

St. Monica's: From Convent to Health Center

By BARBARA MOYNEHAN

As of 2:20 last Thursday afternoon, St. Monica's convent became the Westside Health Center.

The short, routine zoning variance hearing last Thursday ended more than a year and a half of negotiation between Father Edward A. Zimmer, St. Monica's pastor, and Rochester Health Network which is operated by Neighborhood Health Centers of Monroe County, Inc.

What does this mean for the 21 Sisters of St. Joseph and the four priests living and working in St. Monica's parish?

The Sisters of St. Joseph that have lived for two years in the 40-room, 50-year-old stone "mansion" will move into the 12-year-old, 13-room rectory, and the priests will move one block up the street to the corner of Monica and Millbank streets.

And a change in accommodations and living style will be had by all.

In the rectory, which is 50 per cent administration offices and parish meeting rooms, each priest had a suite, consisting of a good size bedroom plus a study, to himself. At 119 Monica St. they will each have a single room, measuring about 10x12 feet, for a bedroom.

For the Sisters that have enjoyed private rooms, the convent sale and move into the rectory means doubling up, two nuns to a bedroom.

St. Monica's has gone through a lot of changes since the late 1950s when it was considered about the richest in the diocese, boasting 5,000 people at Sunday Mass and 1,250 to 1,350 students in the school.

When the growing black population began spreading into the neighborhood about 10 years ago and wealthy white parishioners began moving to the suburbs, St. Monica's "lost a couple of thousand right off the bat," explained Father Zimmer, pastor there since 1969.

The situation has stabilized now, he feels, with 1,000 to 1,100 at Sunday Masses, 350 in the school which now has open enrollment, and one of the most community-involved parishes in the diocese.

All the buildings are available for neighborhood group meetings, plus the religious lend their skills of the 19th Ward committees.

The Sisters who live there offer diverse areas of expertise. Eight work in the school and the others work outside of the parish with the elderly, as campus ministers, high school teachers, and in the Office of Human Development. One is an instructor at

University of Rochester's Nursing School.

They all lend their expertise to the parish in their free house. All chose to live in this transitional, urban parish and want to make it a place others want to live in. The parish priests, in addition to Father Zimmer are Fathers Ronald Stacey, associate pastor, Charles Mulligan, director of Office of Human Development and pastor emeritus Monsignor Gerald C. Lamber who is recuperating from a heart attack at St. Ann's Home.

Father Zimmer sees the convent sale as a "picture of the future."

There are many large con- (Continued on Page 8)



Photo by Susan McKinney

Courier Under Study

Sister Celestine and her freshman religion class at Bishop Kearney High School study the Courier-Journal as part of their theology studies. DeSales High School's Sister Regina also is incorporating the diocesan newspaper into the theology program at the Geneva school.

Auburn Parish to Build New Mission Church

Auburn — St. Francis of Assisi Church here will build a mission church where it is needed somewhere in the world, Father John Nacca, pastor, announced to his congregation at last Sunday's Masses.

There will be no drive for money, not even one special collection, said Father Nacca, adding that the kindness of the people and wise management of funds have made possible a savings account that will be used for the new church.

Father Joseph Reinhart, diocesan director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, said that the site of the new church will be determined by Cardinal Pignedoli, the head of the Propagation's offices in Rome.

"He'll pick the spot because he is aware of all the missions' needs. Because he is a new cardinal he will especially appreciate a gift like this from the

people of St. Francis in Auburn," Father Reinhart added.

The cardinal already has appeals from bishops in Africa, India, Bangladesh and other areas where the Church is growing, said Father Reinhart.

He added that "this is the first time I know of a parish doing this."

Father Nacca said, "in granting us permission to build this church for the underprivileged, Bishop Hogan is giving us real proof that he is sincere when he says that our love for others should have no frontiers. I might add that I never forgot an inspiring sermon on the missions delivered many years ago by a young man who was in the seminary with me, and his name was Joseph Hogan."

Father Nacca told his parishioners:

"Some people merely babble (Continued on Page 8)

Year of Renewal

Common Prayer Advocated

Two hundred thousand copies of an "official" prayer for the Year of Renewal will be distributed in all churches throughout the diocese on Feb. 25, at the Sunday Masses.

A suggested Liturgy will have been sent to all parishes for that day. The theme is "Year of Renewal: Prayer." The prayer will be incorporated as the Opening Prayer, immediately following the Penitential Rite.

Father Daniel Holland, director of the Year of Renewal, was enthusiastic about the prayer. "This is what the Year of Renewal is all about," he said. "It's important to get people praying, get them praying together."

The diocese hopes:

- to get a copy of the prayer into every family's hands — to be prayed together at the supper table;

- to have the prayer prayed at rectory and convent dinner tables;

- to begin and/or end every parish staff and council meeting this year with this common prayer;

- to have the prayer used in every classroom and on every campus in the diocese;

- to have the prayer memorized for full participation at diocesan and regional meetings.

The prayer has been made available to the diocese through the Paulist/Newman Press. It is part of an adult education program called GIFT — Growth in Faith Together. It will be distributed by the Courier-Journal.

Daily Prayer For Renewal Of Faith

"Father we thank You for the gift of faith. May we show our gratitude by sharing this gift more openly and generously with one another. During these days of renewal, please give us Your Holy Spirit in His fullness that we might grow in faith together. This we ask through Christ, Your Son and our Brother who lives with You and with us in the Holy Spirit forever and ever. Amen."

2 Posts Filled Temporarily

Father Ronald Gaesser, Newman chaplain at Auburn Community College and Eisenhower College in Seneca Falls, has taken on the additional duty of administrator of St. Joseph's, Cayuga, the Pastoral Office announced this week.

Msgr. Arthur Ratigan is serving temporarily as pastor of St. Mary of the Lake in Watkins Glen and St. Benedict's, Odessa.

Father Gaesser, a 1961 graduate of St. Bernard's, has been in campus ministry since 1967, when he became associate pastor of St. Mary's, Auburn. In June, 1970, he was assigned to the two colleges on a full-time basis.

The Cayuga parish, which traces its ancestry back to a Jesuit mission established in 1656, had been served for many years from St. Aloysius, Auburn.

Msgr. Ratigan, a priest for 36 years, resigned the pastorate of St. Ambrose, Rochester, in the Fall of 1971 to help out in other parishes. He was at Holy Family, Auburn, for some time.

The Watkins Glen and Odessa parishes have been vacant since the resignation of Father Lawrence Sansom at the end of January.

Deacon Helps Sheriff Form Advisory Group

By BARBARA MOYNEHAN

Canandaigua — The sheriff suggested it, a young deacon is directing it, and a diverse group of citizens is working to form a sheriff's advisory council in Ontario County.

The sheriff, Edward Guinan, elected in the fall of 1971, is most responsible for progress being made.

Rev. Mr. Joseph Hart, of St. Mary's Canandaigua, said "Sheriff Guinan took advantage of public interest in prisons while it was there," following the tragic Attica uprising of September, 1971.

The sheriff, like others in his position, has received many letters and calls criticizing the jail. But, for the most part, according to Hart, the criticism was uninformed of state penal regulations.

Included in a minimum standards manual is a suggestion to sheriffs that is not widely known. It states: "If sufficient interest can be aroused a citizen's committee might be formed, composed of all who volunteer. This arrangement would assure the backing of the community and the availability of resources."

So Guinan decided to harness the energy of his critics to help



DEACON HART

him improve prison programs, beginning with taking advantage of a new clergyman in town who visited prisoners weekly and had good rapport with young drug offenders.

Hart, a deacon serving St. Mary's since last June, was made coordinator. The first meeting was last December with the Geneva Center of Concern, the American Association of University Women, local educators,

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