the opportunity because of financial problems caused by the recent flood." The nature and extent of the assistance will be determined on an individual basis, according to Peter Barry, chairman of the board.

Dr. Alice L. Foley, Nazareth President, estimated that approximately 60 students come from Southern Tier areas most seriously affected by the flood. She said that deferred tuition payments, scholarships, employment opportunities and loans would all be considered, depending on need.

"The main point," she said, "is that we are committed to do everything we possibly can to make sure that none of our students is deprived of continuing or beginning a Nazareth education because the flood has made it impossible to meet our normal schedule of tuition payments."

Although efforts will be made to contact every student in the flood-stricken areas, Dr. Foley urged that any student who feels qualified for Nazareth's tuition-relief plan immediately contact the college's Director of Admissions.

## Supreme Convention Elects Rochesterians

Two Rochesterians were honored at the Supreme Convention of the Knights of St. John and Ladies Auxiliary, held recently in Cincinnati.

Mrs. Camilla Haszlauer of St. Peter and Paul Auxiliary 44 was re-elected Supreme President of the Ladies Auxiliary and John T. Schneider of St. George's Commandery 43 of St. Michael's Church was elected Supreme Trustee of the Knights.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Auxiliary 45 Drill Team, under the command of Captain Ruth Mayer won fourth prize in competitive drills and also won second distance prize.

### SETON 13

The 13th Seton Branch will meet at noon Tuesday, Aug. 8 for dessert and cards at the Honoye Lake Cottage of Mrs. Clement Hanss. Mrs. Edward Heberle will assist the hostess.

### CONESUS BREAKFAST

Conesus — Breakfast will be served at the Conesus Legion Hall from 8 until 11:30 Sunday morning, Aug. 6, for the benefit of St. William Church.

## Our Parish COUNCIL by Bernard Lyons

In some parishes there have been conflicts between the council and the parish board of education.

In his final report to the Saginaw Diocesan Board of Education, before going to Washington, D.C. as Secretary for Education of the U. S. Catholic Conference, Father Olin J. Murdick reported on several conflicts in his diocese.

I wrote to Father Murdick to ask about the conflicts and his ideas.

"In speaking of the conflict between parish councils and parish boards of education, I was responding to concrete situations in which conflict had been evidenced," Father Murdick replied.

"There were at least three parishes in the diocese which, following the suggestion of some of the literature on parish councils, saw fit to substitute an education committee for a board of education."

Father Murdick said that this is "not an exercise in semantics. The notion of a committee is generally accepted not to include policy-making responsibility whereas a board is regarded normally as having such responsibility."

In order to throw further light on the topic, Father Murdick sent me a copy of a policy working paper on "The Parish Council and The Parish Board of Education." Its main points are summarized here.

The parish council is the most basic policy authority in the modern parish. It serves a coordinative and communicative function with reference to all specialized agencies and programs in the parish or carried on under the auspices of the parish.

The parish council relates to the board of education in two ways.

First, by establishing priorities among the various spe-

cialized agencies and/or programs.

Second, by facilitating communication in the parish community with reference to its educational needs, aspirations and achievements.

The parish board of education submits its proposed budget for the coming year to the council. It is the duty of the council to judge "whether the budget request, in relation to all the other needs of the parish, can be met."

If, in the judgment of the council, the education budget requires more money than will in fact be available, it must advise the board to reduce their budget.

The responsibility, then, for reducing or modifying the programs to fit the fiscal realities belongs properly to the parish board of education.

The parish council can perform an invaluable service by creating a climate and an occasion for people to express their concern and aspirations regarding the quality of life in the Christian community.

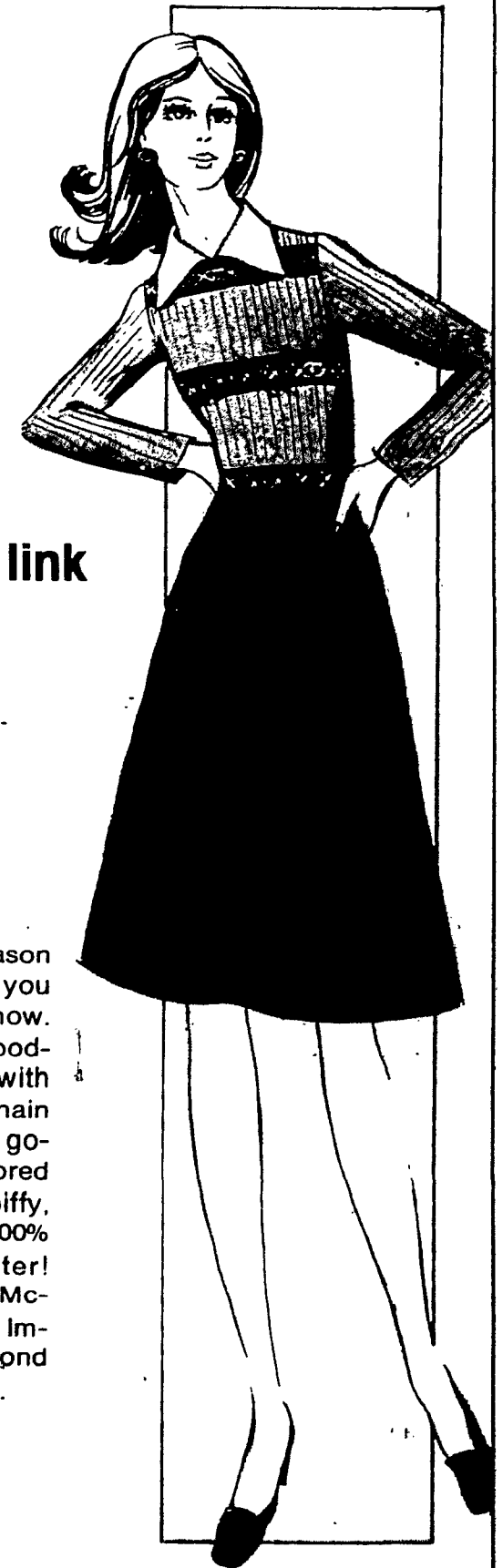
The Catholic school would be a subject for such dialog. The council, however, would not be the proper agency to translate these concerns or any resulting consensus into school policy. It would rather communicate these concerns and any consensus to the board, which in turn would exercise its policy function in the light of such communication.

If the board is unresponsive to the desires of the community, it is the prerogative of the parish electorate to replace members of the board.

The policy paper, summarized above, would appear to be consistent with the Vatican II documents. The council is not to suppress other parish organizations, but is to work with them in freedom and autonomy.

It doesn't resolve the conflicts, it creates the dialog that resolves them.

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