



**Marriage Encounter Mass**

Father Robert Collins, director of the Office of Family Life, distributes Holy Communion during a Mass which highlighted the recent Unit 111 Marriage Encounter Convention, held at Auburn Community College. Bishop Joseph L. Hogan was the principal concelebrant for the Mass which drew more than 200 couples.

**St. John's Church Awaits A 'Glorious Easter Day'**

By DICK BAUMBACH  
Elmira Area Correspondent  
734-1982

Elmira — It appears that Easter Sunday will be a glorious day at St. John the Baptist Church here. That's the day church officials are hoping will be the re-opening of the building which was heavily damaged in a fire almost 15 months ago.

It was during the early morning hours of Dec. 27 when an Elmira police officer making his routine patrol discovered smoke pouring from the church's steeple.

The resulting blaze was one of the biggest ever witnessed in the city and many off-duty firemen were called back to their fire fighting assignments during the height of the fire.

The fire was later termed an arson case and a person was later charged and convicted of arson. He is currently serving a sentence at the Attica Correctional Facility.

Except for the walls, interior of the building was almost totally destroyed.

It took several months before final approval was given by Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, head of the Rochester Diocese, to rebuild the church.

Since the go-ahead for the rebuilding, one of the prime movers of the reconstruction

process has been Edward Ungate, chairman of the parish's building committee.

Ungate said, "We are expecting to have our first Mass celebrated in the church on Easter Sunday. We're now getting to the stage where the odd and end items are coming together."

Ungate said the interior of the church will look different to worshippers because "there were several things we had to do to conform with both liturgical changes as well as new building and fire code requirements."

Some of the changes include removal of the balcony. "The cost would have been another \$7,000 to \$8,000 to keep the balcony and we have always been trying to cut costs so we figured this was one way to do it."

One new feature required by the fire code is a fire detection and security system. That system would have definitely been a help in minimizing the damage from the 1973 fire, church officials said.

One quirk that could be experienced with the new fire detection system, Ungate said, is the effect the smoke of the incense the priests use might have on the smoke detection part of the system.

"We've been told the system is ultra-sensitive and right now we

don't know if the smoke from the incense is going to cause the system to come on. We are trying to determine the effect right now, but this is one of the small problems we still have to work out," Ungate said.

Concerning the liturgical changes, the biggest is that there will no longer be an altar rail and the altar will be a little higher than it was prior to the fire.

Another change will be in the pews. They will be open ended allowing easier access. Before the fire the church had pews which had small sides on either end.

Ungate also said there will be more oak decorations in the church. "We found after the fire that in some areas the wood had been painted over and when we scraped away all the paint we found beautiful oak so we decided to leave it in its natural state."

The cost of the massive project is in the neighborhood of \$400,000, but final cost figures have not been completed.

"We tried to stay as close to the budget as possible, but some items, like the fire detection and security system were not covered by the fire insurance since we didn't have it before the fire, so that became an added expense. However, for the most part we were able to cut corners to try and make things balance out," Ungate said.

**Horseheads Parish May Build Church**

By DICK BAUMBACH  
Elmira Area Correspondent  
734-1982

Horseheads — A feasibility committee at St. Mary Our Mother Church has recommended that a new church be built to accommodate the 1,600 parishioners at the parish, but the committee also acknowledged that because of economic conditions it would be three to five years before a new church could be constructed.

Father Bartholomew O'Brien, pastor of the church, said he was happy with the "new decision making process within the Church today which allows the parishioners to have a voice in what should happen to their parish."

The recommendation of the feasibility committee will be presented to Bishop Joseph L. Hogan for his approval.

No exact location for the new church has been established, but the consensus of the committee

is that it will be located between the rectory and the school on a plot of land owned by the church. The site's main boundary is Westinghouse Road.

The committee also is now discussing the financial arrangements to get the church built within the three to five year period.

**DAY OF PRAYER**

Church Women United in the 17-church area covered by the Southeast Ecumenical Ministry (SEM) will note World Day of Prayer Friday, March 7, with services at Blessed Sacrament Church at 1 p.m. The Rev. Robert Gillespie, director of SEM, will speak. Mrs. Cynthia White, of the Church of the Incarnate Word, will lead the rites, and children of Blessed Sacrament School will sing. Nursery services are available. Tea and coffee will be served after the observance.

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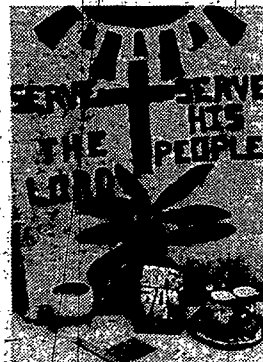
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**Blue Army Sets Children's Day**

The Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima has asked pastors to delegate parishioners to a committee arranging a special program for all school children of the diocese. The committee's first meeting will be April 9 at Holy Rosary School.

The "Children's Day with Mary" has been scheduled for May 25, at St. Pius X, Gates. The speaker will be Natalie Martha Loya of Yonkers, who has devoted 20 years to the dissemination of Our Lady's Fatima message on peace and the conversion of Russia.

Miss Loya is a graduate of Seton Hill College in Greensburg, Pa. She was a research chemist, rising in her profession, when she decided to dedicate herself to the promotion of the Blue Army. Of Hungarian descent, she is a Byzantine Rite Catholic, and she

sees the Byzantine Rite as a bridge between Rome and Russia.

Her current project is to reach as many children as possible. She will be in Rochester May 19-30 to give her slide lecture at schools or before any church groups interested. Anyone wishing to schedule a lecture should contact Mary Kelly at 586-1664.

**MOS GIRLS CYO CHAMPS**

Mother of Sorrows girls' elementary basketball team defeated St. James girls 16-14 in the finals of the Diocesan Tournament Sunday, Feb. 9, at St. John Fisher College. Mother of Sorrows ended CYO season play in first place, with a 7-1 record, in addition to being tournament champions. High scorer for MOS in the tournament final was Kathy Boughton, with 11 points. Cindy Witner led St. James with 7 points.

**Sharing Supper Set in Naples**

Naples — A meager meal of bread and soup will be offered at the annual Sharing Supper to be held Mar. 5 at St. Januarius. "It makes us aware of the advantages, the abundance of food we very often take for granted," said William Kanaley, president of the parish council.

The theme of the annual gathering is World Hunger.

During the meal, a film strip depicting the poverty and deprivation throughout the world will be shown. Mass will follow.

Janet Schwartz is in charge of the supper with her chef husband doing the cooking. Father Robert Smith, pastor, said "The Sharing Supper has always been well attended. It leaves us with a deep sense of humility, compassion and appreciation."