



Father Richard Allard, CSB, secretary general of the Basilian Fathers listens with the Sisters of Mercy to the panel.

Photos by Bruce Genut

Prelude to Decisions

Prior to decisions being made this week in their General Chapter, the Sisters of Mercy listened to five panels discuss key areas during preparatory work sessions last week.

The panels — tone-setting and challenging — raised questions and pointed directions for possible future action or consideration.

A panel on "What We Would Like the Sisters of Mercy To Be and Do" struck common ground in two main emphases: blending justice and mercy, both broadly and specifically, and being completely centered in Jesus.

Panelists included Father Peter Deckman, co-pastor, St. Michael's, Newark; Father Otto Vogt, Pastor, St. Paul of the Cross, Honeoye Falls; Mrs. Nancy Bartell, head of Social Services at St. James Mercy Hospital, Hornell; Mrs. Marion Kolmer, St. Andrew's parishioner; Mrs. Carolyn Micklem, community coordinator for the judicial Process Commission of GEM; and William Huffner, 1975 graduate of Notre Dame High School, Elmira, and president of the Student Council.

Father Charles Latur, director of the diocesan Department of Inter-Religious Affairs, and Rev. Virginia Mackey, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, affirmed the stance of a proposal being considered by the Chapter delegates on increased involvement in ecumenism.

"Sisters of Mercy in Ministry" was the topic addressed by Msgr. George Cocuzzi, vicar for Urban Ministry; Father Joseph Brennan, rector of St. Bernard's Seminary; and Father Daniel Tormey, assistant to the director of Office of Human Development.

The panel accepted the following areas: urban ministry, response to "the deepest need of the Church" for an in-depth experience of God and community, ministry to the materially poor, and the need for solidarity with the poor.

Deaths

Sr. M. Neidinger

Sister Mary Neidinger, SSJ, a music teacher in schools of the diocese for more than 40 years, died Aug. 4, 1975, in Park Avenue Hospital, after a long illness. She was 84 years old.

The Mass of Christian Burial was concelebrated for her Aug. 4 in the Motherhouse chapel by Fathers Joseph Reinhart and Frederick Walz. Father James Kelly, OSB, also was present.

Sister Mary, a native of Rochester, entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1918 from St. Francis, Xavier parish. Her last assignment was at St. Mary's, Canandaigua, where she taught instrumental music. She had spent long periods at St. Mary's, Dansville, and St. Patrick's, Corning, and also worked a year at Nazareth Academy.



Father Daniel Brent, Sister Michael Lapetito and Sister James Lynch listen to a question.



Sisters Doris Hamilton and Janet Korn sit at panel.

Sister Janet Korn and Sister Doris Hamilton spoke on "Theology of Liberation and Concepts of Poverty." They, too, urged a radical witness to solidarity with the poor, not to idealize poverty but to protest and struggle against it. Sister Janet is a Sister of Mercy missionary in Santiago, Chile; Sister Doris, formerly a Chilean

missionary, serves the Spanish-speaking in Rochester.

Finally, a three-member panel from the Diocesan Education Department affirmed these values: the importance of Catholic schools and total parish religious education. Panelists were Father Daniel Brent, Sister James Lynch, SSJ; and Sister Michael Lapetito.

Survivors are several nieces and nephews in Rochester, Webster and Hilton.

Walter Wojtczak

Walter Wojtczak, a Polish immigrant who established the Hudson Avenue bakery that still bears his name, died Aug. 7, 1975, at the age of 84. He was a knight in the papal order of St. Gregory the Great.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated last Saturday in St. Stanislaus Church.

Mr. Wojtczak, who learned the baker's trade in Poland, came here in 1910 to live with an aunt and find a job. Twenty-one years later, he was singled out as an exemplary Catholic layman to receive the insignia of knighthood granted by Pope Pius XI. Bishop John F. O'Hern chose a representative of the Irish, the

Germans and the Italians of the city at the same time and conferred the papal honor on each March 19, 1931. These men were the first knights of St. Gregory in the diocese, and probably the last, according to Church sources.

Mr. Wojtczak was noted for his European specialties. He built up a wholesale business that employed 36 persons and used seven delivery trucks in the years immediately following World War II. Dissatisfied with the way stores displayed his confections, he drew back the retail level, his son Carl said, and in 1955 he sold the store at 990 Hudson.

Survivors are his widow, Madeline, and two sons, Walter, of West Hartford, Conn., and Carl; a sister, Mrs. Anthony (Bernice) Liberti; four grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and nieces and nephews.

WORD FOR SUNDAY



Fr. Albert Shamon

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 15:21-28. (R1) Is. 56:1, 6-7. (R2) Rom. 11:13-15, 29-32.

The theme of the Sunday readings is the universality of salvation.

Matthew borrowed the story of the Canaanite woman from Mark, but with several important changes. First, Matthew calls the woman a Canaanite instead of a Syro-Phoenician. Of all the Gentiles, the Canaanites were the most thoroughly hated and detested by the Jews. Secondly, Matthew expands the dialogue between the woman and Jesus; he is obviously shifting the emphasis to the woman. Thus he reduces the mention of the cure to a single statement. But most important, Matthew diverts interest not only away from the cure to the woman, but to the woman's faith. This woman had many striking features in her character: her mother's love, her energy, her persistence, her humility, her prayer. And yet Jesus singled out only one characteristic: her faith!

Matthew was writing for Jewish Christians and wanted to show that the key to breaking down the barrier between Jew and Gentile is faith. Faith that realizes salvation is a sheer gift of God; and, because it is, it is offered to all mankind.

The first reading reaffirms that salvation is open to all, "the foreigners" even, as well as to the Jews — the house of the Lord will become "a house of prayer for all peoples." However, third-Isaiah shows that faith alone is not enough, but that good works are also needed. Foreigners must observe the covenant terms as far as possible: they must keep the Sabbath and the Lord's name holy and minister to Him. In other words, the first three commandments — faith in one God, reverencing His holy name, and worshipping Him.

We tend to categorize people with labels that divide them. These categories often are social and political, and really have no place in God's plan of salvation. Isaiah speaks of "foreigners" and "all peoples" as distinct from the Jews. I suppose he had to speak that way to be understood by the Jews of his day. Paul wrote of "Gentiles" as opposed to his fellow "Jews." Matthew spoke of the division between "Canaanite" and the "house of Israel," between "dogs" (non-Jews) and "sons and daughters" (the Jewish people).

Still these three authors — Isaiah, Paul and Matthew — reveal that God has broken down all these separating labels and unites what man divides. Isaiah describes as God's children everybody and anybody who ministers to Him, loves His name, and serves Him. Paul leaps across boundaries and divides peoples, not into Jews and pagans, but into those who are disobedient and those who enjoy mercy. And Jesus Himself bursts all national and denominational limits by blessing a Canaanite woman of great faith. God's ways are not ours.

What then are we to do as Christians? What are our attitudes toward those not of our Faith? Do we absolutize? Do we think we only are in the right, and everybody else in the wrong? Vatican II reaffirmed there is salvation outside the institutional Church, that God offers His love

and grace to everyone. Vatican II did not define "Church" exclusively in terms of explicit membership, but fundamentally in terms of the response in faith and action to the offer of God in one's life whenever and however that occurs.

Today's readings tell us that we must open our hearts to all, especially to our Jewish brothers and sisters in the Lord. Vatican II in its Declaration on the Relationship of the Church to Non-Christian Religions wrote: "We cannot forget that the Church received the revelation of the Old Testament through the people with whom God in his inexpressible mercy designed to establish the Ancient Covenant. Nor can she forget that she draws sustenance from the root of that good olive tree onto which have been grafted the wild olive branches of the Gentiles. . . . Since the spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews is thus so great, this sacred Synod wishes to foster and recommend . . . mutual understanding and respect" (#4). Read the entire Declaration; it is only about three pages.

One of the reasons Jesus severely tested the Canaanite woman's faith was to expose and condemn the intense bigotry of the Jews around Him — and ours, too, should it ever rear its ugly head among His followers.



MR. & MRS. MURPHY GOLDEN WEDDING

John and Gertrude Murphy of 1064 N. Tamiami Trail, Ft. Myers, Fla., formerly of Edgemere Drive, Rochester, celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary Sunday, July 27, with a renewal of their marriage vows at Our Mother of Sorrows Church. A reception was given at Barry's Party House by their son and daughter-in-law John and Jean Murphy. Mr. Murphy, who retired in 1969 from Yawman and Erbe Mfg. Co., was a former fire commissioner of the Lake Shore Fire District.

Net Tourney To Benefit Cancer Society

The Court Crusade for Cancer, the first area tournament especially for tennis rookies, will be held the last three weekends in August and is being sponsored as a benefit for the American Cancer Society, Monroe County Unit.

Anyone, 15 years or older, who classifies as a beginner or intermediate player is invited. Format is a singles round robin and play will be on neighborhood courts in the Greater Rochester area. The first rounds will be held Saturday, Aug. 16 and Sunday, Aug. 17. Playoffs will be Saturday, Aug. 23 and Sunday, Aug. 24 and the finals will be Sunday, Aug. 30.

Forty court prizes will be awarded and all entries will receive a net souvenir emblem. Twelve top trophies and prizes will be given to first, second and third place winners.

Entry blanks may be picked up at any Carrol's Restaurant or at area recreation departments. They are also available by calling the American Cancer Society office, 461-3800. Participants may indicate their court location preference on the entry blank.