

LORMORE ST.

'Bless This Mess'

Text by Carmen Viglucci
Photos by Laurence E. Keefe

Lormore Street is typical of many city neighborhoods. Its houses are shingled or clapboard with small front lawns decorated with geraniums or rose bushes and backyards which serve for summer cook-outs and which contain small garages looking as if they were spawned by the main house.

But Lormore Street in Elmira Southside is no longer a typical neighborhood: the June flood changed all that as its charging waters and muddy wake left the street perhaps the hardest hit in the city.

Now the sight of government trailers (with labels milking a little publicity for Housing and Urban Development and the Executive Office of the President), and the sound of power saws and hammers would make even a Martian aware that something has happened here.

The house on the corner is empty, its residents, Mrs. Phoebe O'Neil, a widow, and her daughter, Alice Cassidy, living in a mobile home, next to the house.

"Mr. Patterson (Frank Patterson, coordinator of recovery activities for the diocese in Elmira) is sending over a crew to do the inside," said Mrs. O'Neil. "then we'll have to contract to get the outside repaired."

She is philosophical about her plight: "If you believe in God, He'll take care of you."

Though she doesn't know when it will be, Mrs. O'Neil is

looking forward to returning to her home. She is 84.

Next door at 253, a Frank Patterson crew is at work repairing the inside. Mrs. Fred Pierce, the owner, credits Catholic Family Center and Alpha House in Ithaca for getting the cellar dug out.

The Pierces have lived 23 years at 253 Lormore and now "there's no telling when we'll get back in."

She joins what seems to be the unanimous opinion, "everybody has really been wonderful in pitching in."

William Supple, the former postmaster who retired June 30, lives at 255 but he is away for the week. A small sign on his house is descriptive: "Bless This Mess."

Phil Kniffin, 15, answered the door at the trailer at 257. As with most of those forced into mobile homes he finds that life in a trailer is "okay."

259 Lormore: No answer.

Mrs. Norman Kintz at 261 has noticed a different effect of the flood. Sitting on the couch in her trailer and soothing her dog, Cola, who has suffered a broken leg, Mrs. Kintz notes that in a way life "is even better than before."

"The neighbors are friendlier. We've been through something together and now we're all closer."

Mrs. Kintz is the mother of eight children, three of them (17,15,12) still at home with their parents. She admits that the 3-bedroom trailer "is con-



Mrs. O'Neil, Mrs. Cassidy.

fining, but we're grateful for it."

263 Lormore: Only the sound of hammers.

265 Lormore: No answer.

Wayne Gustin is already back in his home at 267. His present chore is re-paneling the back porch of his home which "is more than 100 years old."

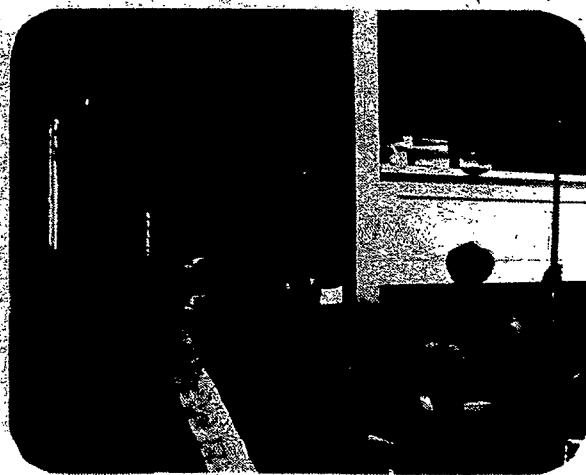
Gustin works nights at American LaFrance "so I've been able

to do most of the work on the house myself."

The flood has taken his swimming pool but he proudly points out that his is the "only garage still standing on the street . . . because it is still so well built."

269, 271 Lormore: No answer.

Remarkably much of Southside Elmira has bounced back from the flood; even the hardest hit streets, such as Lormore,



Mrs. Pierce and her nephew Tim Brown

have been making strides.

The major impetus has come from the residents themselves who have refused to lose faith in the future. Yet it is evident that they can't get the job done alone.

At his office, Frank Patterson is saying:

"Everybody has been doing a great job, especially people from Rochester, but from Ithaca and Auburn, too. You can't believe how hard and how long they work."

But when you see how the Southside has come back, it makes you a believer.



Wayne Gustin at work.



Phil Kniffin

Catholic Committee Sees Chance for School Aid

The decisions reached by the 3-judge federal court on aid to

Pontiff Hints Of Peace, Asks Prayer

Vatican City (RNS) — Pope Paul feels peace might not be far off in some countries, but he stresses the need for continued prayers to that end.

The pontiff told thousands of persons in St. Peter's Square:

"We ask for that peace still so much desired and perhaps also near in many countries of the earth."

The pontiff did not elaborate on his brief reference to possible peace in some nations and consequently set off a flurry of speculation among Vatican observers.

It is common knowledge that the Pope has played some roles in the attempts at settlement of disputes in Indo-China, Africa and even Northern Ireland.

Some Vatican sources felt the Pope was alluding to the speculation that peace might come to Vietnam sometime between now and the November election in the United States.

However, both sides in the Vietnam peace talks in Paris have denied reports that there has been a major breakthrough.

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nonpublic schools met with proportionately mixed reaction from the State Catholic Committee.

The court, hearing challenges to the 1972 Omnibus Aid bill ruled on its three parts last week. Following unfavorable rulings on two parts — health and maintenance grants for ghetto schools and tuition reimbursement to low income families (earning under \$5,000) with children in nonpublic schools — it voted to deny a move by groups opposed to aid to declare the tax benefit legislation unconstitutional.

The latter decision, according to the State Catholic Committee, cannot be overturned except by the Supreme Court.

The 2-1 vote which favors tax benefit legislation was hailed by retiring Senate Majority Leader, Earl Brydges, (an advocate of the plan) as significant since it marked the first time the courts had upheld the legislature on the issue of aid to nonpublic schools.

"It is a strong first step," said nonpublic school parent and professional educator, J. Alan Davitt. "It does two things that I'm pleased about," he said: "It sets firmly on its way the principle of tax benefit legislation, which we are now also supporting on the federal level with tax credits; it shows that help for nonpublic school parents can win a victory in the courts." Davitt is executive secretary of the Council of Catholic School Superintendents of the State and a parent of five school-age children.

That portion of the bill which

received the approval of the court grants to parents who pay at least \$50 tuition per child a reduction (on a sliding scale) of their gross income for state tax figuring purposes on their income tax. Exclusions for up to three children paying tuition are allowed. Anyone who pays a state income tax and has a child in nonpublic school with a \$50 tuition will benefit by the measure.

"I hope parents will bring this good news to the attention of their federal legislators," said Charles J. Tobin, secretary of the State Catholic Committee which advises the state's Catholic Bishops in the field of public affairs. "The decision favoring tax benefits should help federal legislators in making up their minds to approve tax benefit legislation on the federal level," he said. A bill providing tax credits for nonpublic school parents is expected on the floor of the house in Washington for debate at any time. "Parents should write to their senators and congressmen, now, and ask their support for tax credits and let them know our good results in New York," Tobin suggested.

"The legislature also must seriously consider what is the best way to aid low-income families since the court objected to that part of the plan. Every effort must be made to provide equal opportunity for a religious oriented education to all children, but especially the urban poor who now fill our schools in great numbers in our large cities," Tobin concluded.

Wednesday, October 11, 1972

Ways and Means OKs Tax Credit Plan

Washington, D.C. (RNS) — A bill that would permit parents of children attending non-public schools to deduct half of the tuition paid up to \$200 per child from their federal income tax has been approved by the House Ways and Means Committee.

Although the measure was adopted by an 18-6 majority, Committee Chairman Wilbur D. Mills (D-Ark.) said he doubted that it would "even get on the House floor" until next year because Congress is so close to adjournment for the current session. Rep. Hugh Carey (D-N.Y.) and other supporters of the measure said they would push for floor action, however.

According to a committee staff expert, drafters of the bill held the deductions to half of the tuition costs in hopes that the measure would be declared constitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court if it is made law.

The staff source pointed out that if the permissible deduction were equal to 100 per cent of the tuition, the federal government would indirectly be paying the full cost of religious education for some children.

As presently constituted, the bill would apply to tuition for children in grades 1 through 12. (An attempt to increase the bill's provisions to include college tuition was defeated on a 17-7 vote.)

The full tuition credit of \$200 per child would go to any taxpayer whose adjusted gross income (income after deduction of business expenses but before deduction of anything else, including personal exemptions) is under \$18,000 annually.

Above that level, the credit

would be reduced by \$1 for every \$20 of additional income. It would also depend upon the number of children attending eligible private schools.

(Eligibility is defined in the bill as any school having tax-exempt status under federal law, thus excluding racially segregated schools.)

For a family having one eligible child, the credits would be phased out at the \$22,000 income level; with two children, at \$26,000, and \$4,000 more for each additional child.

Families whose income is too low to require them to pay income tax would receive no assistance from the bill. It thus contrasts with the policy of the Nixon administration, which is on record as favoring a plan that would help low-income families as well as middle and upper-middle class ones. The administration has suggested that such families be reimbursed for part of their tuition expenses if they would not be beneficiaries of the tax credits.

If adopted, the bill would go into effect on Aug. 1, 1973, applying to expenditures for the 1973-74 school year. This date was set as being far enough into the future to ensure a Supreme Court ruling on the bill's constitutionality before it would go into effect.

DEADLINE

The Courier-Journal welcomes news of your club or organization. A deadline of Thursday noon preceding publication must be observed.