

Missions in Our Backyards

By BONITA BALDWIN

Eleven out of 12 counties in the diocese are largely rural. "It's important to include this area as part of mission," Sister Alice McLaughlin, assigned to Human Development in Yates, Ontario, and Seneca counties, said in a telephone conversation last week.

In a separate conversation, an OHD staff person in Wayne County, Father George Wiant, added, "Rural U.S. has its own particular needs and poverty. It is not necessarily a farming population... it is very complex."

Rural Human Development has been associated with the Diocesan Missions Office since its early days as the secular mission. The office still awards the work \$10,000 yearly which, according to Judy Wehrin, communications coordinator for OHD, is used for emergency needs and small grants to self-help groups. Such work is supported by an annual collection which this year will be May 17-18.

Rural staff which includes, besides Sister Alice and Father Wiant, Sister Mary Kruckow in Steuben County and Father George Gauthier in Livingston County, works closely with community groups in their territories. Sister Alice explained that she is an advocate for those in need of medical care but have no money in her positions as chairperson of the Yates County Comprehensive Health Committee, and chairperson of the board of directors of the Rush-

ville Clinic. In addition she functions as "an advocate for the poor against bureaucracy" as individual needs arise.

One day a month Sister works at the Middlesex Friendship House, which makes available used clothes, counseling, and legal aid for the poor. She claimed that this activity keeps her in touch with people in need.

Sister Mary Kruckow explained in another telephone interview that she works with three community centers geared to meet emergency needs: GARB in Hornell, Wayland Mission Council, and the Addison Service Center. She aids Serenity Farms, a home for recuperating alcoholics, with finances and food when possible. Sister Mary said that she is involved with The Loving Congregations, a group of churches assisting the elderly, and with Steuben County Churchmen Against Poverty, for which she is a board member.

Father Wiant often works through community groups and low-income individuals to meet the needs of people in Wayne County. He is an officer for Wayne Housing Opportunity, Inc., which seeks to provide low-income housing. Two thirds of all substandard housing is found in rural areas, he said. A community self-help center in Lyons is being organized to deal with problems of food, clothing, and shelter and to provide an emergency apartment for burn-outs.

Father Wiant is on the board of the Legal Aid Society in Wayne County, which provides a voice for the poor, and is active in the Clyde Federal Credit Union, a low-income credit union. He maintains a working relationship with Community Action Self-Help Housing and serves on the advisory board for Special Migrant Program Cooperative Extension out of Cornell University which organized an interstate nutrition aid program, the first of its kind.

Livingston County staffer Father George Gauthier is only part-time. He is associate pastor of St. Patrick's in Mt. Morris. Father Gauthier is involved in personal assistance and emergency needs.

Forming, training, and strengthening parish human development committees is an important role of rural staff. Father Wiant explained that one parish human development committee cannot correct rural problems, especially the great housing problem, but that through raising awareness and joining forces a great deal can be accomplished eventually. He said that they are still in the foundation stage.

Sister Alice McLaughlin named parish human development training as her first priority. "Working ourselves out of a job, getting the nonpoor and the poor to talk and to share, is the whole point," she said. Sister Mary Kruckow added that she believes their work has been an awakening presence that is involving others in helping their neighbors.

Father Koester Ordination Set

Continued from Page 1

diocese, and he has worked on the chaplain's staff at Monroe Community Hospital. He has been an advisor for Explorer Post 509 and has coordinated Boy Scout, Retreat programs throughout the diocese. He was also the director of the boy's season at Camp Stella Maris in 1972, having served on the staff since 1970. He served as a deacon in Newark, Clyde and Savannah.

He completed his Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) at the Pacific Medical Center in San Francisco, Calif.

For the past year he has been the deacon intern at St. Paul of the Cross Parish in Honeoye Falls. Two Masses of thanksgiving will be celebrated at St. Paul of the Cross Church on Sunday, April 27 at 10:30 a.m. and 12:15 p.m.

Students Help Others

Dansville — Confirmation exercises were held at St. Mary's recently and students in the class carried out an "action for others" project recently.

Father Bill Darling, assistant pastor, and director of the Confirmation Class said, "The enthusiasm of these young people to help others is truly impressive. Because it is a Christian call to serve others, this project is an important part of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation."

More than 50 students in the class canvassed door-to-door in the village distributing fire protection labels. The bright red stickers are designed to aid volunteers in locating bedrooms of children and elderly people in case of house fire. More than 6,000 of the self-adhesive squares provided by the Dansville Moose Club were distributed.

The idea for the service project came from St. Mary's Human Development Committee. Fire Chief David Harter explained to the ninth grade students what would be involved in the distribution and the importance of the sticker in effective fire protection. The class then named a committee comprising Bill Purdy, Luanne McGovern, Angie Heimbach, Judy Rauber and Rhonda Burger to work with Jim Sauerbier and Dan Rauber in planning the street by street canvass.

WATCH OUT FOR SOL

The sun is a very fine fellow in small doses. Too much could lead to skin cancer, says the American Cancer Society. Take precaution while in the sun; use lotions, wide hats and umbrellas. See your physician promptly when a sore does not heal.

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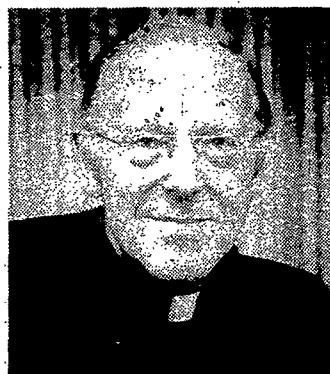
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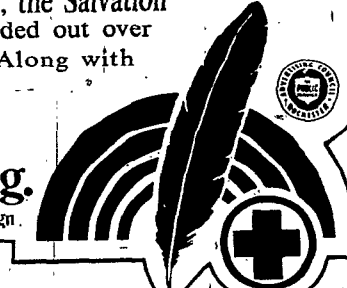
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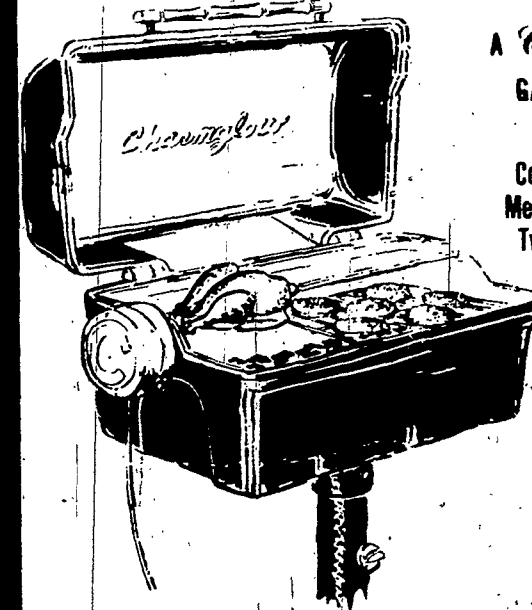


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