

## Forum Airs Problems The Elderly Confront

By MARTIN TOOMBS

Twenty-four per cent of the 100,000 senior citizens in Monroe County are below the poverty level, according to Sister Kathleen Kohl of the Catholic Family Center. She reported the statistics at a forum on Aging and the Church May 18 at St. Rita's in Webster. For these people "everything is based on a financial crisis," she said.

The forum, sponsored by the Office of Human Development,

heard from professionals who work with senior citizens and from several senior citizens. Four major problems surfaced: housing, medical care, transportation, and lack of finances.

Daria Ostrum, a public health nurse at the Anthony Jordan Health Center on Holland Street in Rochester, described some difficulties senior citizens have in obtaining proper health care. Citing the cost, and a shortage of doctors willing to work with the elderly, she

noted that several senior citizens she works with have no doctor at all. Transportation to a doctor or hospital is a serious problem, she noted, as many can't afford taxis, and are unable to get on a city bus.

Ms. Ostrum stressed the need for home care for the elderly, even non-medical home care. Many of her patients, she said, need someone to take care of their basic needs, and to make sure that they haven't become seriously sick. She noted that existing home care programs reach a comparatively small number of people.

Getting senior citizens to come forward, and to ask questions about programs is a major problem cited by Richard Infarinato, a county social worker who works in the Social Security office. His primary function is to take care of requests for emergency assistance, and help when Social Security checks are lost or stolen. He noted that the reluctance of some people to ask what programs are available and what they are eligible for results in people going without benefits needlessly. He also noted the problem of housing, especially for those who are paying a very large portion of their monthly income for an apartment. Noting that some just "don't want to live in a high rise" senior citizen complex, he said that a program providing subsidies for seniors living in privately owned (and tax paying) buildings should be made available.

Infarinato also noted that the 6.4 per cent cost-of-living increase in Social Security payments beginning July 1 will not help the senior citizens who also receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments. He explained that the whole amount of the increase will be deducted from the SSI check.

The senior citizens who spoke at ST. MICHAEL'S

Penn Yan — Students of the Religious Education program and their teachers met Wednesday evening, April 14, for a Penance service followed by a discussion and viewing of a film.

A marriage counseling workshop will take place during July 12-15 at Keuka College. Registration, for parish staff members, will be \$25.

### INDUSTRIAL ARTS

The 17th annual Monroe County Industrial Arts Awards Exhibit will be held June 7-12 at the Greece Town Mall. The exhibit is co-sponsored by the Coldwater Lumber Co. under the auspices of Joseph Entress and the Monroe County Industrial Arts Association.

The program is designed to provide all industrial arts students in the county the opportunity to enter work for competition. Categories are cabinet making, ceramics, metal working, drafting, architecture, electricity, plastics, graphic arts, power technology, special education, and photography at the junior and senior high levels.

emphasized their transportation problems. Noting that some elderly people are unable to use public transportation due to its cost or their physical problems, they asked for vans that would provide transportation to shopping areas,

especially for residents of high rise apartments.

The seniors also called confusing directions and an excess of paperwork from governmental agencies very frustrating.

## The Hungers of the Family

The Church recognizes that the family unit is one of the cornerstones of a healthy society. To lend support to that idea, it has established organizations such as Catholic Family Center and the Family Life Office. This series of articles, prepared by the two offices, will explain their programs directed at family enrichment. Each article will explore one segment of the program.

### Part 4 Trust and Intimacy

One of the most desired things in a relationship is intimacy. It is not an easy word to define and that is probably some indication of its power. Most words like love, integrity, intimacy are not easily defined — perhaps they cannot be defined — but we continue to explore and probe in the hopes that we can better understand these words so that ultimately we know more clearly what it means to be human.

A word closely associated with intimacy is trust. Without trust relationships together.

What are some conditions which helped develop intimacy and trust? In order for intimacy to exist in a relationship, both members of that relationship must have a positive self-image. If we do not feel good about ourselves, there is nothing we feel that we can share. Without a positive self-image, the desire for acceptance becomes more acute, but the ability to have the closeness is impossible.

Another ingredient necessary before trust and intimacy can exist is the willingness to risk. As one member in a group recently said, "I do not want to say anything until I know the people in this group more." But in order to know, there must be a willingness to risk ourselves. If we have that positive

self-image, we may be able to take that risk.

Love is the bedrock upon which trust and intimacy are rooted. If people love one another they can move closer to each other and with this closeness comes trust.

Trust and intimacy come as a person can be more certain of his or her partner. Intimacy means that we reap not only the joys of the good moments but it also means that we are able to confront our partner with the unpleasant and the disappointing, the troubling and the threatening aspects of a relationship. Intimacy means that we might come to points where our views are not congruent and that we must live with the tensions of division and difference.

Intimacy and trust emerge when one is able to respond to the fun-loving and playful side of a personality. When we feel confident enough of ourselves to follow our own instincts we are not plagued with guilt about what somebody, whoever they might be, will think of us and our actions.

Trust and intimacy mean many things, but they are treasures that all of us desire most deeply in a world growing more impersonal.

For information about the Catholic Family Center's adult education program on trust and intimacy, please contact Rev. Thomas Hanson at 716-546-7220.

## Capitol Letters

Last session the State Senate passed the Parental Consent Bill. From there it went to the Assembly Health Committee which prevented its passage by holding it until adjournment. This session it again passed the Senate, was sent to the Assembly Health Committee whose members voted 12-6 to report the bill to the floor for a vote by the entire Assembly. Despite that vote, the Chairman of the Assembly Health Committee, H. J. Miller, made a unilateral decision on May 13 to send the bill to the Assembly Codes Committee without another vote by the members of his committee. Mr. Miller not only blatantly disregarded the voting privileges of his committee, but ignored 65 Assembly sponsors and 100,000 voter signatures from every county in this state requesting passage of this bill.

The thrust of this measure is strictly the rights of parents to know and approve all surgery performed on their daughters who are minors under the law.

Please write your representative in the Assembly again, urging that the Codes Committee report Bill A9313, Parental Consent Bill, to the Assembly floor for a "yes" vote. We must also write Democratic Majority Leader Thomas Cuire or Republican Minority Leader Pasquale Mele to urge action. Codes Committee Member,

Assemblyman Thomas Frey, Rochester Area, could be particularly helpful in the passage of this bill.

Address: All Assemblymen, Legislative Office Building, Albany, N.Y. 12224.

Our timely, brief, courteous letters to our elected representatives are vital. They help to balance the democratic process.

Compiled by Jeanne D. Sweeney

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