

## THE SLOT MAN

It is no secret but it is also not widely known that one of the country's foremost experts on the great 20th Century composer-pianist, Sergei Rachmaninoff, happens to work for the Courier-Journal. And Frank Crociata doesn't even work in the editorial department; he is our circulation manager.

Among Crociata's more recent published works on the great Russian is the booklet enclosed in the five-album RCA set of the complete Rachmaninoff works issued last November. Crociata, who is at work preparing a full biography of Rachmaninoff, was asked by the record company to do the booklet.

Crociata has been studying the piano since he was eight and now is organist and choirmaster at St. Patrick's Church in Rochester. He attended St. Andrew's Seminary and was graduated from St. John Fisher with a degree in political science.

He has done some music criticism for the Courier-Journal, has written a short biography of Leo Sowerby for the Encyclopedia of 20th Century Music to be published by E. P. Dutton, did a series on Rachmaninoff's piano music for Piano Quarterly, another on the composer's recordings for the British publication The Antique Record, and wrote the liner notes for another RCA recording, an album of Van Cliburn playing Rachmaninoff.

All this may sound a little heavy to the layman, but Crociata manages to keep a light touch to his work, much the same as his principal subject.

Crociata likes to tell how the composer preferred the company of modern musicians to that of the so-called longhair set.

## Pentecostals Set Day of Renewal

The Pentecostal Catholic Prayer Groups of Rochester are sponsoring a Day of Renewal on Sunday, March 10, at Our Lady of Mercy Church. The preacher will be Father Raphael Lombardo, Consolata Missionary, who serves as liaison between the Bishop of Buffalo and the Catholic charismatic groups of that diocese.

## Colleges Go To High School

Nazareth and St. John Fisher Colleges are going to Mercy High School in September with the addition of college-level courses taught by Mercy faculty.

Mercy High School will be a trial school in a program which allows students planning to attend Nazareth or St. John Fisher College to get college credit in the areas of English, Chemistry, French, Mathematics and Social Studies.

Sister Mary Bryan, principal, noted that "It is a financial saving for the student as well as a senior year challenge."

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"In fact," Crociata says, "the pianist Eddie Duchin was one of his favorites. Whenever Duchin was playing in New York, Rachmaninoff likely would be in the nightclub and, often, at closing time, the tall Russian (at 6 foot 5, the approximate size of Bishop Hogan) would sit down at Duchin's piano to play a little jazz — unannounced to the audience.

He particularly liked Duchin's version of Blue Skies and the popular pianist would always do that number when Rachmaninoff was in attendance.

Among Rachmaninoff's other friends from the musical world, Crociata lists Vincent Youmans, Adolph Green and George Gershwin.

Rachmaninoff gave a Rochester performance only about four months before he died in 1943. He was scheduled for 8:30 and when he hadn't shown at 8 the management began getting somewhat nervous in light of the full-house out-front.

At about 8:20, the Russian arrived alone, greeted no one, paced casually until curtain time and then walked out on stage to his piano to give a stirring recital.

Crociata points out that right up to his death, Rachmaninoff was capable of top-flight performance. He died prematurely at 70 of cancer. His biographer draws a tragic similarity between the lives of Rachmaninoff and the great Italian composer Giacomo Puccini.

"Both smoked too much, both had a fascination for speed — fast cars, fast boats — both bridged the gap between romantic and 20th Century music. And cancer led to both deaths, although Puccini actually died of complications following an operation."

Starting at 3 p.m., there will be a shared prayer meeting, and a talk by Father Lombardo, followed by refreshments and fellowship. The Day of Renewal will close with a Pentecostal Mass, ending at 8 p.m.

Books and tapes will be available for purchase.

## National Merit Finalist Named

Rebecca Regan, a Mercy High School senior, has been named a finalist in the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test.

The nationwide contest awards monetary scholarships to outstanding high school seniors based on the scores of the PSAT test taken by all high school juniors. Eleven hundred scholarships will be given out to the winners of the contest.

Miss Regan is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Regan of Manor Hill Drive, Fairport.

## MARRIAGE IS TOPIC AT ANNUNCIATION

Sunday Sermons at Annunciation Church during Lent and through the first weekend of May will be devoted to marriage and marriage problems. Father Sebastian Falcone, a professor at St. Bernard's Seminary, will join Msgr. Albert Simonetti, the pastor, and Father Frank Lioi, associate pastor, in preaching at the 7 p.m. Mass on Saturday evenings, and at the Sunday Masses, 8, 9:30, 11 and 12:15. This weekend's topic is New Testament Perspectives on Marriage, by Father Lioi.

## K of C Activities

Knights of Columbus activities for March include:

Canandaigua Council #1445: March 16, St. Patrick's Dinner and Social, 8:30 p.m.

East Rochester Council #3676: March 11, regular monthly meeting.

Henrietta Council #4812, Our Lady of the Genesee: March 15, regular monthly meeting.

Greece Council #3892, Our Lady of the Cenacle: March 20, regular monthly meeting and ham dinner at 7 p.m. For

reservations call Edward C. Miller at 663-6203.

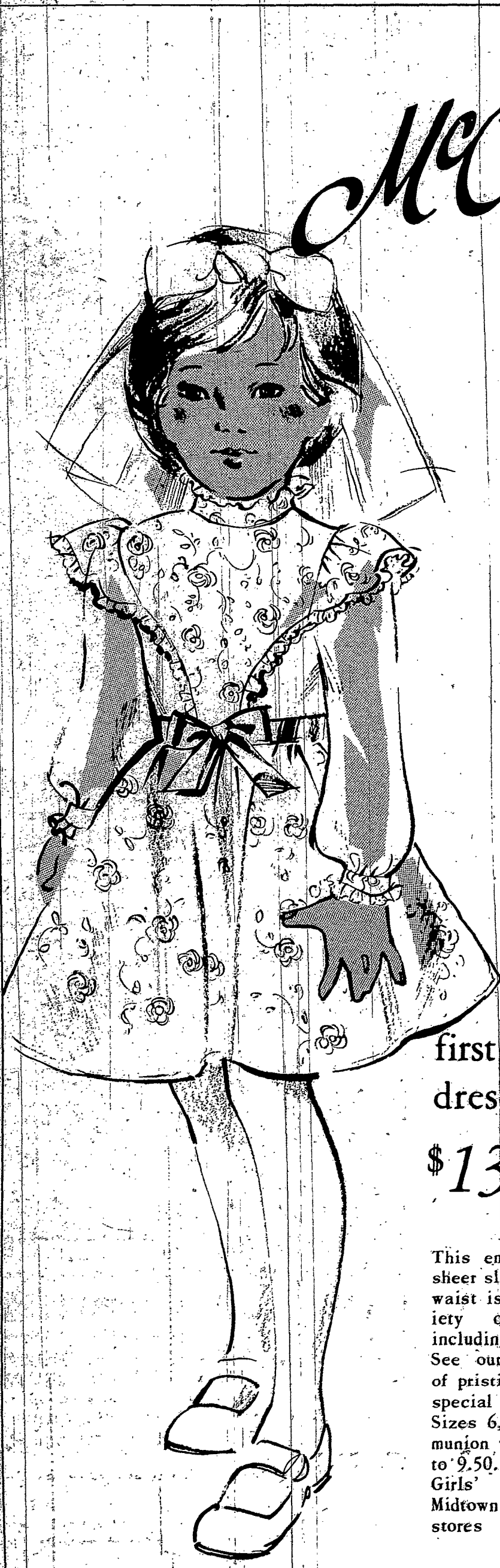
Ithaca Council #277: March 16, regular monthly meeting; March 17, St. Patrick's Dinner and Dance, 6 p.m. Call club rooms or officers for reservations.

Rochester Council #178: March 7, regular monthly meeting and ladies' auxiliary meeting; March 10, Fathers and Sons Communion Breakfast, Mass at 8:30 a.m.; March 14, council entertainment, State Hospital, 7:30 p.m.; March 21, council meeting and ladies auxiliary meeting, 8:30 p.m.

Rochester General Assembly,

Fourth Degree: March 28, dinner at Christ the King School hall, 6:30 p.m. For reservations call John Surash at 225-5101 or Bernie Bromka at 342-3163; Apr. 7, Fourth Degree Exemplification, Our Lady of Lourdes School hall at 2 p.m. A banquet will follow at the Holiday Inn Downtown.

Webster Council, Trinity Council #4618: March 7, regular monthly meeting; March 10, Knighthood Degree, third degree, at the clubrooms; March 12, Mass at Hill Haven at 7:30 p.m.; March 16, St. Patrick's Party at 6:30 p.m. For reservations call council officers.



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