



OUR PARISH COUNCIL
Bernard Lyons

The most common answer you would probably get if you asked most parishioners why they need a council in their parish would be that it helps the pastor. It takes some of the load off his back."

Most pastors in turn would tell you, "Yes, the council does take some of the work load from me, but only after you get the council organized. It takes extra work to get it started."

Science Show At Fisher Gym

The Science Teachers Association of New York State will sponsor a science show on Tuesday, May 15, 6:30-9:30 p.m. at the St. John Fisher College gymnasium.

Seventy exhibits and demonstrations, including glass blowing, lasers, computers, wine-making, the Wankel engine, ecology, oceanography, among others will be shown.

The highlight of the evening program will be a NASA space show, telling about upcoming space exploration possibilities.

Representatives from area college science departments, industries, and government agencies will be on hand to discuss careers in science with any interested students.

CLUB ALOUETTE DANCE

The French Club Alouette will hold a dance on May 5, 8:30 p.m., at Cloud Post, 898 Buffalo Rd. Music will be provided by the Ray Serafin Quartet. For ticket and club information, call Mrs. Jeanette Laurin, 663-0830.

But what about the work that doesn't get done? The truth is that many parishes, with and without councils, are administratively sloppy.

Over eight years ago, when I started to study and write about councils, I pointed out that many parishes would need an executive secretary. I knew this from my experience with community organizations.

The council is faced with the task of turning a good percentage of its parishioners into volunteers. This requires not only numerous committees, but also organizing, communications, and training.

There are special skills in administration needed to fit the right person to the right task — and not to make unrealistic demands. Many people would serve as presidents and secretaries of councils and committee chairmen if they knew that some staff person was backing them up.

A president is quite willing to devote his time to planning and preparation for meetings, but he is going to get discouraged if he has to continually see to the reproduction of the agenda and get the mailing of meeting notices out. A secretary also is willing to take minutes and type them, but in many cases he is not going to have the equipment and time to get them to the members before the meeting.

In the few cases where I have been in a parish that has an executive secretary or administrative assistant, the pastor and the council are happier and more effective. They are able to concentrate on the parish mission, and not get bogged down in the minutia of administration.

Mental Health Commentary

Child Can't Do 'Best' at Times

By The DePaul Clinic

A common question that arises among teachers and parents is how to motivate a child to do his best in school. Some parents report that all they expect from their children is that they do their "best," and they may be alarmed when their child's teacher reports that he isn't "working up to his ability."

How one determines a child's "best" in academic performance is not as simple as it may sound. Because a child has good intelligence and a potential for average or better than average academic performance doesn't mean that he can or should perform at that level at all times. One has to consider the other factors in his life that affect him and with which he must struggle during those important years of "growing up." A reasonable person would not expect a child to perform at his usual rate in any activity if he were physically sick with pneumonia or measles. In fact, most parents would restrict all activities under such circumstances.

The same principle pertains to academic performances under the circumstances of being emotionally upset. The child who is worried about his status in the family, about his father's drinking, his mother's working, his parents' threats of separation, or even his status in his peer group, may not be able to function at his usual level. Both his academic performance and his general behavior, in and out of the classroom, may deteriorate. His "best" may be what he is doing, though it may be below his usual performance.

There is the highly motivated child who, when his intelligence is measured by psychological tests, might be considered an "overachiever." He may be the pride of his parents' and a joy to his teachers. Such a child, if he has developed an exaggerated expectation of himself in

response to pressures put upon him at home and at school, is in danger of becoming obsessed, not with succeeding but with not failing. He may compensate for his fear of failure with an exaggerated effort which tends to interfere with his self-development in other areas.

These children are prone to fear of disapproval by their teachers, parents and, sometimes, even peers. They worry about homework, tests, and, as the pressures mount, show increasing signs of tension, including anxiety dreams, absent mindedness, forgetting and a tendency to cry easily.

Sometimes a child, who was highly motivated to achieve and has done well, begins to do poorly. His teacher may complain that he doesn't pay attention, doesn't concentrate well, doesn't follow directions, and doesn't complete his work in school nor his homework. He may become aggressive with his peers though he previously had been quite friendly. He has developed an intense dislike for school and has

"dropped out." His expectations of himself were more than he could master. He resolved the conflict by giving up. One cannot fail if he doesn't try.

If children are given a sense of the pleasure of learning, their motivation will be self-actuating. There must be a reward for their efforts and their goals must be reachable. Exaggerated expectations lead to chronic frustrations which can only result in a negative attitude towards school despite "overachievement" which may be more reflective of the wish not to displease the teacher than being educated.

A healthy child is born with equipment that makes learning natural. Every experience, every perception, conscious or unconscious, has its effect. The mind has been defined by some psychologists as "the sum total of life experience." The task before us is to help children maintain their natural curiosity and eagerness to learn. Setting reasonable goals and utilizing the reward principle may help in this encouragement.

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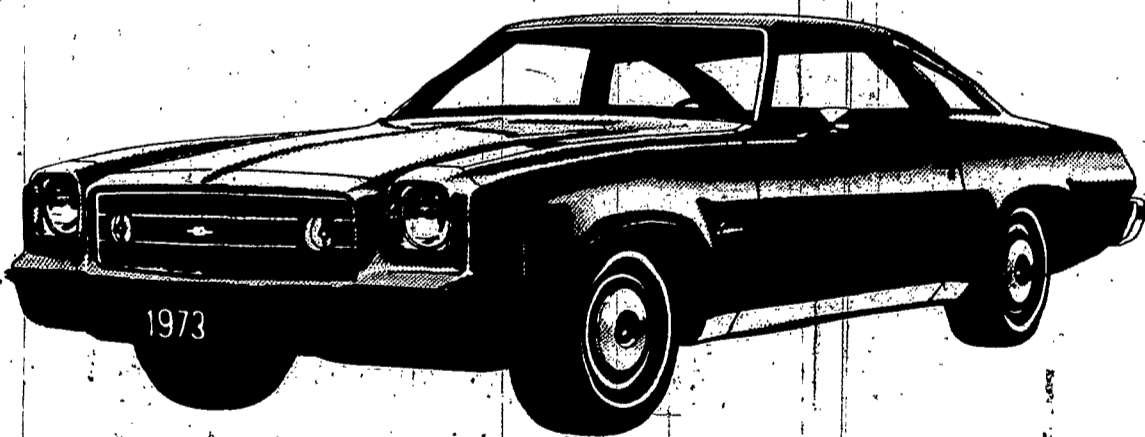


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