

# What's Coming Down in the Inner City?

By CARMEN VIGLUCCI

"It looks like we'll be sending helicopters to transport Catholics out of the inner city."

This was said in obvious jest by a diocesan official at the time of the announcing of the collapse of the Council of Inner City Parishes (CICP) in early May. Appropriate in that it was uttered at the time of the evacuation of Saigon, it nonetheless was facetious in intent as the Church of Rochester is indeed not pulling out of the center city but searching diligently for ways to improve its ministry there.

Still the remark had some grim humor. This year has seen:

\*The collapse of the CICP school system.

\*The end of the CICP itself.

\*The closing of St. Lucy's parish and with it the transfer of the only black pastor in the diocese, Father Stanley Farier, who will be returning to his Divine Word order.

\*The transfer of veteran inner city pastors, such as Father Joseph Beatini, 21 years at St. Francis Xavier and Father Raymond Booth, Mount Carmel co-pastor for five years, and a prime mover in the CICP.

Add to this the retirement of Holy Redeemer's Msgr. Joseph E. Vogt and the transfer of his associate pastor, Father Paul Schnacky and the situation could provoke gallops humor.

But in actuality such reasoning is absurd. The diocese is looking for new and hopefully more meaningful ways of serving inner city people. The financial collapse of the school system which provided the most effective work as well as the most striking example of Church in-

This is the first of a series of articles in the Courier-Journal which will explore the situation in the inner city of Rochester. The articles will explain what has happened and why, what directions the Church will be moving toward, and how the center city problem has application throughout the diocese.

## Special Report

volvement in the core city has created a major problem but the diocese hopes to produce even more effective and appropriate ministries and make them affordable.

The general effect of the schools' closings is obvious but there some other, more subtle disadvantages. For instance, 43 fulltime people will be leaving the inner city with the closing of the schools there. This number includes 23 Sisters from three orders — Sisters of Mercy, School Sisters of Notre Dame and the Sisters of St. Joseph.

Their teaching capability will be missed but even more telling will be the loss of their inner city knowledge. The Sisters must apply early for September assignments so cannot wait for developments to provide then with center city possibilities. Likewise lay teachers must begin looking for work now.

Time will tell how serious such losses are. Obviously diocesan officials feel that new approaches are needed in inner city ministry. Some of this sentiment may have grown from a special study conducted by the Office of Human Development for the CICP and released in April just before the sudden collapse of the CICP. Using material gleaned

from official parish figures, the U.S. Census, — a 25-page questionnaire filled out by inner city parishes, calls to rectories and a card-by-card study of parish membership, the survey revealed statistics suggesting a new look at inner city ministries, with or without CICP.

For instance, it showed that "the falloff in Mass attendance seems to be accelerating," and that there is a downward trend in baptisms, marriages and funerals that is "dropping faster than the rate of Mass attendance." It alludes to these findings in a later section, Parish Personnel, where it concludes, "in the face of drastic decline in sacramental and worship ministries for which the priests are trained, questions should be raised about the fact that they constitute 67 per cent of all staff in CICP parishes. Trained fulltime personnel in religious education comprise only 12 per cent of the staff of parishes. It seems that they are under-represented in light of the new and different demand in regard to educational ministry."

Anyone startled by such implications may be even more shaken by the study's look at "buildings" which notes that "four of the CICP churches were built in the 19th Century. Buildings are too large for congregations presently worshipping in them." The section concludes that "projections should be made into the future about the necessity and upkeep of the church buildings."

Obviously the face of the Church, because of circumstances, already has changed in the center city. It is equally obvious that further changes are coming and that they must be the fruit of careful and imaginative planning.

To date, the most important move in the way of new personnel has been the appointment of Msgr. George Cocuzzi to the new post of vicar for Urban Ministry.

In announcing the appointment, Bishop Joseph L. Hogan listed the following duties and responsibilities:

"1. To provide decisive supportive assistance to the Central City parishes in their efforts to create the serving-Church.

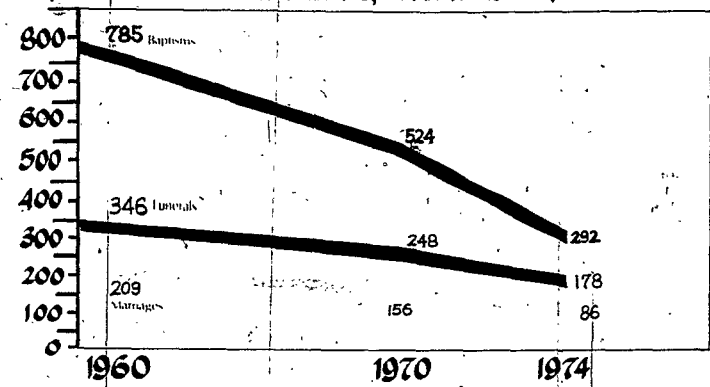
"2. To encourage new forms of ministry based on realistic perception of the problems and opportunities for ministry and to try to help the new forms work more closely with the more traditional forms of ministry.

"3. To be the spokesman of Bishop Hogan in regard to speaking out on concerns of the Church in the Central City area."

The choice of Msgr. Cocuzzi for the job is in itself indicative of high diocesan priority for inner city work. A doctor of canon law, he has served as chancellor of the diocese, pastor of Holy Family Church, and has just completed seven months working at the National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs in Washington.

The appointment is not an isolated one. The diocese has been searching for new personnel for inner city Rochester and has instituted some new requirements. For instance, priests applying for urban ministry posts

CI-CP PARISHES BAPTISMS, MARRIAGES, FUNERALS  
BAUTISMOS, MATRIMONIOS, FUNERALES



Graph prepared by Office of Human Development shows decline in reception of sacraments by members of inner city parishes.

should have "ability to relate to Spanish-speaking if assigned to Spanish-speaking parish ability to work with and minister to blacks... ability to work in an unstructured situation."

As for the attitudes of such applicants, there must "be openness to adaptive ministries... openness to pastoral team approaches... willingness to cooperate across the center city and... openness to coordinated ministerial planning."

There are other requirements and expectations, of course, but the ones cited are tailored to a new approach to inner city ministry.

In announcing the appointment of Father William J. Cosgrove, as pastor of St. Francis Xavier, the diocese referred to his knowledge of the Italian language. It also took care to point out that Father Edward

Golden of the Spanish Apostolate and Mexican missionary, Sister Felicitas will continue their work with the Spanish-speaking of the parish and that Sister Betty Mulcahy would continue as pastoral assistant. Although not characterized as such this setup could be described as team ministry, just one of the approaches being "considered for the inner city."

The schools are gone but the children are there. The CICP structure is gone but the people are there. Ergo the Church must be there. Everyone concerned from Bishop Hogan on down is aware of this so obviously there will be action. It may come in any or many of new directions — evangelization, the mission approach, and others are ideas awaiting nuts and bolts. There is work to be done. Call off the helicopters.

**ALL IN THE FAMILY**

Sarah Child

For years I've loved browsing through those woman's magazines that you throw in your shopping cart at the last minute at the checkout. What used to cost 15 cents now requires 35 cents but I've always thought it worth it.

Both Family Circle and Woman's Day are chock full of recipes, articles on interior decorating, advice on how to keep both you and your family physically and mentally healthy plus news of the latest fashions among other things.

Slick colorful pages, enticing advertisements and lead paragraphs that stop you from turning the page have worked their magic on me month after month.

How to be a better wife, a friendlier mother, a more liberated woman — and countless variations on these themes — comprise the contents.

Lately, however, I've discovered that perhaps some of the luster is wearing off. I've become something of a skeptic.

Take the article in the May issue on using bedspreads to decorate both you and your house. "Make this charming 'at-home' dress with one sheet," instructs the bubbling copy and make a matching bedspread with the other. Then invite your friends to your bedroom for tea so they can

appreciate the co-ordinated look." This seems a bit much since I have trouble avoiding looking like an unmade bed even when I'm not wearing a sheet.

In the same issue is a how-to article on building your own 22-foot, twin-hull deck boat for \$713. Boat enthusiasts should be warned not to rush out and buy plywood, however, because in the fine print further down the article says that a few amenities might push the price up to \$4,500 and the cost of the motor is even more.

An advertisement for United Van Lines headlines its copy with this grabber: "All the 'makings' for an unforgettable move."

We had an unforgettable move once—three years ago. We moved exactly one mile and ended up with a dent in the top of our cherry Queen Anne dining room table, a smashed dresser drawer and discovered a fire hydrant installed smack in the middle of the new driveway. I don't need any more unforgettable moves.

And then there was the recipe I clipped for "the best chocolate cake ever" back in February. I don't normally use recipes from magazines or newspapers, preferring to try new dishes at friends' homes and then beg for the instructions.

But since we have four chocolate cake freaks at our house I decided to take the plunge this once. After using a full pound of butter, a pint of sour cream, a cup of walnuts, baking chocolate and a host of ingredients I do not normally stock, I estimated the cost at \$7.60. The kids said it was almost as good as Sara Lee's.

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