



Barbara L. Braun

By The Pastoral Center Staff

"A new spirit who came to us bearing gifts signifying the Lord's presence among us — joy, a beauty that was deep and simplicity that was authentic

"I thank God for the blessed memory of her joyous presence among us. And I utter a final blessing over my beloved daughter."

With these words, Bishop Joseph L. Hogan spoke of Barbara L. Braun, who in the brief few months in which she worked in the Diocesan Pastoral Office, before her untimely death in an automobile accident on Dec. 18 of last year, was truly what Bishop Hogan said: a gift of joy, beauty, and simplicity.

She was secretary to the coordinator of educational services of the diocese, Sister Mary James, SSJ.

The daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Ames of Haddon Road, Barbara was married since September 1973 to Stephen M. Braun, an employe in the Quality Control Division of Kodak's Elmgrove Plant. Steve and Barbara lived in Hilton, and Barbara had attended Westridge Grammar School; Hoover Drive Junior High; and Olympia High School, from which she graduated in 1972.

It would be late for an obituary, but this is not an obituary. Barbara's family — both of blood and her family at the Pastoral Center simply want to share with Courier readers the remarkable meaning of this gracious and anonymous life. In his homily at the funeral Mass of the Resurrection, at St. Theodore's, Bishop Hogan spoke of the two great temptations in life as boredom and bitterness. We at the Pastoral Center know that however hard the reader tries, he or she will not be able to feel the effect, both sorrow and joy, that we who knew Barbara feel. But, we want to share with you the reality that for a brief moment we knew one who was without bitterness and whose vivacious joy-in-living precluded boredom.

And we want to share with you, who like us will die, the tremendous renewal of hope in the Resurrection which we have experienced in the life and death of this remarkable young woman. We make ours (and we invite you to do the same) Bishop Hogan's words: "Today we share a common sorrow, yet we share a celebration even daring to sing an Alleluia in defiance of what a narrow vision might label tragic and untimely. For the vision of faith assures us that for Barbara there is the beginning of joy eternal."

Stephen M. Braun is especially concerned to find the words to thank all those who have been so good and sensitive to him and to the two families. And he asks that you pray for "Barb" and for him.

Committee Sees Need Of St. Mary's OB Unit

The Monroe County Legislature's social services committee has approved unanimously a resolution urging the Genesee Region Health Planning Council to consider carefully all alternatives before recommending the closing of the obstetrics unit at St. Mary's Hospital.

Chairman James Breese, introducing the resolution, said that

the closing of the maternity section, which serves a broad area of western Monroe County and the inner city, would be a backward move. Breese also pointed out that St. Mary's is the only Catholic hospital in the area and, as such, provides a unique moral and religious environment. Additionally, the Republican legislator said, the hospital's obstetrics unit has one of the lowest per patient rates in Monroe County.

Pope Leads Ash Wednesday Special Mass

Vatican City [RNS] — Pope Paul celebrated a special evening Mass in St. Peter's Basilica on Ash Wednesday to mark the opening of the traditional penitential season of Lent.

At the ceremony in St. Peter's Pope Paul knelt and received ashes from Cardinal Paolo Marella, archpriest of the Basilica. Then the pontiff, in turn, administered ashes to Cardinal Marella and the other cardinals and bishops in attendance.

Priests then took over and performed the ritual for the thousands of pilgrims in the congregation.

Earlier in the day, at his customary midweekly general audience, Pope Paul remarked that the Ash Wednesday

ceremonial was intended to recall "the fragile character of human life and the fact of death," which, he said, is a penalty of sin.

"Saint Paul tells us," he said, "that death entered the world through sin. What then is sin? Sin is the conflict of our will with the will of God. It is an action seen in its religious dimension. Sin is a voluntary and conscious offense against God, a violation of the

relationship between ourselves and God's laws."

The pontiff reminded his listeners that Christian teaching calls for repentance for sin, and that the Lenten season, which focuses on repentance, is a preparation for celebration of the Paschal mystery of the resurrection, itself a symbol of the victory over death and therefore over sin.

Life, Liberty and Law Nancy Murphy

Handicapped. When a child is handicapped

Our initial response is one of rejection. We violently reject the doctor's harsh words, the defect and the reality. We turn away. It didn't happen. No. In our frantic effort to defy, to reverse a tragedy, we turn our senses off and hide in a forest of questions. Ultimately, in those first terrifying moments we reject even the baby himself.

Extent, fault, blame, treatment, severity, truth. None of them matters at first. And then our senses return, one by one. The pain through the numbness. The words through the haze. The realization that we have rejected our own flesh, and the resultant guilt. Shame. Horror. Fear. Weakness. The gamut of human emotions in the span of hours. Exhaustion.

That's the normal sequence of events. It is a natural response I think. As the body rejects grafts and/or transplants, perhaps the psyche rejects the sudden horror of a severe shock. The single unnecessary element is a continuance of guilt, a guilt which decreases as the realization of the normalcy of our response becomes clearer.

And then we look for help.

After all, giving birth is our only contribution to immortality. It is an extension of ourselves. And when our newborn is in some major way imperfect, he and his mother and father need help. In years gone by, parents were told to go home. Forget the baby. They were urged to place him immediately in an institution and tell others that the baby had died. But now parents can get the support and the advice they need. And the handicapped youngsters can experience the "one to one" teaching ratio they frequently require.

It is only the community which still holds back. We all urge the state, we all urge the county. But as a community we all hold back.

Some defects bring early death to the infant. Some shorten his life after allowing him to live a number of years. Some have little or no effect on longevity, but burden him to a degree with perhaps an increasing severity all his life. Some are prevalent in a particular race, while others are

universal. But each takes its own toll of time, effort, research, cost and emotion. What life doesn't?

But the community's response is narrow. Pity. Fear. Ignorance. And rejection.

Yet each of us, each person, regardless of the distance or the proximity or normalcy, is distinctly human. And each has a value. A worth. This we tend to overlook in our golden age of instant pleasure and instant convenience. We tend to ignore the innate dignity of humanity. We try to replace it with comforting word concepts. Obsessed as we are with definitions and justifications, with the plastic perfection of man and the novelties of self-identification, we have wasted precious time, lives, energy and ego . . . and all we have to show for it is a sterile set of wordy social pacifiers. We have accomplished so little. And the potential is so vast.

I believe a community can accept defective humanity. There is neither need nor justification to destroy people before birth. We can help. We have much more to share than pity and a deliberate self-protective ignorance.

With the goal of knowledgeable understanding, our school systems could investigate the possibilities of courses concerned with the realities of defects. These courses would not be researched by organizations which either encourage or would profit from the destruction (the prevention) of defective births, but by those rare individuals who respond to the needs of others; those involved in the pioneering of new approaches toward the training of the handicapped; those involved in art, music, design, and therapy. Parents, both biological and adoptive, of handicapped children would be invaluable to such courses. And the handicapped themselves could contribute significant insight.

New careers and new ideas would evolve. The imperfect child would be admitted to the imperfect world. He would be encouraged to develop his potential. His "strange" ways would be overlooked. And some of the cruelty of humanity would begin to fade.

The clumsy gait, the spastic movements, the wheelchairs and the throaty sounds, the special PKU diets and the insulin needles . . . these could become familiar to each of us.

Are we so lacking in human response that we will condone the deliberate destruction of human life on the pretext that some are less perfect than we see ourselves seem to be? Or is it we who are imperfect and handicapped . . . destroying or isolating those among us whose defects are more visible and less fashionable than ours?

We can do so much. Take a good look.

Corning Church Conducting Food Drive

Corning — St. Patrick's Parish Human Development Committee will sponsor a "Parish Pantry" during February.

Communicants are asked to bring canned goods to the Masses or drop off supplies at the rectory.

The food will be used for the benefit of Corning area people in a time of emergency.

Deaths

Matilda Loree

Hornell — The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Matilda Loree on Feb. 4, 1975, in St. Ignatius Church. Mrs. Loree died Feb. 1 in St. James Mercy Hospital.

She was an aunt of Father William J. Riefer, retired pastor of St. Joseph's, Wayland, and a sister of the late Father Charles P. Riefer, who was pastor of Sacred Heart, Perkinsville.

Mrs. Loree, wife of Leon M. Loree of Crosby Street, was a native and lifelong resident of Hornell and a member of St. Ignatius parish, its Rosary-Altar Society and the Ladies of Columbus.

Her pastor, Father Leo J. Mans, concelebrated the funeral Mass with Father William V. Spilly. Fathers Herbert Sturmer and Otto Vogt were present in the sanctuary.

Survivors besides Mr. Loree are three sons, John P. of Ypsilanti, Mich.; Philip J. of Port Washington and William C. of North Hornell; five grandchildren, two sisters, Miss Katherine Riefer and Miss Mary Riefer of Hornell, and a brother, Leo Riefer of Canandaigua.

Sr. Secunda

Sister Mary Secunda, SSND, a native of Rochester who taught in several local schools, died Feb. 9, 1975 in Wilton, Conn., at the age of 82 and in the 59th year of her profession. The funeral was conducted in Wilton last Wednesday.

Sister Secunda, the former Edna Zeitvogel of Holy Redeemer parish, began her teaching career with 14 years as a missionary to Puerto Rico. She came home to teach at Holy Family, then at St. Boniface, St. Philip Neri and Holy Ghost schools. She retired in 1971 to the School Sisters of Notre Dame Motherhouse in Wilton.

Survivors are a brother, Frank Zeitvogel of Holley, and several nieces, nephews, grandnieces and grandnephews.

WANTED! STAMPS and COINS John C. Percoll ESTATES APPRAISED

Irish-American Dancing Association of Rochester FIRST GET-TOGETHER and DANCE Saturday, February 22, 1975

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