

Drive for Needy Gets Good Start

Even before Thanksgiving, contributions to the Courier-Journal Christmas Fund began arriving at the Catholic Charities office which lends hope that thousands of persons throughout the diocese facing a bleak Christmas may instead have a bright day.

"This is the earliest we have ever started the fund," said Anthony J. Costello, Courier-Journal general manager, "and we hope that it will give more people the opportunity to help."

He, also had some advice.

"Please send your contributions early," he asked, "because in the late hours of the Christmas season we incline to become involved in the rush and may forget. We already are into December and the days seem to fly by more quickly from now until Christmas."

The Courier-Journal established its annual Christmas Fund six years to help Catholic Charities in its work of helping the needy. The fund has grown every year, last year reaching nearly \$34,000.

To make the plight of many of our diocesans graphic, the Courier-Journal prints the 100 neediest cases, noting that there are many more who will be in need at Christmas. The cases are true and they come from throughout the diocese.

This year, the Catholic



Charities office will not be able to accommodate clothing, toys or food. Three Rochester parishes have offered facilities for toys and food but they do not have the facilities for clothing. Gifts of food and toys will be accepted at Mount Carmel, 60 Woodward St.; St. Michael's 869 N. Clinton Ave. and Immaculate Conception, 445 S. Plymouth Ave.

Readers may contribute to individual cases listed but because some may receive a great deal of attention and others none, the Catholic Charities must use its discretion and expertise in aiding as many as possible at Christmas time.

All contributions should be sent to:

Courier-Journal
Christmas Fund
Care of Catholic Charities
50 Chestnut St.
Rochester, N.Y. 14604

100 Neediest Cases

41. Lorita has four children: Annie, 13, John, 5, Charles, 10, and Michelle, 8. The family has had a very difficult year with financial problems, illnesses, and special needs for the children. Lorita is alarmed to think of Christmas with the prospect of no money, no toys, even no tree!

42. Anna is only in her sixties. In her younger days, she was in a position to be kind and charitable to everyone, although she never had much money. Today she is so completely exhausted with the financial struggles she had to endure during the past ten years, that it is a horrendous task to cope with daily living. Anna's husband was ill for many years and in a hospital for six years. This, of course, used her little savings. Besides this, her husband objected to her selling her home, and when he finally died last Spring, the property had depreciated to \$2,000. She still owed the county \$950 for ex-

penses incurred during her husband's illness. Fortunately she was able to obtain an apartment in subsidized housing. Moving and other expenses have consumed enough money to furnish her apartment adequately. She can barely meet the necessities of living as she is an S.S.I. recipient, and for two months her S.S.I. income checks have not arrived. Anna is cheerful, does not complain, but is most in need of your help.

43. Jane's husband is an alcoholic. He has lost jobs several times and at present is unemployed. She can't work because of illness. She has been receiving chemotherapy treatments after a cancer operation last year. There are four children in the home, and house payments have not been made for three months. Applications have been made for Social Security disability in late summer and to County Social Services for aid to dependent children

Continued on Page 2



Photo by Anthony J. Costello

Advent Begins

What probably is the largest Advent wreath in the diocese was blessed last Sunday at St. Margaret Mary's Church in Irondequoit as the official Church year began. Father Gary Shaw, assistant pastor, blessed the wreath as members of the John Kuitems family looked on. John made the ring for the Advent wreath.

Vatican: Abortion Out, Alternatives Needed

Vatican City [RNS] — The Vatican, while reaffirming uncompromising opposition to direct abortion under any circumstances whatever, called for widespread social reforms to allow for "honorable" alternatives to abortion.

In a 4,500-word document made public last week, the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith declared:

"Never, under any pretext, may abortion be resorted to, either by a family or by a political authority, as a legitimate means of regulating birth."

The document, called "Declaration of Procured Abortion," and approved by Pope Paul, took note of the fact that "many citizens in pluralistic societies held that abortion was licit" and did not wish to be forced (by Catholic opinion) to follow a course of action they disagreed with.

It also noted that "the crime" of illegal abortion had become "too common" for authorities to punish it every time, and that consequently authorities "often find it wiser to close their eyes" to violation of anti-abortion statutes.

The document insisted, however, that public authorities should be especially concerned about creating the proper social conditions "so that always and everywhere it may be possible to give every child coming into the world a welcome worthy of a human person."

It proposed family-aid plans, increased help for unwed mothers, improved adoption laws "so that there will always be a concrete, honorable, and possible alternative to abortion."

Condemning laws that permit abortions, the Vatican declaration stated that "a Christian may never take part in a propaganda campaign in favor of such laws or vote for them."

Acknowledging that "modern technology makes early abortions more and more easy," the document insisted however that "moral evaluation is in no way modified because of this."

Insisting also that "the first right" of the human person is "the right to life," it said "this right is fundamental. It does not belong to society or public authority to recognize this right for some and not for others — all discrimination is evil, whether it be founded on race, sex, color, or religion."

The declaration maintained that respect for this right to life "is called for from the moment of conception," since, it held, "modern genetic science has confirmed that from the first moment of conception" there was established the pattern of what specific type of living being would be produced.

Even if doubt existed about whether the fertilized egg was a human person, the document added, "it would be, objectively, a grave sin to dare to risk murdering a human being."

The Vatican statement admitted that the problem of abortion arose from the fact that there were many cases in which, by denying abortion, one endangered important values "which sometimes seemed to have priority."

"We do not deny these very great difficulties," it said. "It may be a serious question of health, sometimes of life or death, for the mother; it may be the burden represented by an additional child, especially if there are good reasons to fear that the child will be abnormal or retarded."

"We proclaim only that none of these reasons can ever objectively confer the right to dispose of another person's life, even when that life is only beginning."

Continued on Page 2

Features Inside

The Bishop Sheen Housing Foundation was formed in 1968 to help alleviate the housing problem throughout the diocese. The problem has stayed and so has the foundation. For an up-to-date look at the foundation and its work, see the centerfold.

While the BSHF has had a brief though active history, another diocesan institution, Immaculate Conception parish, is celebrating its 125th anniversary. And they have been 125 busy years. See Pages 14 and 15.

