



Father Walter Carron, pastor of St. Mary's, accepts the offertory gifts.

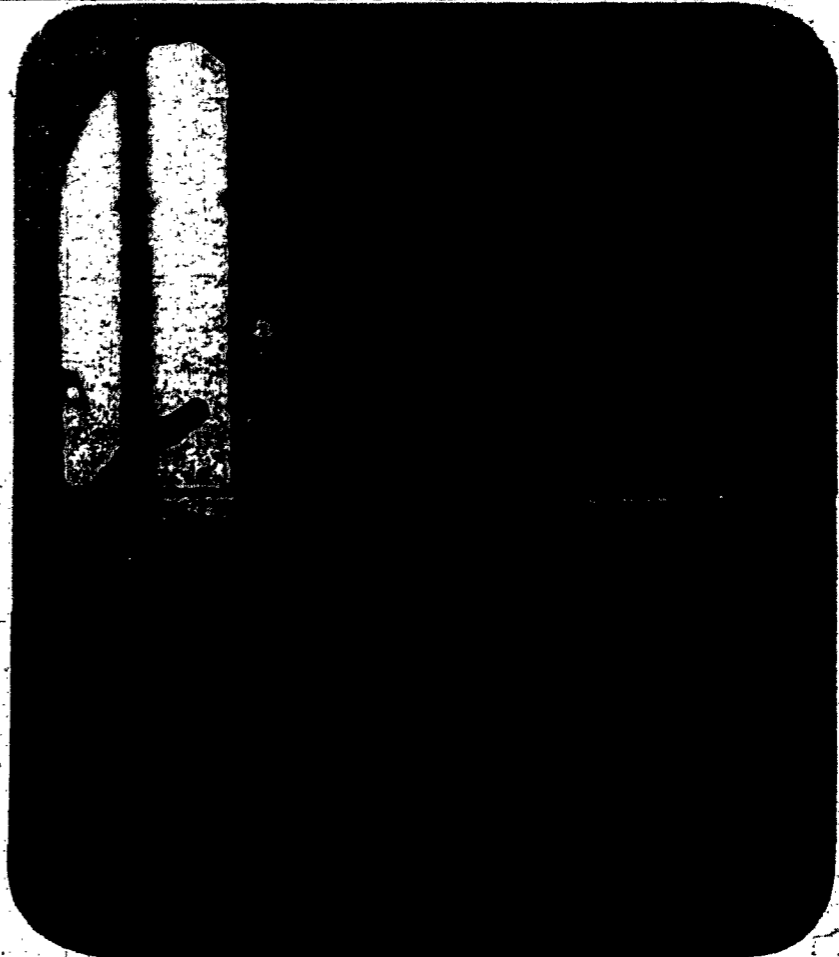
Children's Mass

I'm Special, I'm Me was the theme of a second children's Mass at St. Mary's Church, Geneseo, Sunday, Oct. 7.

The special liturgies at St. Mary's were started by the liturgy committee of the recently formed Parish Council.

The children of the parish acted as the ushers, lectors, presenters of the gifts and the musicians.

In the plans are a Right to Life and a Peace Mass.



A youthful lector reads from the Scriptures at the Mass.

Panel Seeks Break From Ethnic Shells

By PAT PETRASKE

"Why are all Jews cheap and why are all blacks lazy?"

This was one of the hostile questions that was shot out from the back of a church during a question and answer period. Members of the Rochester Panel of American Women learn to take challenges such as this in stride, knowing that they will face everything from praise to epithets as they tell their personal story of what it's like to be a Catholic, Protestant, black or Jew.

"I didn't know that." The effects of prejudice, discrimination, and racism can leave a listener pretty dumbfounded. At a panel presented last week to the Brighton Junior Chapter of the YWCA, many of the neatly dressed women expressed surprise as Claudia Morgan, the black panelist, commented on the issue of black separatism.

"You can't expect anyone who receives a slap in the face everywhere he turns to leave the community where he feels comfortable," she said, noting that there is a difference whether the separation is made by choice.

A total of 17 area women have taken turns staffing the panels which are coordinated with the YWCA's Design for Anti-Racism Education (DARE) program. The panels have appeared before more than 60 civic, fraternal and religious groups in the last 18 months. They have even found themselves in the spotlight for a Sunday homily. "We represent no one but ourselves, although each is a member of a defined group," began Jill Gessinger, moderator of the group who fits what is referred to as the "Protestant slot."

The dream of every panelist is to build understanding and communication and that through dialogue "we can solve some of our problems." Inner conflicts seem to have plagued each

panelist as they slowly broke out of their ethnical or religious shell.

"We were encouraged to feel superior to public school kids. It was inferred that if our parents paid tuition and public school taxes then the schools must be better," said Betsy Powell, the Catholic panelist.

Mrs. Powell believes her background failed to teach her much about people of other races and religions, and for this reason she decided to send her children to a public school. "I feel my children should be exposed to different situations now. Too many parents say they're going to wait for their children to change their lives themselves," she said.

Being different as a child can be a difficult experience, according to Joan Streit, who is proud of her Jewish heritage. "It was difficult to maintain a Jewish identity in the Christian atmosphere of the public schools. I didn't know whether to sing the Christmas carols along with the other kids," Mrs. Streit said.

She expressed resentment toward such incidents as the scheduling of important conferences or classes on Jewish holidays and the ending of public non-sectarian meetings with a benediction including the phrase "through Christ our Lord, Amen." Being a Jew does not mean being crafty or sneaky, she added.

Claudia Morgan also broke through an ethnic stereotype by explaining that she wore her hair in an Afro "long before black is beautiful" become popular. She campaigned for "equal rights for all" when she found "I wasn't good enough because of my color to be shown any house I chose."

None of these problems beset Mrs. Gessinger, the fourth member of the panel, who grew up in the best streets of Ohio as a white Anglo-Saxon Protestant. "I didn't know what to make of those Catholic parochial kids I saw," she recalled.

She also felt "nervous" when she first heard various panelists speak. "It's difficult to know what it's like to be denied anything," Mrs. Gessinger realizes it is her group which holds the reins of power, and that it is her group which causes some of the problems.

Making Christmas a national holiday is one source of contention with American Jews. "Christianity is not the official religion of the country," Mrs. Streit maintained. She was supported by Mrs. Morgan, who also objects to the Nativity scene

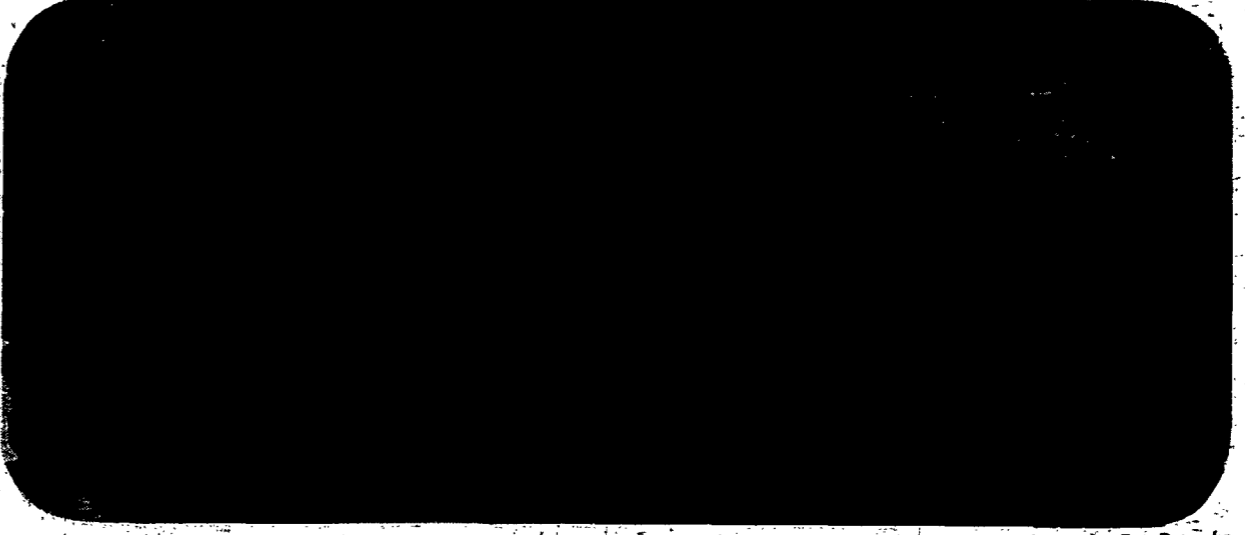


Photo by Pat Petraske

Members of the Rochester Panel of American Women, [l. to r.] Betsy Powell, Joan Streit, Claudia Morgan and Jill Gessinger, discuss discrimination.

at the White House outdoor Christmas tree. "A government display should not be religious," Mrs. Morgan said.

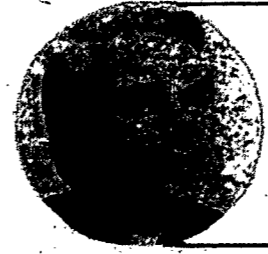
Members of the YWCA talked easily on Judeo-Christian problems because the Brighton area has a large Jewish population. But on the black-white situation, many of them confessed, "We're not aware of black needs; we can't think of any proper questions."

One woman asked if black organizations such as separate sororities were a sign of rebellion. "It's not a matter of rebellion, but of not being invited. You have black sororities because you have black colleges. And you have black colleges because we weren't allowed into the white colleges," Mrs. Morgan said. She feels many blacks may move up financially but "have no place to spend their money. That is why you find better houses in the ghettos."

These hard hitting statements can make members of the audience defensive, according to Mrs. Powell. "They think the panel is pointing their finger at them. People get guilt feelings and mixed reactions." Mrs. Streit added that the sessions enable both panelists and members of the audience to "express their inner feelings." "So many people talk about things but not about the important things," she said.

Discussion for a Rochester panel took root after Mary Rita Whitney, Sandra Gurovski, Pat Geraci and Donna Agostinelli read the book, The Education of a WASP by Louis Mark Stalvey. Enthusiasm for the panel has caught fire across the country since it was started 16 years ago by Esther Brown of Kansas City, Mo. Last year 24,000 programs were presented to over 100,000 people.

Mrs. Powell believes that the Rochester groups have been speaking to women primarily. "But it is the men who run the country," she mused.



THE OPEN WINDOW Fr. Louis Hohman

Dear Father Hohman,

At a party someone recently challenged me for some stock I've got in an industry that has a branch in South Africa. I believe that it's an important thing to put money into the economy via buying stocks; but this person says that I am putting money into an immoral situation since there is apartheid in South Africa and the only ones to benefit from my investment are the whites in government. For some reason this has been bothering me because it rings true. Should I pull out of this company?

Sincerely,
D.S.

Dear D.S.,

It seems to me that many people forget what the real meaning of stocks is. In concentrating on getting a return on their investment through growth or dividends, they forget the basic concept that stockholders are the owners of companies. Ultimately they control the policies of the company and direct the executives and board of directors. The trouble is that most companies are so large and any given stockholder holds such a small portion of ownership that his power over company policies is very small. It is usually so insignificant that this aspect of ownership is forgotten.

Once you realize that you are a part owner you must also realize that you share in the responsibility of the company to operate in a moral way. If the company is operating immorally in any fashion you would have an obligation to change that policy or remove yourself from ownership.

Now take the case you mentioned — the operation of a branch of your company under apartheid in South Africa. If the operation contributed to that immoral situation, I would think you would have to get out. But if the company is merely operating in a country which has a policy of apartheid, but in no way contributes to it or supports it, I would not find that wrong on your part.

I would find it hard to believe that any white man operating a business in South Africa was by that very fact operating immorally. You have a right to find out the nature of that operation relative for example, to its hiring practices or marketing practices to discover whether the company is operating under a policy of racial discrimination. At the same time you just might get the company executives thinking about this matter. Good luck.

Note to Father G. Stuart Hogan re his letter to the editor of 10/10/73: Do you not remember from your study of theology that Jesus Christ "rose glorious and immortal on the third day"? Wasn't it in his human nature that Jesus was glorious and immortal after his resurrection? Didn't that make him more perfectly human, or to state it another way, more fully what human nature was capable of being? I believe as you do that suffering carries the power of atonement and the power to purify. The only thing we differ about is WHY that is so. Apparently you are disturbed that I would even try to find a reason why suffering can atone. So be it.

RELIGIOUS COORDINATOR NAMED IN CORNING

Coming — A former Rochester area teacher, Sister Mary Lynch SSI, has been named religious coordinator for St. Patrick's Church.

Selected by the parish council for the post, her duties will include working in adult education, the CCD program for parish youth and visiting homes so parishioners can voice their needs.