

Time of Renewal

Regionalism Developing Strength in Diocese

By JOHN DASH

The diocesan program of regionalization is going surprisingly well judging from reports submitted at last week's meeting of regional coordinators.

Father Daniel Holland, diocesan director of the Time of Renewal, expressed pleasure at the reports and satisfaction that some breakthroughs have been made, especially in the organization of the Yates-Ontario-Wayne Region and the Chemung-Schuyler Region.

Auxiliary Bishop John E. McCafferty chaired the meeting at which Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, auxiliary Bishop Dennis W. Hickey and clergy and laymen discussed the program's progress.

Father Henry Adamski, coordinator for Chemung-Schuyler, noted that all major departments of concern have

been established in his region with the Education Committee very strong. "Were moving ahead, there's no doubt about it," he said.

When someone pointed out that last year's flood occasioned a slow start in the establishment of parish councils and a regional identity, Father Adamski bristled. "That flood is a worn out excuse."

Father Thomas Reddington, recently returned from abroad, and Father William Amann reported on the North West Region. Father Amann noted that they have made good progress in several areas. The region has a regional constitution which approximates the guidelines issued by the diocese. The region hopes to have a general assembly with 72 delegates and six elected representatives in September. "We have the confidence that we're ready to move," Father Amann said.

The South East Region's committees are "pretty much at a standstill," Father John Philipps said. He, however, thanked Bishop Hogan for his presence at the recent regional meeting in the area. He also noted that the financial response to the region was "very encouraging."

Father Elmer McDonald gave the most complete report of the afternoon session, describing the activities in the South West Region since last summer. All the parishes in the region have established councils. Religious and lay involvement in regional programs has been good, he said. The region's education committee is viable, Father McDonald noted, but the other committees either are not strong or are not yet formed. Of the Youth Committee, he said, "I won't be surprised if we don't ever have one."

Father Leo Lynch told the

group that since the first of the year the Seneca-Cayuga Region has established Liturgy, Education and Human Development committees which meet regularly. He noted however that the region has "mostly clerical involvement."

Father Eugene Emo reported that 10 of 24 parishes in the Livingston-Stauben Region have formed parish councils. He cited the diversity of communities in his region but said, "They're all going along" with regionalism.

Father Robert Smith said that progress in the Yates-Ontario-Wayne Region is moving slowly but that the area has a very strong Education Committee, a very encouraging Human Development Committee, a strong Liturgy Committee and is developing a Vocations Committee. He said that the steering committee for a regional conference is a "complete disaster." Father Smith also said he has received 100 per cent cooperation with regional finances.

Father Albert Ryan noted that the Tompkins - Tioga Region has 12 parish councils from nine parishes, two missions and two college campuses. The region's Liturgy Committee is strong, he said, and described the Education Committee as "a beaut." One of the educational developments is the establishment of a teacher training team which visits individual education centers. The area has no Youth Committee and the Human Development Committee will begin shortly.

The North Region has every parish represented by at least the laity, according to Father Paul Schnacky. He sees the leadership in the area coming especially from the laity and the Sisters. Two teams have been established to help steering committees set up parish councils in the area. He also said that the Eastern Churches in the area have been contacted, "but while they appreciate being asked, they are diffident."

Renewal Book Gains Support

A proposed booklet of data collected this year and presented in area newspapers for the Time of Renewal got a strong boost last week when Father Daniel Holland, director of the Time of Renewal, presented his idea to the regional coordinators' meeting at Camp Stella Maris.

The coordinators' response "said to me they want a booklet," Father Holland said. The support came hard on the heels of a vigorous challenge by members of the Priests' Council.

The purpose of the booklet, according to Father Holland, is to further the credibility of the Church and to provide a tool for people to re-examine their own faith values.

Bishop John McCafferty strongly agrees with the position taken by the regional coordinators. "I do feel that a great deal of the effort and expenditure of the research and analysis will be lost if it is not assimilated and presented in popular form."

He stressed that it was essential that it be published as reasonably as possible and be widely circulated.

While describing the idea behind the proposed Time of Renewal booklet as "tremendous," Father Henry Adamski stated that the success of the booklet depends on how it is marketed.

He expressed what he called "the general consensus of opinion among the regional coordinators" that the booklet be put in layman's terms in a paperback selling for around \$1.

"The diocese cannot distribute the booklet gratis," he said, adding that he doubts if parishioners could afford to buy a booklet costing \$3-\$4.

Father Adamski views the booklet as a part of the adult education program to be used in the Fall. "It is not just another thing being thrown at the people but is part of the program started by the Church in the renewal year," he said.

"How the booklet is done" is the only reservation held by Father Douglas Hoffman who sees it as an excellent, in-depth visual aid.

"We've gone this far with the Renewal and we need to embody the results in some concrete way. But it must be done well to hold the interest of the people," he said. The main question that has been raised about the booklet concerns whether the people would read it since several priests believe they didn't read the ads in the newspapers.

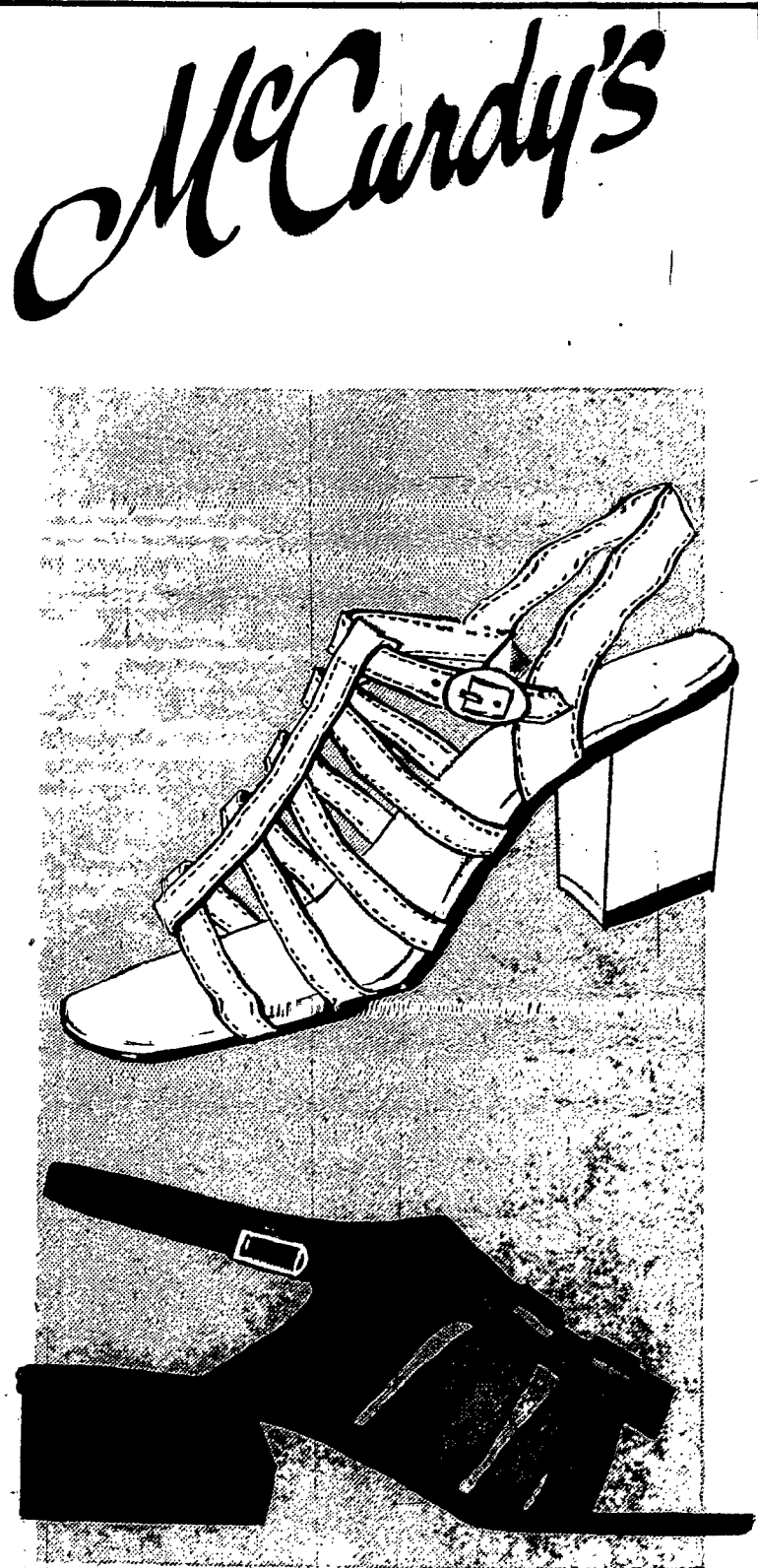
"The ads in the paper are simply that. People tend to look at ads with less than one eye and lump the ads from Sibley, Lindsay and Curr together with the

Renewal ads," he commented. Father Hoffman feels the booklet will be a success, "assuming it is well done and costs only \$1."

Father Thomas Reddington, while admitting that because of recent study in Rome he was not familiar with the materials presented in the newspapers, commented that "if it was worth printing, then it would be worth preserving."

Fear that valuable information would be lost without the booklet was expressed by Father Albert Ryan who believes the Renewal series "have shown us the ignorance of the people." He'd like to see thousands printed to be used for adult education, Sunday sermons and high schools.

He said that according to Father Holland it would be feasible to print a minimum number of copies such as 10,000, which could be sold for around \$1. Breaking down the number of copies to be sold per parish according to population, the Cathedral, for example, would only have to take 100 copies. "If there weren't 100 people who wanted to buy the booklet, then the parish could buy it and distribute it," Father Ryan maintained. He said that although according to the breakdown his parish in Erumansburg would only have to take 25 copies, he plans to request a minimum of 150.



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