

Me Teach CCD? Well, Why Not?

By SHARON DARNIEDER

A story about Religious Education or CCD may not have anything new to say. Nothing new, that is, if you're attending instructions, if you have a child who does, or if you've been a CCD teacher.

But it is new to me. And I bet it's new to many Catholic adults just like me. I never attended religious instructions because I went to Catholic schools from grade school through college.

Oh sure, basically I knew what the program is all about. If you're Catholic, and you attend a public school, you have to go to weekly CCD classes at your parish. But although I knew what it is, I had no idea what classes were actually like.

So I decided to become involved. This year I signed up to teach a CCD class at our parish, Our Mother of Sorrows.

Although I've only been on the other side of that front desk for a few weeks, I've already learned a lot about kids today, teaching and getting along with people in general. And so far, I've discovered two things.

Even though I'm only a

beginning teacher, it's one of the most rewarding things I've ever done.

Second, the next time a teachers strike looms, you can be sure I'll be on their side! Believe me, I spend more time preparing for my classes than teaching them — and they're an hour and a half long. Teaching isn't easy; it's hard work.

My 18 seventh grade students are bright, intelligent and inquisitive. And they're a lot of fun to be with. As Art Linkletter said, they do say the darndest things.

And oh, those questions!

As a practicing Catholic for all my 23 years, I thought I knew as much about my religion as the next guy. I was wrong. You never stop learning. I'm finding out there are a lot of questions I hadn't thought of, and they aren't all coming from the teacher's manual either.

Those 18 brains are just aching to know all the answers. At their age they've experienced none of the disillusionment of the world. It's marvelous to be re-exposed to the innocence and creativity of children.



I feel several years younger since I began teaching, and I'm not even old yet. Imagine what it could make other adults feel like. Maybe the fountain of youth isn't a myth after all.

Despite its joys, there is a sad note in the CCD programs — a lack of teachers. Almost every parish is crying for more help.

You don't have to be a member of a religious order to qualify. The Church relies heavily on lay people as teachers. Basic requirements are enthusiasm, ambition and a desire to help further the faith.

As new teachers, we had an orientation day, and there are

other parishes that may have a teacher training program. So check with those in charge of your parish CCD program if you're thinking of signing up.

The time you give up to teach isn't that important. With all the free time we have today, you'll never miss a few hours. What is important is teaching young adults what their religion, and consequently their life, is all about. For a few brief hours each week, you're involved in the future of the Church and the country.

That's a big responsibility, but it's nothing to get frightened about. Do it lovingly, willingly and well and if you're like me, you'll have such a good time in your classes you'll be sorry to see them end.

The trick is to get the kids interested in living their religion, not just being Sunday go-to-meetin' Catholics. Textbooks teach the theory behind our faith, but life gives us the examples of practicing it.

Tell them about someone who helps those less fortunate or someone who volunteers their time for charitable projects, and

you'll be relating to them what being a Christian is all about.

So give a little time when your parish asks for CCD volunteer teachers. In return, you could receive a lot of personal satisfaction.

Ithacan Families Hold Mass

By JOY CHALONE

Ithaca — "Lord, forgive us for not being patient with our parents, Lord have mercy. Lord, forgive us our impatience with our children, Christ have mercy." — poignant words for family members praying at Sunday Mass.

The scene is the altar of immaculate Conception Church. It is the 9 a.m. Sunday morning Mass. Small, young faces peer over the altar at Father David Mura, associate pastor. An elbow or two is seen, propping up an inquisitive head. Eyes are wide with expectation.

A family stands at the side in readiness to serve. They are the altar boys for the Mass. Another family has prepared and is ready to read the scriptures for the day.

This is the beginning of what promises to be a very successful way of celebrating Mass, with family units actually participating and helping.

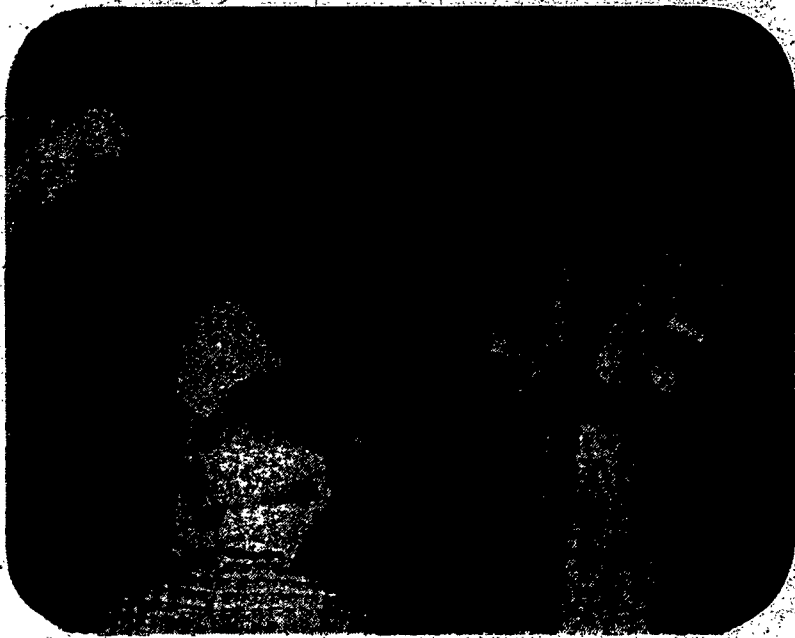
Father Mura explains to the congregation that this is "Family Mass." He hastens to explain that a family is considered to be, not just mom, dad and the kids, but a married couple without children, or a single person, anyone who considers himself a part of the family of God.

Father also describes what a family is not — that of mother and father dropping off their children to Mass and not attending themselves.

The first part of the sermon is directed to adults. Then Father turns to the children, asking questions about the theme for the day. As Mass goes on Father stops every so often to explain something that might seem strange to a child, or to ask if they know what some particular part of the ceremonies mean. The Gospel and other readings are vernacularized so that all the congregation, children included, can understand. As the time of

PETER AND THE WOLF

The Mercury Ballet Company will perform Peter and the Wolf at 3 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 14, at East High School. The Rochester Association for Education of Young Children is sponsoring the production as an introduction to theater and ballet, and children in the audience will be able to talk with the performers after the show. Tickets cost 75 cents for children, and \$1.25 for adults.



While vesting for Mass, Father Mura discusses the liturgy with Ed Reinagle. One of the Reinagle children looks on.

consecration draws closer, the serving family brings up the cruets of water and wine, the towel, and other items. Each member has something to do. Mass ends with a procession of the family and priest down the middle aisle.

But this is not the end. Mimeographed sheets are given

to each family with projects and preparations outlined for next Sunday's theme.

Perhaps a particular gospel passage will be read and studied by the family, relating it to its own life. Maybe a prayer is to be composed. In the end much discussion and thinking goes on before next Sunday's celebration.

Pope John Named In Lutheran Rites

New York [RNS] — Pope John XXIII and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., are among the figures listed in a calendar of "lesser festivals" appearing in "Contemporary Worship 6," a new lectionary and calendar published for four Lutheran denominations by the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship.

As in the previous five volumes, the 220-page book contains prayers for each Sunday and festival day, an explanation of the liturgical seasons, and Scripture readings for public worship. It has been prepared for use by the American Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church in America, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

A three-year cycle of Scripture readings is based on the series used in the Roman Catholic Church.

Changes in the liturgical calendar from Lutheran tradition

include the dropping of three Sundays in the pre-Lenten season — Septuagesima, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima, and the extending of the Epiphany season to Ash Wednesday. Sundays for the second half of the church year begin after Pentecost, rather than after Trinity Sunday.

Among the Christians listed for commemoration under "lesser festivals" beside Pope John and Dr. King are Quaker George Fox, Methodist founder John Wesley; Monica, the mother of St. Augustine, and diplomat Dag Hammarskjöld. In introducing this feature, the publication says, "The calendar of the church year should present something of the breadth of Christian history, remembering a richly assorted variety of persons — young and old, learned and ignorant, people of action and hermits — whose common denominator is simply that the grace of God worked mightily within them."

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