

Explore Regional Sharing, Center City Parishes Urged

By BONITA BALDWIN

The center city parishes most needing social ministry are St. Bridget's, Mt. Carmel, Immaculate Conception and St. Lucy's, according to a report by the Office of Human Development (OHD).

Sister Grace Miller of the OHD, who has studied the Council of Inner-City Parishes territory for the past three years, presented statistics May 22 at Immaculate Conception showing the human needs of the CICIP area. The meeting was the third in a series of four.

The study recommends that

parishes explore ways of sharing talents and resources on a regional basis and states that evangelization cannot be delayed until human needs are met, but must be an integral part of the center city ministry when the CICIP ends June 30.

Stronger areas on the fringe of the CICIP were urged to make careful plans to help their neighborhoods avoid the most harmful patterns that have developed in the core. The human needs study, based on 1970 census data and examining socioeconomic needs, housing conditions, and family stability patterns, showed the rim of St. Michael, Holy Redeemer,

and St. Francis Xavier as the strongest areas.

Socio-economic needs, figured from education, occupation, and income levels, are greater in the CICIP area than in the city generally or in the county, according to the study. In the CICIP area 44 per cent of the population 25 years old and older have an education of 8th grade or less. The city percentage, minus the CICIP area, is 29.6 per cent and the suburbs 14.4 per cent.

The study did note, however, a strong contrast between the inner city east and west of the river. On the west side the Third Ward has a fairly high level of education, which may be the separating factor, between the two sides.

Employed, unskilled workers comprise 27.4 per cent of the inner city population 16 and over. The corresponding percentages for the city and County are 16.3 and 10.5 respectively. American-born and immigrant whites tend to have skilled jobs even if their level of education is low, the study said, while blacks and Spanish-speaking workers hold unskilled jobs. The study concluded that minorities need access to skilled trades and that adult education should be a priority in innercity work.

The yearly income is below \$4,000 for 19.8 per cent of the innercity families, compared with 4.2 in the suburbs and 11.4 in the city.

On housing needs, it was reported that the innercity is more overcrowded than either the city or the suburbs, possibly due to urban renewal projects. The areas most overcrowded are also those with the highest percentage of children 14 and under. The CICIP region has the highest percentage of vacant houses, making demolition of these houses, fire and safety hazards, a priority.


Home ownership, maintenance, and rehabilitation programs are important in St. Michael's and St. Francis Xavier parishes where deterioration may possibly still be checked. Father Paul Brennan, pastor of Immaculate Conception, said he thinks the only solution is economic integration of the neighborhoods.

Innercity families, confronted with the tensions of poverty and poor housing, show patterns of instability, according to the study. Nearly three fourths of children under 18 in the innercity do not live with both parents. Three fourths of the poverty level families are single parent families. The innercity has a higher percentage both of unemployed males 16 and over and divorced and separated females 14 and over when compared with the city and suburbs.

The study recommended woman-to-woman programs, family education programs, adequate day care facilities, a form of parents without partners, and skill development programs to meet the needs of these families. A regional approach to employment searches also was suggested.

The final study in the series will be presented June 23 at St. Michael's parish at 7:30 p.m.

Life, Liberty and Law



Nancy Murphy

It was the feast day of a third century saint. The feast day of St. Valentine, Friday, Feb. 14, 1975. Judge James P. McGuire delivered his charge to the Edelin jury, a charge that was a masterpiece of tact and diplomacy designed perhaps to avert possible mistrial proceedings.

It was 10:15 a.m. The courtroom doors were locked as the last empty seat was filled.

Neglecting the traditional expression of gratitude to a tired jury, the judge began his difficult task. "It is your responsibility and yours alone to determine the facts in this case." And it was his duty he said to determine and interpret the law. The jury was not to make judgements of the law. They were simply to apply it.

Addressing himself to the 1973 Supreme Court abortion decision (Roe vs. Wade) Judge McGuire said, "Whether you like that decision or not, whether you approve or disapprove, you must accept it as the law of the land." The decision to abort a fetus must rest, he said, with the judgement of the physician. In order to find Dr. Edelin guilty of manslaughter the jurors would have to find him guilty of "more than mere negligence. You must find him guilty of wanton and reckless behavior in the death of a person."

They would have to find that the deceased was a person under the law, "which generally means after birth. A fetus is not a person under the law, and is not a subject for manslaughter."

At this, there were audible sighs of relief from the Edelin supporters in the room. Moments later however Judge McGuire added, "a person must be born or in the process of being born."

"You are to be the sole judges of the credibility of each witness. You may accept all of a person's testimony, part of it, or none of it. A witness's demeanor, his choice of words and his manner of presentation may be taken into account in evaluating his credibility."

The defendant was to be presumed innocent until and unless he was proven to be otherwise. And to convict him, the jury would have to believe beyond all reasonable doubt that

he was guilty. "The burden of proof rests with the prosecution."

There were seven hours of deliberation.

Returning to the courtroom Saturday afternoon, a nervous jury foreman Vincent B. Shea answered the time-honored question, "How say you, Mr. Foreman?"

"Guilty!"

That one word loosed an avalanche of protest. There were telephoned threats to the jurors' families. Immediate outrage from abortionist physicians. "I do not think this jury was fair," said a bitter and tired Dr. Edelin. "I do not think it was possible to get a fair jury in Suffolk County. A witch-hunt. I was convicted because I was not tried by a jury of my peers. They (the jury) were out to get a black doctor!"

"Medical World Stunned" headlined the Boston Herald American; while the American Medical Association pledged their support and admiration for Edelin.

"A reflection of the angry pressures of the anti-abortion forces (and) the militant 'right to life' groups" said the Medical Tribune. 225 members of the Association of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics meeting in New Orleans that weekend issued a statement of strong support for the convicted doctor: "In our diverse (pluralistic) society we must guard against vocal minorities imposing their ethical positions!"

United Press International: "A witch-hunt!" The Washington Post: "Something out of the (Catholic) Middle Ages." "A Black man tried by white Catholics" was the position taken by the Detroit Free Press.

"The verdict went against the weight of the evidence" said Planned Parenthood.

"Guilty," said the jury. "We asked ourselves did the doctor owe this baby an obligation although granted he was doing a (legal) abortion? And the answer we came to was yes, that under his oath as a doctor he owed it to that baby to do more to preserve its life. He held in his hand an individual human life, separate from the mother."

"Everyone in the room made up his mind that the fetus was a person. He had breathed air."

In a court of law, Boston Massachusetts, February 15 1975 Kenneth C. Edelin MD was found guilty of manslaughter in the death of a person.

Documentation sources available on request.

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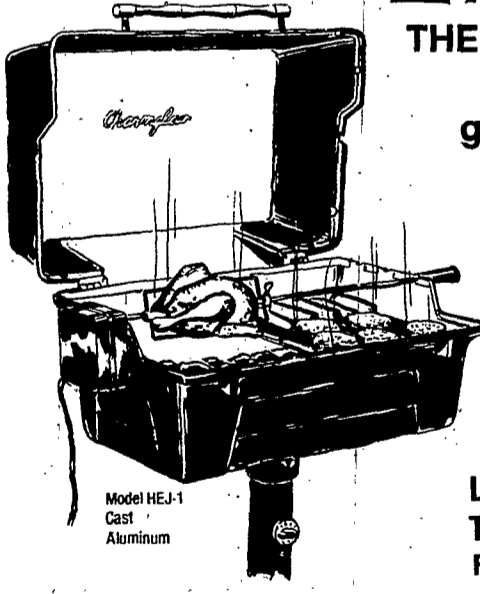
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