



EDWARD RIZZO

New Music For OLPH

By MARGARET CONNOLLY

As far back as he can remember, Edward Rizzo has been listening to music, some of it strictly in his own head. Since the age of 70, instead of just whistling his own tunes, he has been writing them down. They're all for the Church.

On Easter Sunday, the choir of Our Lady of Perpetual Help will introduce his fourth Mass and his latest hymn, a celebration of Easter morning. The composer will direct, as he has for the past three years. Mrs. Arnold Boehm of Irondequoit, a music major at Nazareth College, is organist and collaborator in scoring Rizzo's melodies for the voices of OLPH.

Rizzo spent his adult working life in the print shops of various industries, ending 31 years with Kodak in 1961. This spoiled his fingers for instrumental music, but he had a trained baritone voice.

"Music has been my life," he says, and "church music was my first love." The OLPH choir consists almost entirely of women — "such beautiful, beautiful women, so quick to catch the music!"

The possibly Italian hyperbole comes off in perfectly American English. Rizzo, born in Sicily, in Caltanissetta Province, has lived in this area since he was 11. His family came to the United States in 1912 and settled as farm workers in Avon until the older boys took the immigrant trail to Rochester's clothing factories.

Before that, all worked in the farm fields of their native place. Rizzo remembers himself as a small boy walking home after a dawn-to-dusk work day, tired and hungry, fixing a new song in his mind by beating out its rhythms with two stones. And that reminds him of the pomegranate groves, the fields of artichokes, the fishing fleets pulling out on the Tyrrhenian Sea. It reminds him also of hunger and an abiding terror of bandits. Rizzo never went back.

He and his wife of 49 years live in Midvale Terrace in Good Counsel parish. He has sung with the Verdi Opera Society and the old Rochester Grand Opera Company. For years after Vatican II he instructed the Good Counsel congregation in the new liturgies.

Church music dawned on him as his "first love" in 1922, at a Cleveland concert by the touring Sistine Chapel Choir. Composition came to him in 1971, while he was convalescing from an operation. He started with a poem that "just cried out for a melody" and went on to Masses dedicated chiefly to Our Lady, the latest of which will be sung at 9:45 Easter morning.

CELEBRATING PETRARCH

"An Evening with Petrarch" Saturday at St. John Fisher College will feature guitarist Stanley Watson and a comedy performance in the Renaissance style by students of Italian. There will be readings from the works of the poet-scholar and a slide presentation on the world he lived in, 1304-1374. The program, at 8 p.m. April 6 in Basil Hall, will be followed by a reception. It is free and open to the public.

Narcotics Anonymous — They Help Each Other To Stay 'Clean'

By PAT PETRASKE

"I thought as long as I wasn't mainlining that I wasn't a junkie."

But the truth came crashing in on John, who realized that after three years he would have to withdraw some place to shake his 'drug' habit. During that month John thought for sure that he was crazy. But he figured that this was better than being an addict.

John, a quiet young man with reams of blonde hair, told his story at a meeting in the basement of the First Universalist Church. He was "smiling and doing the things he hasn't done for a long time." This college student has been "clean" for two years, but knows he will continue to need help and support from the other ex-addicts who attend the semi-weekly sessions of Narcotics Anonymous (NA).

Narcotics Anonymous is a loosely-structured, closely-knit group that patterns its approach to drug abuse after a similar program, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). All that is asked is that each member have an honest desire to stop using all drugs. For people like Henry, it has been 25 years, for others, like Gail, an accomplishment has been to be "clean" for two days. (All names used here are fictitious.)

Up to 15 people have attended one of the meetings held each Tuesday and Friday at 8 p.m. at 150 S. Clinton. Begun in Sun Valley, Cal., the program was established in Rochester last January. There are no leaders, no fees, no pledges or promises and no affiliations. Preaching, probing and pity are also taboo.

A typical meeting begins with the reading of the twelve steps of guidance that are "written so simply that we can follow them in our daily lives," explained John, who was chairing that night's meeting. Basically, the members are asked to admit that "they are powerless over drugs, that their lives have become unmanageable."

The third step is perhaps the most important. For a successful rehabilitation, it has been found that the addicts must make a decision to turn their will over to the care of God "as they understand Him," according to the NA booklet entitled "Our Way of Life." Henry prefers to call God "a Higher Power" and defines this "Power" as something that helps us "to get away from ourselves."

John's story speaks for millions of teenagers who like to dabble in drugs "for the fun of it." He tried just about everything and as long as he didn't go crazy using it, he kept on using it. "But I had no sense of proportion. Every time I got a drug I'd have to use it up right away," he continued.

Pretty soon, however, he did start to go "crazy." John's whole life centered around obtaining drugs and he couldn't go anywhere without being "high." Why he started taking drugs remains a mystery to John, but it had gotten to a point where he felt he should have been committed to a mental institution. Those years were spent in a fog and in alienation from his family and friends. This fog began to lift only after a friend took him to an NA meeting.

Gail wasn't quite as lucky as John and has had several visits to a mental hospital. "They classified me as a psychoneurotic manic depressive with schizophrenic tendencies. What a relief to find out I was only a drug addict," Gail said.

At the age of 12, Gail first found herself "stoned" on drugs. She puts part of the blame on her associates. "I hung around a lot of

older kids and I did things to be cool." Gail also felt she couldn't live up to her last name, indicating that she came from a prominent family.

"It was a big drinking Irish family," the eighteen-year-old noted. Most of the members of NA also have to attend AA.

Twenty-three-year-old Cindy unofficially serves as the group's secretary and is also working as a secretary for a company which previously had fired her because of her use of drugs. Cindy believes she had an "inferiority complex" because I thought people didn't accept me." Alcohol and drugs made her "inhibitions a lot looser."

Many of the NA members complained about their "encounters" with professional medical help. When Gail was under treatment, the doctors didn't realize that she was a drug addict and allowed her to have any drug she wanted. When Cindy went to a doctor, he diagnosed her as a "neurotic woman" and prescribed tranquilizers.

"So then the drugs were legal," said Cindy who discovered that "one was too many and a thousand was not enough."

Disillusionment often hits the addicts even after they join the program. Gail found that she was even more lonely after joining NA because she had to cut her ties with her old friends if she wanted to stay "clean." What to do now is one of the major problems facing those who no longer spend their days under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

"By the grace of God, I don't have a drug problem, but I sure do have a living problem," said Gail, who admitted that at times she feels she couldn't make it through the week without NA meetings.

Gail's answer to this question was found at the end of a television show: "The best thing about the future is that it comes day by day."

NA members pattern their lives after slogans like, "Easy does it," while they try to live one day at a time. Henry, 62, who took his last drink in 1949, still does not allow himself to think too much about the future and continues to attend AA and NA meetings.

"I know that I don't have it made but then I know that I don't have to have it made. I'm just running real fast to stay in the same place," Henry said.

SEVEN LAST WORDS

The Seven Last Words of Jesus Christ, by Dubois, will be presented at Sacred Heart Cathedral at 8 p.m. Tuesday, April 9, by the cathedral choir and soloists. Don Meminger will direct, with John Woolfolk at the organ.



Left to right are Tweedle, Hargather, Rood, Gosert, Horn.

AQ Players Named Hockey All-Stars

Four Aquinas varsity hockey players were named this week to the Monroe County High School Hockey League All-Stars. Wayne Rood, Dave Hargather and Rick Tweedle made the first team; Captain Mike Horn, the second. Honorable mention went to Scott Gosert and Bill Quinlan.

Hargather received the largest number of penalties, he was judged as his team's strongest defenseman.

Aquinas finished first in the Northern Division of the Monroe County Hockey League, with 12 wins and three losses.

Rood led the league in goals and points, and holds the league record for number of goals. Tweedle was second in total points and has the league record for assists. Even though Dave SPRING DANCE

Dansville — Parishioners of St. Mary's will hold their Spring dance in the auditorium Saturday, May 4, following dinner at 7:30 p.m. Reservations, limited to 100 couples, are being taken by Mrs. Jerry Whittlesey. The price is \$15 a couple.

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