



**They Care**

Joseph Mallia and Michele Skotnicki, fourth graders at Annunciation school, show the "We Care" buttons that all the school's children wear in affirmation of their concern for each other, all people, and the world.

Photo by Susan McKinney

**TOWARD TOMORROW**

**Father Henry Atwell**

Confirmation remains somewhat of the orphan of the sacraments. No one seems to know exactly what to do with it.

In the early days of the Christian faith, adults, rather than infants, accounted for the growth of the Church, as on the first Pentecost when three thousand were baptized and received "the gift of the Holy Spirit." Even through the second and third centuries, baptism (with confirmation) was more for adults than for infants.

As a matter of fact, up until just a few years ago, the Catholic rite for baptism was still an adult-oriented rite although in practice it was used far more frequently for infants than for adults. Now we have two rites, one for adults and another for infants.

When second and third generation Christians brought their infants for baptism, the Church wondered what to do about Confirmation, "the gift of the Holy Spirit." Greek Christians decided baptism-confirmation-eucharist were really all one package so they conferred this triple sacramental-initiation upon infants. Latin Christians baptized the infants, delayed eucharist until early childhood and confirmation until early adolescence. Later in church history, some Protestants, as the Baptists, delayed baptism itself until early adolescence and eliminated confirmation.

American Episcopalians have recently proposed the possibility of two confirmations — one that completes the initiatory character of baptism and is therefore not repeatable, another rite that is catechetical in nature, an affirmation and renewal of baptism and may be repeated many times in life. The chief problem for the Episcopalians at the moment is that their experimental Prayer Book contains the rites for these two really quite different events but uses the name 'confirmation' for both of them.

The latest Catholic confirmation rite attempts to combine all these aspects into a once-and-for-all rite. The text makes frequent mention of the "gift" of the Holy Spirit as if it were being given for the first and final time. Yet there is also the re-hewal of baptismal vows and an affirmation of faith.

All this, however, is directed to youngsters about 12 years of age, hardly the time for a life-long commitment. If one of them wanted to be married we'd tell them, "You're not old enough

yet." Yet the marriage commitment is only "until death do us part" whereas the confirmation pledge is for all time and eternity.

Maybe our scholars will some day provide us with a repeatable confirmation, renewable in five year options. Then those who don't like the Church as it is can opt out, but those who choose to stay in can say so clearly rather than just drifting so aimlessly as too many do today.

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**St. John's Home Notes 75th Anniversary**

St. John's Home, 150 Highland Ave., celebrated its 75th anniversary Oct. 23. The founder and first Chairman of the Board of Managers was the Rev. J. F. W. Helmkamp, pastor of Salem Evangelical and Reformed Church. Pastor Helmkamp approached pastors of several German churches and received enthusiastic cooperation.

The home was founded in 1899 to serve elderly German people in the community. The first location was a residence at 547 Lake Ave. which was rented for \$250 per year. Ten residents were received the first year.

Currently St. John's Home offers a wide variety of services to its residents. These include medical, nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy and recreational services.

An ever increasing number of volunteers provides service to the community in the form of a Meals-On-Wheels program, serving over 40 people daily. This is an expansion of the Visiting Nurse Service program. Also added was Respite Care which

**INDIAN DAY**

Seventh graders of St. John of Rochester School in Fairport recently treated the rest of the school to a program on Indians. Exhibits concerned the life, customs and artifacts of 10 tribes, ranging from the northwestern Eskimos to the Cherokees of the southeast.

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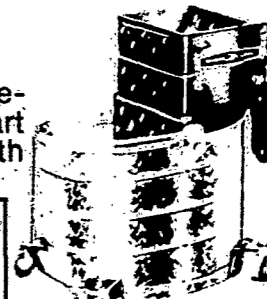
Looking to the future included in the New Health Related

Facility building will be a Day Care Program which will enable older people to come to St. John's during the day but return home at night. Meals, recreation programs and health supervision will be available. A new chapel will be constructed to meet their spiritual needs.

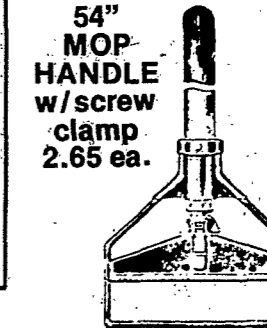
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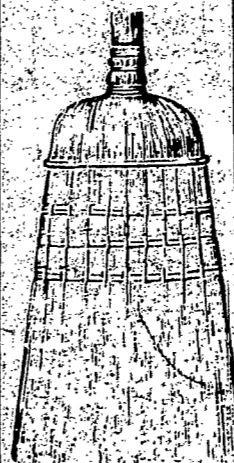


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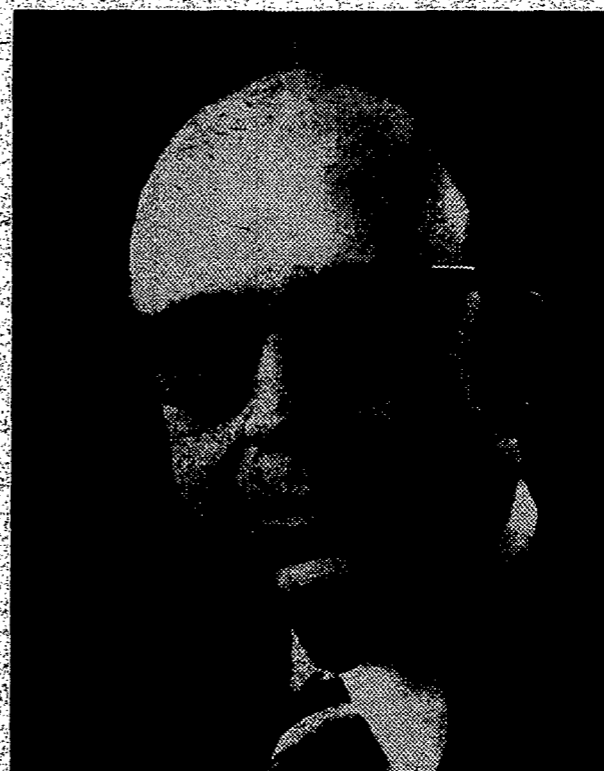
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