



PARISH OPENS STORE

Photo by Susan McKinney

Michell Terry seems to say I think I'll take this as she browses in the St. Monica Parish gift shop. The shop, operated by the parish facilities committee, has two purposes, fundraising and encouraging members of the parish to get together after Mass. The store in the convent is open 4-6:30 Saturdays, 2 Sundays.

Neighborhood Organizing

Suburban Parish Tackles Housing, Family Problems

Last in a series

By BARBARA MOYNEHAN

Life in the suburbs has been getting a bad press in recent years, and no one knows the truth of the situation better than those who live there.

St. Louis's parish council, for one, has a very blunt view of problems with life in Pittsford and has begun some serious efforts to change family life and community life by working for moderate-income housing.

The housing effort is ecumenical so it can be effective, explained Carl Claus, chairman of St. Louis's Human Development Committee (HDC). He is a private business consultant and former college professor.

The problem is the high concentration of high-priced housing which drives out young singles, elderly on fixed incomes, moderate-income people who work in Pittsford and anyone else in the middle to low income bracket.

Claus and George Kimber, an HDC member who works for Service Bureau Corp., are concerned about the lack of moderate income housing because of its effect on the children growing up in Pittsford.

"They are growing up in an environment where people are all the same," both said.

There is also a problem for the elderly that differs slightly from that in the city.

The present generation of retirees in most cases have lived in Pittsford since the days when it was a quiet, old canal village, before it became the bastion of Rochester's upper middle class. These natives of the village, now living on a fixed income, find it nearly impossible to keep up with rising costs.

St. Louis parish has joined forces with the Pittsford Ecumenical Lay Council to effect a better balance in the cost of housing.

Their aim is to provide more housing units at a cost lower than the current \$40,000 average, specifically to aid those who have a stake in the future of Pittsford but find that housing costs are more than they can afford: senior citizens, young marrieds and those who work in the village yet

do not live there, such as teachers, shop and town employees.

They have two plans of action. First, they are helping senior citizens in their six-year battle to establish a senior citizens housing development, and they are trying to develop a survey to distribute to those people who have demonstrated an involvement in Pittsford in order to determine what interest, if any, they might have in moving to Pittsford.

Family life is the area they are really concerned about, and the one they have worked on longer.

Elvie Davis, who is a member of the HDC's Family Life Committee and has had long involvement with St. Louis' community service programs, recently said that the critical writing about the family in the last few years has prompted many to re-examine their own family relations.

Mrs. Davis agreed with Claus' statement that family centered activities are needed.

The Family Life Program that grew from their concern is parish-

wide and multifaceted, with the purpose of enriching the lives of parish members of all ages within their individual families and in their greater family, the parish community, Mrs. Davis explained.

Short-term programs include a one-day marriage enrichment program that was very successful; a Mass and lunch to celebrate Senior Citizen Month, to be held this summer; and enrichment day for senior high schools students at Mendon Park in October.

Claus sees the trend today as toward cohesiveness and away from our fragmentation of elderly, youth, teenagers, singles. And he feels that what is responsible for the shift away from these false differences is the "young people's rebellion."

"Young people's rebelling against the establishment has had a much bigger effect than any of us is willing to admit," the father of five said. "There are dehumanizing influences in our society. But now we are getting back to the individual, to the human being in us and away from the fragmenting influences."

Conference Marks Transition Fr. Collins Says of NCDD

Last week's National Conference of Diocesan Directors—CCD seemed to Father Robert Collins to mark a transition from a "share the misery" springtime gathering to a "professional organization with a responsible voice in religious education."

Father Collins represented the religious education department of the diocese at the Chicago meeting.

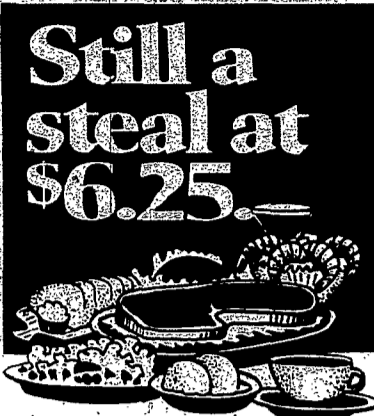
He said last week that one of the major efforts of the meeting was to act as a bridge, to try to bring out the positive values in what both the right wing and left (in education) are saying.

Father remarked on two resolutions which came out of the meeting, a resolution on minorities and a resolution on hiring practices.

The minority resolution, according to Father Collins came from an understanding that religious education in the past has been directed primarily toward middle class Catholics. The resolution he said, is a step in rectifying that situation.

On the hiring practices the group said "We disagree with any discriminatory hiring practice which would exclude qualified individuals from jobs in the field of religious education simply because they are former religious or laicized priests in good standing with the Church."

A further development of the meeting, Father Collins said, was the position taken that "We do want a definite say in the development of the U.S. Catechetical Directory."



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