

The Responding Church

Program Aims at Exploring Human Needs

By SHARON DARNIEDER

Through a wide variety of topics, concerns and speakers, The Responding Church, a program in continuing education hopes to enable those who attend to understand better the range of human needs and gifts.

Sponsored by the Diocesan Sisters Council (DSC) the program is open to all religious and laity and consists mainly of two-hour mini-sessions Monday and Wednesday evenings at St. Ambrose School, 31 Empire Blvd. beginning July 1, at 7:30 p.m.

Four of the 15 scheduled sessions are Marriage Counseling, Jail Ministry, Hospital Ministry and the Ministry of Social Change.

Rev. William Grace, a Presbyterian minister and director of the Center for Urban Encounter, Minneapolis, Minn., will present a weekend of sessions on the Ministry of Social Change, July 12-14.

Developed by Sister Eileen Conheady, SSJ, who works for the Northeast Property Upgrading Association (NEPUA), the five sessions beginning at 7:30 p.m. Friday, July 12, will form attitudes and techniques for social change. Saturday and Sunday sessions take place during the day.

Rev. Grace will deal with the mission of the Church, the identification of self-interest, the identification of an issue and how to deal with it and with the Church as an agent of change.

The Center, which has been in existence since 1967, is not only a resource place but also is concerned with training individuals in community organization.

In addition, staff members work with groups who want to



REV. GRACE

start community organizations. At present, Rev. Grace is working with the Northeast Area Development Organization, Inc., here.

In a telephone interview from Minneapolis, he said he felt that a "cluster of churches coming together can make massive social changes."

"Our experience has been that within the Church there is probably more going on (with regard to efforts for social changes) than in any other area," he added.

And he cited as examples the now settled Farah slacks controversy, the lettuce and grape struggle of the United Farm Workers and civil rights.

Father Robert Collins, director of the Family Life Office and Dennis Conheady, a marriage counselor for the Catholic Family Center who also will present the material, put together six sessions on Marriage and Family Counseling.

Beginning July 8, the sessions will continue each Monday and



SISTER JOSEPHA

Wednesday until July 24 and are from 7:30-9:30 p.m.

They will develop basic counseling skills and will include emphasis on the initial contact with people, listening, communication, patterns, resistance and referral.

Conheady, who's done similar sessions for some parish groups and also taught on the subject at Colgate-Rochester/Bexley Hall/Croser Theological Seminary, has been with the Catholic Family Center seven years.

He advised those who sign up to "think about themselves seriously before they come because an important element in counseling is that you have to be very aware of yourself."

He also noted that the sessions would involve a great deal of group participation and role playing to acquaint participants with some of the realities of counseling and on how to refer those with serious problems to professional help.

Hospital Ministry is the subject of four Monday evening sessions July 8-29, 7:30-9:30 p.m.

A combination of lectures, readings, discussions and field work which will introduce people to the ministry of the sick and dying, the sessions were developed by Sister Josepha Kennedy, SSJ, a professor of music at Nazareth College, and member of the Diocesan Liturgical Music Commission.

They will be presented by hospital chaplains Father John



VIRGINIA MACKEY

Rosse, St. Mary's; Father James Schwartz, Rochester General; Father Bruce Ammering, Monroe Community Hospital, and Father Edwin Metzger, a faculty member at St. Bernard's Seminary.

Sister Josepha has worked with Hospital Audiences, Inc., a group that synchronizes the efforts of hospital volunteers. Last summer she and Sister Marie Michelle, SSJ, administrator of St. Ann's Home, presented a course on the subject at the Pastoral Institute at St. Bernard's Seminary.

"I do think it's a terrifically important apostolate," she said, "and we've tailored the program to fit what the individual wants to accomplish in hospital ministry."

"The emphasis is not just on the terminally ill," she added, "but also on all who are affected by the trauma of illness in a family."

She stated that the sessions aimed to "give participants an opportunity to be exposed to the hospital environment, health care facilities and to analyze and evaluate their own Christian effectiveness in that setting."

In addition to the readings and discussions provided by the priests, there also will be an opportunity to meet with Sisters who work in hospital ministry full time.

Virginia Mackey, coordinator since 1972 of the Genesee Ecumenical Ministries (GEM) Judicial Process Commission, will present four sessions Wednesday evenings July 10-31, 7:30-9:30 p.m., on Jail Ministry.



DENNIS CONHEADY

Sessions will deal with law, order, justice and trying to develop a sense of injustice; crime and the system of criminal justice; a look at some of the existing Church groups which already have responded and why the Church and its members should respond to criminal justice problems.

In addition to lectures, reading material and group participation, Mrs. Mackey hopes to set up a jail tour and also an opportunity for discussion with former inmates.

"What I want to do is raise some basic questions about the purpose of the criminal justice system," she said. "I see it as going beyond the point of making our system more efficient and equitable. I'd like to see it become more concerned with problem solving."

Other mini-sessions being offered by The Responding Church include Youth and the Church, Institutional Response to the Needs in the 70s, Life Issues and Social Action, the Church and the Black Community, Total Parish Education and Counseling to Unwed Parents.

The opening introductory session July 1 is free and open to all. It will deal with introductions to The Responding Church and what individual courses and sessions have to offer.

Tickets are \$10 for 12 mini-sessions, or \$1 per mini-session at the door.

Sister Marie Elena, 1001 Lake Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14613, should be contacted for further information.

THE OPEN WINDOW

Father Louis Hohman

Dear Father Hohman,

I don't know if you will remember me, but I remember you and felt compelled to write to you. I met you almost three years ago at the "Invitational" at Penfield Country Club. At that time I brought you some "good news" from Bishop Hogan and now I would like to bring you some "Good News!" from Jesus Christ. I, too, am a "renewed Christian" — one of those known as a Catholic Pentecostal. Since I have accepted Jesus as my Lord and Saviour I have truly shed the "old man" and have been born again in Christ.

Love in Christ,
M. G.

Dear M. G.,

I am very happy that, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, you have opened your heart so totally to Jesus Christ and that the reality of re-birth is yours. So much emphasis has been given in the past to the ex opere operato aspect of the Sacraments (the working of the sign itself) that we neglect the need for openness to the Spirit which is required to benefit by the Sacrament. But I must make a confession — I am still bothered by two things about Pentecostals. I know they are my personal impressions and I know they pertain to only some adherents. But one is the impression that "baptism in the Spirit" is some kind of eighth Sacrament. I find it hard to buy that. The second is the impression given by some Pentecostals that they are "in" people and all the rest are really outside the pale. I know this is strictly a personal feeling and very subjective but it does bother me. I believe Pentecostal-

ism has done immense good, as it obviously has for you. If it does nothing more for the rest of us than raise consciousness about the necessity of our being totally open and receptive to Divine Grace and Presence, it will have become an immense power for good. Thank you again for your letter.

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