

St. Rita's Notes 25th

West Webster — The parishioners of St. Rita's Church are celebrating this year the 25th anniversary of the founding of their parish community.

The anniversary is special because the founding pastor of the Church is the present pastor, Father Francis Kleehammer.

He tells the story that a few days after he was assigned to organize St. Rita's by Bishop James E. Kearney, he walked into a neighborhood cigar store-cum-horse room to buy a paper. He mentioned the new appointment to one of the other customers, and the other, obviously celebrating a win from the back room, pulled out his wallet and handed the priest \$30 to start off the new church's treasury.

Father Kleehammer was assistant pastor of St. Michael's Church when he was named to the West Webster post. The

pastor of St. Michael's was Father Arthur Florack, whom Father Kleehammer credits with the success of organizing St. Rita's.

It was Msgr. Florack, he says, who found the site for the new parish, proposed purchasing the lot to Bishop Kearney, and "discovered" a building suitable for the infant congregation.

It seems that Father Florack was attending a funeral one day at St. Margaret Mary's Church, when he looked out the window and noticed a frame structure that the congregation had used prior to building the present church. He decided that the structure would nicely suit St. Rita's.

The building was dismantled, moved to the 23-acre site in West Webster and reassembled. Father Kleehammer credits the success of the operation to architect



An early picture of St. Rita's Church.

Phillip Winkler, who not only supervised the process, but redesigned the face of the church.

Facts and figures: Father Kleehammer is named to organize St. Rita's, March 24, 1950; first meeting of the congregation, April 23; First Mass celebrated, Sept. 3; church dedicated, Sept. 24.

Things really started rolling in 1954; a drive to build a school started and the first St. Rita's Fiesta was held.

The school was opened in 1955. The drive had aimed at \$85,000 and gained \$140,000. Four Sisters of Mercy, six lay teachers and 406 pupils used the building that year.

The annual fiesta is noteworthy because of some national attention given it a few years back, Father Kleehammer recalls.

It seems that in that year, the

parish sponsored a raffle for a new car.

One of the parishioners, weary of writing her name on each of the raffle tickets she had purchased, simply started to scrawl the word "Tippy."

When the raffle tickets were drawn, "Tippy" had won the car.

They had newsmen there when Father Kleehammer presented Tippy with the keys; and Tippy, a dog, trotted over to the car and jumped in and sat down — in the driver's seat.

The church dedicated its new

organ in 1955 and Jerry Vogt played a recital.

In 1959 the parish started a school-convent drive which drew in \$68,000 more than expected; and the additions to the school were opened in 1960.

Father Kleehammer was ordained in 1933 by Bishop Emmett M. Walsh. He had attended Holy Redeemer School and St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's Seminaries.

Following his ordination he served the parishes of St. Andrew's and St. Peter and Paul, as well as St. Michael's.

CYO-Seeking Sponsors

The 44th Annual CYO Sponsorship Campaign is under way.



His Biggest Win

For nine years, he has been a man again — no longer one-half man and one-half drunk — former Brooklyn Dodgers pitcher Don Newcombe told a Workshop on Alcoholism and the Black Community in Denver. The shock of a separation threat by his wife, Billie, and the possible loss of his children helped him to find himself, he said. Newcombe, once one of the top pitchers in baseball, [he is shown during his playing days], recalled his baseball career. He said he enjoyed overcoming racial discrimination and becoming a successful pitcher, but that he had no time for family or community activities. A lot of travel was necessary, and he has long had a fear of flying. These pressures caused him to start drinking quantities of beer on hot days, later switching to whiskey to counter a weight problem. He began moving, he said, closer and closer to Skid Row. He is now president of Don Newcombe Enterprises and administrative associate of the Management Council for Merit Employment, Training, and Research in Los Angeles. He is also active in youth affairs and says he wants to be counted as a campaigner against alcoholism. [RNS]

GREECE SYMPHONY

The Greece Symphony Orchestra will open its season Sunday night, Oct. 26, with a concert at 7:30 in St. Charles Borromeo Church, Dewey Avenue at Maiden Lane. Michele DeBoer will be soprano soloist in Mozart's Exultate, Jubilate.

CYO sponsors from the friends of CYO are needed to help sustain and continue the CYO youth programs.

"CYO Does More Than Just Keep Kids off the Streets" is the theme this year. CYO stresses the values of Christian life-style and community awareness through programs developed by the CYO Youth Development staff. Reach-out in Christian leadership, Search for Christian community, Venture into Christian life style and Awakening into adulthood serve the needs of youth groups throughout Monroe County.

"We are very excited about the progress in our basketball program by making available to coaches and teams adaptations of our Search program," said Thomas C. Cotterill, executive director of CYO.

St. M.M. School Lists Projects

School children and their mothers at St. Margaret Mary parish hope to collect 100,000 Campbell's Soup labels by Dec. 20. In exchange for the labels, the school can get a number of things, including record players, overhead projectors and alphabet blocks. Pizza parties will reward the homerooms bringing in the biggest collections.

On Friday, Oct. 24, there will be a flag-raising ceremony on the school lawn, with the school band participating, and on Oct. 28 Sister Alma Caroline's social studies department will present a Bicentennial celebration from 7 until 9 p.m.

McQuaid Aides Raise \$3,000

A group of women that provides the "extras" at McQuaid Jesuit High School raised \$3,000 this year toward the expense of landscaping the school grounds.

Mrs. Russell Cugino, outgoing president of the McQuaid Aides executive board, gave the money to Father John J. McDonald, rector, at the aides' third annual luncheon, Oct. 9 at Oak Hill Country Club. Last year's contribution was \$2,100, used for audio-visual equipment. The \$2,300 given the year before helped pay for carpeting the chapel. The new board, headed by Mrs. Joseph Siconolfi, has renovation of the chapel as its aim.

The aides are organized in five circles, each of which has a program of social activities and at least one major fund-raiser each year.

McKinney Is Named Photo Editor

Susan McKinney has been named photo editor of the Courier-Journal. She has been with the newspaper's photo department since 1972.

Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Leo McKinney of Spencerport; Ms. McKinney majored in sociology and journalism at Keuka College, from which she was graduated in 1972. She also has studied photo illustration at Rochester Institute of Technology.

'Life Issues' At Mercy Parish

Our Lady of Mercy parish is sponsoring a Life Issues series, beginning Wednesday, Oct. 22. The program, supplied by the Rochester Area Right to Life Education Committee, comprises four topics, to be presented on consecutive Wednesdays, 7:30-9:30 p.m., in the school hall, 600 Denise Road. All are invited.

The euthanasia movement will be explored at the opening meeting. A film entitled "Who Should Survive?" will be shown, and Jeanne Sweeney, R.N., and Dr. Nino Trunfio will speak.



Catholic Daughters' Day

Rochester Mayor Thomas Ryan reads from a proclamation declaring Oct. 19 Catholic Daughters' Day. Receiving the proclamation on behalf of Rochester Catholic Daughters are Barbara Zaso, left, monitor, and Rose Hendrickson, vice regent, of Court Our Lady of the Cenacle.

CARD PARTY

Elmira Heights — A card party will be held at 8 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 22 at St. Charles Church Hall, Oakwood Ave., Elmira Heights. Progressive euchre will be played. Donation \$1.

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