



### New Look

New supervising principal Sister Patricia Gause at St. Mary's School in Dansville with three of her pupils who are sporting the new look in uniforms this year. From left, Kim Everman, Doreen Djavaheri, Karen Redding.

## WORD FOR SUNDAY

Father Albert Shamou

Sunday's Readings: (R1) Ex. 17:8-13. (R2) 2 Tm. 3:14-4:2. (R3) Lk. 18:1-8.

In a survey conducted by This Week magazine on "Sermons America Wants to Hear," the number one choice was: "How can I make prayer more effective?" Sunday's readings lend themselves to such a topic. Moses' prayer on the hilltop for Joshua and his fighting forces (R1) certainly show the efficacy of prayer. Even a widow (R3) got what she wanted when she prayed.

The ingredient in each of these instances seemed to be perseverance. The constancy of the dropping water, so goes the adage, weareth a hole in the rock. The constancy does it. A renowned psychologist, who wrote a best-selling book on prayer stated that if prayer is to be an effective force in one's life, it must be made a regular and regulative part of life.

Prayer is not a spare tire to be used only when an emergency arises. One day an extremely enthusiastic tourist, after having viewed some of the works of Rodin, approached the famous sculptor.

"Oh, Mr. Rodin," she fluttered, "is it difficult to sculpture?"

"Not at all, Madam," replied Rodin. "You simply buy a block of marble and chip away what you don't want."

Simple? Yes.

Easy? No.

Prayer is simple—yes. But it is no easy art. It will never be mastered on a hit-and-miss basis. Prayer, like learning, must be a regular part of life. We must be patient with ourselves and carry on even when we don't want to pray and when it doesn't come easily. Like dieting, who likes it? But it works if you keep on it.

No doctor can be expected to help a patient who comes to him only when he feels like it.

Regularity is the first condition for effective prayer.

Another obstacle to effective prayer is our harboring of unkind thoughts and feelings, fears, resentments, hatreds, hostilities,

Too often we want prayer to solve our problems and we seldom realize that we are the problem.

Our Lord, one day, come to a man who had been sick for 38 years. Jesus said to him, "Do you want me to cure you?" Good heavens, how stupid such a question seems to us! Yet Jesus never asked a stupid question in all His life. He always had a good point to make in whatever He said. Jesus was not a veterinarian healing merely broken bodies. He came to make man whole and so holy. "Do you want me to cure you?" The emphasis was on the "you"—not on the sickness. The sickness, as so often is true, was only the symptom. The real malady was in the person. That was why Jesus always demanded faith before working a miracle.

So prayer isn't meant to take care of our problems, but primarily of us who are the underlying causes of all our own problems. We pray to get rid of the problem—drink, trouble at home, a fear, guilt, and so on—but we won't let go of the thoughts, feelings, hates, resentments, causing the problem. We are saying words (which we call praying) and all the while we are throwing psychological roadblocks into God's way, making it impossible for our prayers even to be answered. God can't help, because we really won't let Him. We won't let go of our ways, our thoughts and feelings, especially those against charity.

"Lord, teach us to pray effectively." Sure, but first begin praying regularly and then surrender yourself to God. For prayer is a cup held up to God to be filled, and it cannot be filled unless first it is emptied—emptied of every thought, feeling or action contrary to the law of love of God and of neighbor.

## Free Milk Available To School Children

A free special milk policy for Catholic elementary school children unable to pay the full price has been announced by the Office of General Education. Eligibility will be determined by family size and income.

The policy, sponsored by the Bureau of School Food Management under the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutritional Services, must be in operation in each school by Oct. 31. School officials will use an income scale, and any uncontrollable financial hardship which may affect a family's ability to pay for special milk. Provision is also made for foster children.

Families falling within the income scale are urged to apply by completing application forms sent home in a letter to parents. Individual applications may be submitted any time during the school year.

Each school will designate an official to review applications and determine eligibility. Any dissatisfaction with a ruling by an official may be appealed through a hearing.

The policy also provides that there will be no identification of, or discrimination against, any student unable to pay the full cost of the milk.

## St. Bernard's Announces Change in Degrees

St. Bernard's Seminary is now empowered by law to replace the Bachelor of Divinity degree of all its graduates with the Master of Divinity degree.

The upgrade in degree title began with a unanimous resolution of the seminary faculty on May 6, earlier this year. Official acknowledgement of the faculty action was recently received from the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada and from the Office of Higher Education of the State of New York. The first is an international agency which accredits schools of divinity; the second monitors the Charter which legally recognizes educational institutions of higher learning in New York State.

"The process," he explained, "will be carried out on an individual basis. Within the next two weeks or so, the Academic Office will begin contacting alumni involved in the change. Details of the change will be communicated by mail. Another aspect of this change-over is that our Conferral of Degrees, on Nov. 14, will mark the first time the new degree will be awarded in an academic convocation at this seminary."

In the meantime, another Faculty resolution of May 6 calls for a revamping of the over-all seminary program. Key seminary personnel will spend two semesters on a comprehensive degree plan aimed at better integration of the academic, field education and spiritual development programs. In addition to the present M. Div., St. Bernard's will be offering a second degree program, the M.A. in theology.

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## PCNY Stresses Anti-Abortion Position

In response to various pro-abortion stances taken by other groups, the Priests Councils of New York (PCNY), representing the eight state dioceses, have issued a statement strongly reaffirming its opposition to abortion on demand.

The PCNY declared that it "fully acknowledges the divine right to life that the unborn possess."

It coupled this declaration with a "call for action behalf of social programs in the areas of welfare, social justice, housing, day care and similar works to improve the quality of life for all as an effective alternative to abortion."

Father James Marvin, president of the Rochester Priests' Council was one of eight signatories to the declaration.

### SCOUT DINNER

The St. James Boy Scout Troup #83 will hold a ham dinner, Oct. 18, at the St. James school hall. Tickets may be obtained through the scouts or by calling 482-8427 or 288-8037.

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