

What's Coming Down

In the Inner City?

Father Schnacky Sizes Up Decade at Holy Redeemer

By CARMEN VIGLUCCI

Although expressed from his new vantage point as pastor of St. Patrick's in rural Cato, Father Paul R. Schnacky's view of inner city Rochester and its problems is seasoned by 10 years spent at Holy Redeemer Church where he was associate pastor until late June.

Although anxious to assume his new duties, Father Schnacky admits to the urge to look back "before I close the book on 10 years which I loved very much."

He feels his knowledge of the center city is valid because "it was gained from experience in its streets, in its neighborhoods."

He prefers to speak of the strengths of the Church as he mentally scans the past decade, all of which he spent at Holy Redeemer.

"First of all, there is the great confidence the inner city people have in the Church and its personnel. I attribute that to all the priests and nuns who went before us and also to the fact that we were visible as priests and as nuns."

"I remember the little kids who would ask, 'Where is your church?' They wanted to see a church, a visible church building. It gives them stability. Likewise I think they want to see priests and nuns as such. And I think they want to see the same priests and nuns, not just some people who come for a time and then leave."

He says that an unstructured, person-to-person approach works best for all concerned in the inner city.

"Having gone through storefront, after-school activities with children in the neighborhood," Father Schnacky says, "we found ourselves coming back to the absolute conviction that if you really love these kids and you've got something good that they need, that's what you give them."

He has education in mind and he points to the storefront school run by the Sisters of Mercy a few years ago wherein a small group of youngsters were taught basic courses at "what we called the academy."

He feels that that "unstructured atmosphere" works in the inner city — "unstructured but visibly the work of the Church." He adds the corollary that priests and nuns should wear habits remembering "that we are not ourselves any more, but belong to the Church, and the Church belongs to the people."

Though he feels that at the grass roots, the less structured approach works best, he is equally strong in his conviction that a structure must be visible to support the work.

"I suppose it can be said of every parish," he said, "but it was obvious to me that the inner city is mission territory. I had to go out and meet people where they are but always with the idea of giving them the one great thing you have to give — the Faith."

While at Holy Redeemer, Father Schnacky was coordinator for the North Region for a year and a half, after serving as assistant coordinator. He "likes the parish approach — it gives you a sense of identity. You know the people for whom you are responsible. Your activities are limited and defined and in a sense you can work in depth within those limits."

This is another in a series of occasional articles in the Courier-Journal which will explore the situation in the inner city of Rochester brought about by financial difficulties and the closing of Catholic schools there.

"It reminds me of what Christ said in reference to the Good Shepherd, 'I know mine and mine know me.'"

One of the strongest points about the Church, Father Schnacky feels, is in the field of education.

"History books show that the Church has not always been successful in every field, but by and large in education we've done very well."

Because of financial problems, the Council of Inner City Parishes school system was forced to close in June. This absence of Catholic education for inner city children seems to pelt Father Schnacky.

"I found one of the great needs of children was to be motivated to learn the basic skills and one of the great desires of their parents, who couldn't give them much else, was at least to give them an education. The Church could not only give them that but also could motivate them to want to learn."

Perhaps from his experience as coordinator, Father Schnacky is a proponent of regionalism as a way to minister to inner city residents.

"There is a tremendous amount of good will towards parishes in the inner city and it worked both ways not only as a mission to the inner city but also as mission to the whole region — in a sense to help people in other parts of the region to understand what is going on and to give them the opportunity to provide charity, the opportunity to share the apostolate."

Sitting forward in his chair in the small, paneled living room of his rural rectory, Father Schnacky stresses a second thought about that charity aspect.

"I always felt that Holy Redeemer had as much to offer as any other parish in the region but in a different way. It is rich in

tradition, rich in church architecture, the church has real warmth, it is a motherly church. We were not beggars — we didn't have money but were rich in tradition."

"And many people in the region have some kind of association with the parish (Holy Redeemer), often their parents or they themselves were educated there. We (Holy Redeemer) were like their representative in the poor section of the city. What we did we did in their name as well as our own."

Summing up, Father Schnacky explains that he basically believes in the person-to-person approach.

"I feel that worse than the bureaucracy of big government, or of big business, would be big Church."

There are some 50-odd miles between Holy Redeemer and St. Patrick's in Cato but the difference in surroundings, accompanying life-style, and problems make it seem as though they are in different countries.

Giving up one of these "countries" for the other, Father Schnacky notes that the "experience I had, well," he searches for words, "something was given to me which has been given to no one else. I feel honored that I was able to meet the people I did meet and do the things I did with them. I got so much out of it — it was a privilege really."

He thinks of Msgr. Joseph E. Vogt, who retired as Holy Redeemer pastor the same date Father Schnacky was transferred. "All the things I was able to do, I was always conscious that Msgr. Vogt never said no. I am grateful to him and fortunate to have worked for a pastor of that stature."

Such heartfelt sentiment undoubtedly will remain but the mind seems to adjust more quickly. Father Schnacky tells of his new parish, with its mission church in Red Creek, looks forward to meeting the parishioners and smiles, "I'm sure I'll love it here too."

What Is a Catholic Pentecostal?

By JAMES ROMAN

Perhaps the best way to have this question answered is to find one and ask him first hand. Usually Catholic Pentecostals are the people who linger in the pew after Sunday Mass, or are active in the parish, or display religious bumper stickers on their cars, or simply smile a lot.

No two Catholic Pentecostals (Charismatics) could give the same answer since the Holy Spirit deals with us as individuals, each according to his needs. Nevertheless there would be a remarkable similarity of substance contained in the answers provided by those professing to be Catholic Pentecostals.

It might be a good idea to clarify the point that there are three distinct streams of pentecostal fervor rapidly developing throughout the world today. Combined they form a significant mainstream of genuine contemporary Christian ecumenism that shows no sign of abating. Catholic Pentecostals, therefore, are not to be confused with those Christians of other denominations who also profess pentecostal affiliation within the churches they attend.

The first group of pentecostals,

as we have come to identify them today, is the "Classical Pentecostals" (Assemblies of God, Pentecostal Holiness Church, etc.). These good people avoid authoritarian structures in the Christian community, tend to reject creeds, and prefer to rely directly on the words of the Bible and on the inner movements of the Holy Spirit as the rule of faith. They began only 75 years ago in Topeka, Kan., and today number upwards of 15 million. Many historians regard them as a "third force" in the Christian world, along with Protestantism and Catholicism.

The second group of pentecostals is known as "Neo-Pentecostals." They come from all other Protestant denominations such as the Lutherans, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, etc. This phenomenon was first noted among the Episcopalians in 1958 in Monterey Park, Calif. and Wheaton, Ill. How they came to reconcile the growth of pentecostalism within their individual churches is interesting reading. Among many good books on the subject I would be quick to recommend *The Pentecostal Movement in The Catholic Church* by Edward D. O'Connor, CSC, Ave Maria Press.

It was perhaps inevitable that



Nun, Journalist, Missionary

Sister Maria del Rey, MM, is an alert, 68-year-old American nun who has written 10 books and been a leading Catholic journalist and Maryknoll missionary for almost 30 years. For the past two years, she has been an English teacher and school librarian in Datu Priang, a predominantly Muslim city in the hinterland of Mindanao, the Philippines. Right now she's in a Maryknoll "cloister," recharging her spiritual batteries for the next go-round in the mission field. A newspaperwoman before joining Maryknoll in 1933, Sister Maria del Rey served in Hawaii before going to the Philippines in 1938. During her first tour of mission work there she was interned for 3½ years by the Japanese as a prisoner of war. After returning to the U.S. in 1947, she spent more than 20 years traveling and writing, mainly about her order's missionary activities. Here, she is shown with a friendly elephant at a mission post in Southeast Asia during the 1960s (top photo) and working on her writings at her order's headquarters in Maryknoll, N.Y. (RNS)

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daily life in the modern world.

No one was prepared for the ready acceptance which Pentecostal spirituality was to encounter once it had gotten a start in the Catholic Church. It has spread far more rapidly here than in any of the other established churches and the opposition to it has been much less intransigent. Many Pentecostal observers have commented with surprise on how easily Catholics seem to receive the "baptism in the Spirit." The Catholic hierarchy have been more open and favorable to the movement than the officials of any other church.

At this point a word of caution is advisable. This movement is very personal, complex, delicate, and spiritual in nature. Although it is now looked upon by the Catholic Church as the work of the Holy Spirit in its root and principal impulse, it is also a complex melange of human energies that in part correspond to the Spirit's plan, but in part could deviate from it, conflict with it and counterfeit it. Anybody considering further investigation into the Charismatic Renewal would do well to approach it with much prayer, meditation, and consultation with his or her spiritual director or pastor.