



Photo by Laurence E. Keefe

'BRIDES OF CHRIST'

Final Vows Begin A New Life



Sister Maria Sciarra gets her ring, above, in the Nazareth Infirmary from Father Maynard Connell; below, Bishop John E. McCafferty hears the final vows of Sister Mary Ann Sutera in Sacred Heart Cathedral. Each nun wrote her own service for the occasion of her final vows.



A nun's final profession ceremony resembles nothing more than a one-person wedding.

The resemblance is deliberate; each new Sister plans to "marry Christ" to the exclusion of all others. The resemblance is also complete; it extends from the form of the liturgy to accepting a wedding band and signing the congregation's register.

This Spring the Rochester Sisters of St. Joseph accepted 10 new members of their congregation in celebrations all around the diocese and in Latin America.

The final profession of vows has come to be made usually in the parish or institution where the postulant has been working. Another sign of the times is that each of the new nuns now writes her own ceremony of profession, or joins in writing it with another nun who may be making it at the same time.

All of the ceremonies express the same theme of marriage.

In the ritual of Sister Marguerite Dynski, SSJ, the celebrant prayed, "Almighty Father, bless this ring that it may be a continuous sign of Christ's unending love. May she who wears it witness to its deepest meaning, by living with fidelity and faith her commitment to Christ and His people."

Those who became "brides of Christ" this year among the Sisters of St. Joseph were Sister Christel Burgmaier, from Cape Vincent; Sister Jean Bellini, Bridgehampton, L.I.; Sister Marguerite Dynski, St. Stanislaus; Sister Linda Arnone, St. Lawrence; Sister Mary Ann Sutera, St. Francis Xavier; Sister Margaret Liguori, St. James; Sister Maria Sciarra, St. Margaret Mary; Sister Patricia Trovato, Sacred Heart Cathedral; Sister Ruth Ann Dupre, Blessed Sacrament; and Sister Susan Schantz, St. Leo's.