

Vatican Unit Asks Greater Role for Women

By LEE HEALEY

Vatican City (RNS) — The Roman Catholic Church can never thank women enough for the role they have played in evangelization, and the best form of gratitude would be a serious appraisal of their work with a view to increasing their responsibilities.

This is the conclusion of a study made by the pastoral commission of the Sacred Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples which will appear in the March issue of "Omnis Terra," the magazine published by the congregation.

The study said that during the life of Jesus, women had had a notable share in the work of evangelization, and showed a loyalty that surpassed that of the men in the darker hours of His Passion, death and burial. St. Paul referred frequently to the assistance given to the preacher and the preaching of the Gospel by such women as Priscilla

According to the study women themselves and men who observed them at work recognized that certain human qualities are more specifically feminine and are a precious resource for evangelization.

The study discussed new functions which could be played by women in evangelizing, but said that these functions should not be looked on as alleviating an eventual shortage of male personnel even though this might in fact arise. Said the report, "We must consider what women are doing and can do for evangelization. While maintaining traditional occupations of women missionaries, in hospitals, schools and welfare services, women have suggested they could also play a part in the following:

- * "Apostolic home visiting to the poor, the sick, the abandoned.
- * "Active contributions to retreats and spiritual sessions.

* "Counselling, especially in connection with vocations.

* "The teaching of religion, including theology, when one has the necessary ability and qualifications.

* "Activity in the social communications media, the press, radio and television, and catechetical work."

The study also discussed the work of women in parish activities, again making the reservation that the considerations were not based on the need to supply for the absence of a priest, "even though this is bound to be increasingly the case."

The fields in which it is felt that women could be most useful in parish work were administrative and directly pastoral, and it was felt that more and more they should be given full responsibility for decision-making and become full members of the parish team.

The study said that much of the apostolate of preparation for the sacraments was as open to women as to priests, whether for baptism, confession, confirmation, marriage or anointing of the sick. It was hoped that priests, who were often overburdened in these areas, would find women to be valued associates.

Discussing the work of women in liturgy and the ministries, the report said that already in many parishes, a nun, in the absence of a priest, presided over liturgical assemblies of the faithful (but not Eucharistic), instructing them in their Christian duties.

The sisters often made it possible to have the Blessed Sacrament reserved, and distributed it to the faithful during Mass and outside of Mass when necessary.

There were also cases where nuns were permanently in charge of

parishes with the authorization of the local bishop, and administered Baptism and presided at marriages as the Church's official witness. The report said that other functions should be the object of more precise study, such as prayers for the sick and funerals.

Said the report, "Sisters often suffer deeply at the sight of the neglected state of Christian communities. Their requests to be entrusted with greater pastoral responsibilities spring from this anguish and not from a spirit of pretension, and should be examined with sympathy and with the urgency required by the circumstances."

The work of evangelization required balanced persons, free from false inhibitions, who had achieved human maturity, persons who had "warmth and openness" and were filled with living faith.

Fr. Mura Assigned To Watkins Glen

Father David W. Mura, who has been at Christ the King parish since last June, is leaving to become associate pastor of St. Mary of the Lake in Watkins Glen and St. Benedict, Odessa. The appointment is effective Feb. 27, the Pastoral Office announced last week.

Father Mura's transfer had been pending since the arrival of two Basilian Fathers, in mid-January, to administer the Irondequoit parish. He will be working with Father Joseph W. Dailey, whose former assistant was Father James Hewes, a priest intern reassigned in December to St. Mary's, Canandaigua.

Educated in the diocesan seminaries and in the Pontifical

Gregorian Institute at the North American College in Rome, Father Mura received minor orders in Rome and was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop John E. McCafferty May 29, 1971, in Holy Trinity Church, Webster.

For four years, he served at Immaculate Conception, Ithaca, where he was an innovator in adult education programs and work with young people. He also was active in the jail ministry. After the devastating floods in the Elmira-Corning area in 1972, the Ithaca Journal cited him as "Man of the Year" for his leadership in clean-up operations.

Father Mura is a native of Rochester.

A Christian-Style Meditation

A Christian method of meditation, based on the Jesus prayer, is being promoted by the Daily Mass League. Called Transcendental Meditation-Christian Style, the approach is similar to that taught by the followers of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, but uses the Jesus Prayer as the mantra, the expression repeated during meditation.

The Jesus Prayer, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, Have mercy on me, A sinner," is repeated a minimum

of 45 times, coordinated with a 2-breath cycle. Each line is repeated while breathing in or out; the rhythmic pattern established causes relaxation.

The Daily Mass League proposes its system as one without secrets, unknown elements or cost. Those wishing to receive full instructions can request the information from the Daily Mass League, PO Box 9490, Midtown Plaza, Rochester, N.Y. 14604.

Northeast Region Notes

The regional Liturgy Committee will discuss the new Penance rite at 7:30, Wednesday, Feb. 11, at St. Ambrose. The meeting is aimed at religion teachers, coordinators, liturgy people and all other interested persons.

The regional Youth Committee has formed two groups to foster youth ministry in the region. The Outreach Committee will offer assistance to any parishes in the region who do not have youth committees and wish to form one. The Advisor Committee will help to prepare adults who are interested in

being parish advisors to youth committees but who are unsure how to go about it.

The regional Youth Committee also has planned two events to which all the youth of the region are invited. On March 21 there will be a cabin party at Hazelwood Lodge in Ellison Park and on April 1 there will be a Day of Recollection. For more information contact Richard Weider at the CYO office.

Father James DiGiacomo, a teacher from Fordham Prep, will inaugurate the first annual Youth Ministers Conference in the Diocese on May 7 and 8. The conference is sponsored by the Youth Ministries team of the division of religious education. Contact Sister Joan McAteer or Martin Palumbo, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, 14624 for further details.

took place at St. Francis Xavier parish hall on Jan. 14. Eighty delegates and parish representatives discussed the work of the Human Development, Education and Youth committees. Some of the ideas developed were the need for training and research in Human Development, the possibility of using the cluster, organizational pattern in regional education and the possible need for a full time youth coordinator for the region.

Earlier in the evening, Sister Michael Lappetto described some of the ideas that the task force on Confirmation have been considering. Sister Michael asked for the considered, prayerful reaction of the delegates through a questionnaire which will be distributed to parishes. One of the main concerns is the age at which Confirmation should be administered.

The next Northeast Regional Assembly will be held April 7 at St. James Church on Brockley Road.

Sister Kathryn Wahl Takes Final Mercy Vows

Sister Kathryn Wahl professed final vows Jan. 24 in the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy of Rochester. The ceremony took place during an afternoon Mass at the Church of the Annunciation.

Sister Kathy teaches first grade at Annunciation school. The third graders, her beginning class in 1973, made the Eucharist bread, and children from all the primary grades joined in the singing at the offertory. The Mass was celebrated by Fathers Matthew Siudara, John Mulligan, James Boyle and Douglas Hoffman. Msgr. Albert Simonetti welcomed the congregation and read the gospel. Sister Margaret Mary Mattie gave the homily, and a group of Mercy sisters provided folk music for the liturgy.

Graduated from Bishop Kearney High School in 1968, Sister Kathy joined the congregation that year.

In 1974 she received a B.S. degree in education from SUC Brockport. She is living with the religious community at St. John the Evangelist, on Floverton Street. Her parents are Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wahl of Wahlmont Drive, Webster, parishioners of St. Rita's in West Webster.

DENTAL HEALTH

The Monroe County Dental Society is bringing Children's Dental Health Week to Eastview Mall Feb. 6 and 7. One booth will feature a puppet show. The Wonderful Dentist of Oz, staffed by dental auxiliaries. A second booth, staffed by dentists, dental hygienists and auxiliaries will deliver information on dental health care. Free balloons and toothbrushes also will be given away, and audio-visual presentations on children's dental health will be presented.

AS I SEE IT



Pat Costa

New shows of the "second" television season have begun to make an appearance and the two most eagerly awaited by the young people at our house have been weighed and not found lacking.

What the adults at the same address think "The Bionic Woman" and "Donny and Marie," however, is a different story.

The first, starring Lindsay Wagner in the title role, is pure capitalization on the popularity of this season of "The Six Million Dollar Man." Lindsay Wagner is a little less stiff than Lee Majors in her counterpart role and almost as pretty as astronaut Steve Austin.

Using a teaching job as a front for her government activities, Jaime, the bionic woman, keeps her elementary class in order with subtle threats such as ripping a telephone book in two with her bare hands and picking up, asides not meant for teacher, with her supersensitive aural powers.

She cleaned up a barn loft for use as an apartment quicker than you could say 123, tossed an electric range around as if it were a beach ball and opened a can of tuna with her thumb nail in lieu of a can opener.

Then the domestic side seemed to disappear as some villains, in on her super powers, decide to get her to help them which she pretends to do while realligning Uncle Sam. After that I get confused because I also saw "bionic man" the same week and I can't separate the two in my mind. Suffice it to say that the writing was super bad almost as horrendous as that exhibited in "Donny and Marie" the Osmond family's model pretty teenagers.

Right now I can imagine someone saying "but why knock the kids. We have too few shows now that youngsters can watch. It's good clean fun."

Well it may be clean. But Donny and Marie are neither good nor fun.

In the first place they are not professionally up to carrying such a show although their less handsome and more experienced brothers, The Osmonds, could probably handle it. They were given precious little to do in the hour. Paul Lynde was sadly misused — ditto Lee Majors who should not attempt dance and song routines.

The two stars who had 17 costume changes between them, were dazzlingly dull in their barbed repartee and worse in the many different production numbers.

They fared best when they stuck to what brought them fame, smiling and singing.

If the hour seemed to go on forever without a letup it was because of incessant action: imitation silent movies, ice skating, rodeo, river boat, vaudeville, phony commercials, etc., etc., etc. Without a doubt it will go over big with the small fry and the only hope here is that we don't get a spinoff titled "Jimmy" featuring their 13-year-old brother.

Your Heritage

Feb. 1, 1842. Father Edward Barron offers the first Mass at Cape Palmas, Maryland in Liberia. In the 1830s, the Maryland State Colonization Society bought land at Cape Palmas, western Africa, in order to found there a colony, Maryland-in-Liberia (now known as Liberia) in which to resettle repatriated black slaves. Among those who accepted repatriation there were only a few Maryland Catholic blacks. More were expected, however, so the American Catholic bishops agreed to send over missionaries and thus establish the first foreign mission ever undertaken by the American hierarchy. Father Edward Barron went as superior, accompanied by Father John Kelly and a lay volunteer, Dennis Pindar. After arriving at Liberia, Barron was named a missionary bishop. He secured the aid of the French missionaries and two Irish volunteers. But sickness attacked the missionary party, so that within a few months nine out of fifteen had died. Bishop Barron had to call off the undertaking. In 1845, he returned to this country where he did pastoral work. — Rochester Diocesan Bicentennial Commission.