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DSC—'Uniting Congregations'

By MARTIN TOOMBS

Uniting the women's congregations in the diocese and providing a means for the voice of sisters to reach diocesan leaders are the major contributions of the Diocesan Sisters Council, in the opinion of Sister Ann Miller, RSM, president. In a recent interview, Sister Ann, who is principal of St. John the Evangelist school on

Humboldt Street, evaluated the progress of the council.

She said she hoped the impact of the Sisters Council would become stronger in "things that are going to make a difference in the lives of the sisters or the people we serve."

"We have been so busy reacting to things the diocese has sent our way, we haven't had an opportunity to say what we see as needs," she explained.

The Sisters Council organized a group that previously had gone unrepresented. "Until the time of the formation of the council," Sister Ann said, "the bishop would go to the major superiors of each congregation and ask their opinion." The Sisters Council now gives the bishop "a chance to hear what all sisters think" from the small, as well as the large congregations.

The role of the orders in the Sisters Council has grown. Sister Ann feels that "one of the biggest steps is that the congregations themselves are more a part of the Sisters Council. The superiors are members of the council, and at our February meeting we are going to propose they be given voting power." The superiors have had no voting rights.



SISTER ANN MILLER

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A Home

Photo by Ben Susso

St. Joseph's Villa operates three group homes in the Rochester area. Director William McLaren, standing, visits one of the homes, located on Nester Street. Seated in the chair is Tom Graham. He and his wife Mary Ann, holding daughter Jennifer, oversee the boys through their daily activities. For the story and more photos of this group home, see pages 8 and 9.

"WEDDING DAY '76"



Bridal Section

Planning a wedding and having problems? The annual Courier-Journal Bride's Book in the center of this week's edition should provide some answers. Schedules for the Pre-Cana conferences and other valuable information to help you plan your wedding is included in this special pull-out section.

Operation Rice Bowl

How Can I Not Share?

Twenty thousand families in the Diocese of Rochester are expected to participate in Operation Rice Bowl, a national program for Lent designed to increase awareness of world hunger. The families will eat a slender meal and pray and reflect on world hunger on Wednesdays during Lent, placing the money saved on food in a cardboard rice bowl.

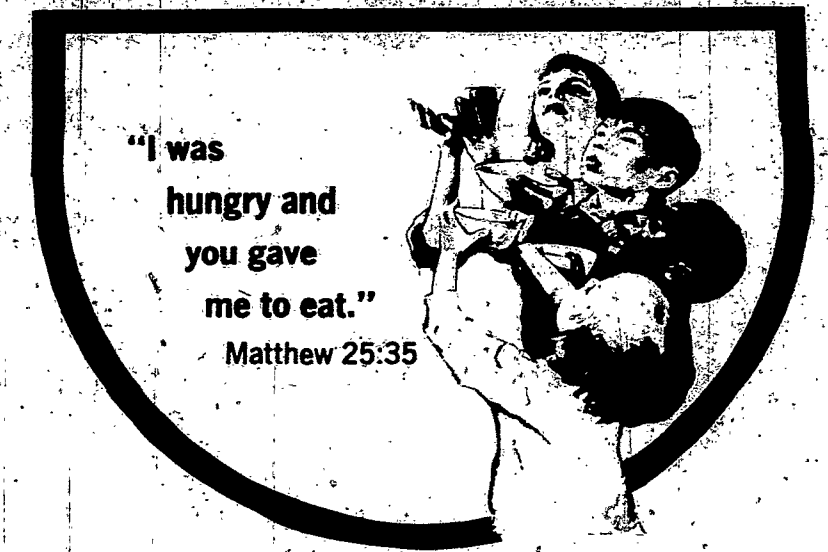
Operation Rice Bowl is part of the spiritual renewal and preparation leading to the International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia Aug. 1-8. The program originated last year in Allentown, Pa., under the leadership of Msgr. Robert Coll, who is chairman of the national campaign this year. Msgr. Coll explains:

"Operation Rice Bowl is motivated by the single thought, 'I have bread and my brother has no bread. If I believe in the Eucharist, how can I not share my food with my brother who has no food?'"

"Not too long ago I saw a child starve to death because he had no food. His body lived off itself. First, his body ate the muscles of his stomach. So that he became swollen. He could not hold up his head. He did not cry because it takes energy to cry and he had no energy. His eyes did not move, because he did not see; his brain had been destroyed. It had not been nourished with protein."

Msgr. Coll noted that some 500 million people, half of them children, live on the edge of starvation. "It is estimated," he said, "that this year some 10 million people will die from hunger and disease related to malnutrition. Half will be children under five years of age."

The problem is too great to be



solved easily. But rather than being resigned to future shortages of food, Msgr. Coll calls on everyone to do something positive: "What we ask you to do is to gather your family around your dining room table. We ask you to make it an altar, to pray and to eat a sacrificial meal which will make you experience the agony, the pain of hunger. And then to place your food savings into the cardboard rice bowl that will be provided through your parish." The money will be collected in a parish rice bowl in church each Sunday.

A menu has been suggested for each Wednesday of Lent. The Ash Wednesday menu is potato soup

and one slice of bread. The following Wednesday meals would be macaroni and cheese and vanilla pudding; egg salad, toast and rice pudding; tuna fish salad and chocolate pudding; spaghetti and jello; creamed peas on toast and rice pudding; and tomato soup and two crackers.

The money collected in the parish rice bowls will be divided, with 75 per cent going to Catholic Relief Services to aid the hungry overseas, and the remainder kept for local use.

Families wishing to participate should contact their parish Human Development Committee.

The New Rite of Penance, the long-awaited updating of the Church's Sacrament of Reconciliation, will be the subject of a special Lenten Series beginning next week in the Courier-Journal. Father Louis J. Hohman, episcopal advisor to and columnist for the paper, is the author of this series of timely interest in every Catholic home.