

# Housing Foundation Solicits Advice

The Bishop Sheen Housing Foundation conducted "talkback" sessions in three cities last week, looking for advice on its future direction. The forums brought together many professionals and volunteer housing workers in Rochester, Auburn and Elmira.

The Foundation is expanding its program and seeking new approaches to its goal of improved housing for low and moderate income families in the diocese. The following reports give highlights of the three meetings.

**Rochester** — More problems than solutions surfaced.

Donald Cohn, from the Rochester Housing Authority, noted the foundation's limited funds and said that hard decisions would have to be made for their use. He said that the foundation could function as a catalyst, spurring other groups into action, and using its funds to buy houses that could then be sold to families using bank mortgages and FHA loans. (This the foundation has done.)

Education about the housing problem is very important, Gloria Sampson of the League of Women Voters told the group. And that education, she said, must recognize that in metropolitan areas much of the apathy concerning housing is a result of racism.

Rehabilitation of existing structures, especially in Rochester's inner city, was advocated by many speakers. Sally Knorr of the 16th Ward Coalition reported on her group's plans to rehabilitate 10 houses, and on its efforts to encourage residents to watch over the neighborhood.

Two problems with rehabilitating housing surfaced. Ms. Knorr reported on security problems, noting that when copper prices

were high a 24-hour guard was necessary to protect some empty houses. Cohn mentioned that Rochester Jobs had rehabilitated houses in the inner city without encountering vandalism. He said he thought that was because local people were doing the work, and so the neighbors watched the buildings.

Jo Ann Elferink, assistant to the Rochester city manager, added that groups doing rehabilitation must be careful not to create expensive housing, effectively cutting down the number of low and moderate income units available. — Martin Toombs.

**Auburn** — Speaking to the Foundation members here Wednesday night, Walter O'Hagen of the St. Alphonsus Human Development Committee objected to the elimination of units for large families. He said that large families with low incomes have been shortchanged in housing projects locally. A local architect told him, he added, that there's no profit to be made in low income housing.

Joan Gallo of the Cayuga County Office for the Aging, in a letter read at the session, called on the church to provide housing for the elderly. She pointed out that there is only one apartment project to serve the 12,500 elderly persons in Cayuga County. She said that "the church could and should intervene" to provide housing for the elderly with low cost loans for maintenance.

Father James C. Enright, president of Auburn Interfaith Ministries and associate pastor of St. Mary's, called upon the churches to alert their people to the housing situation.

He spoke of poor planning. Some current proposed senior citizen



Photo by Ben Susso

## Flag Presentation

The Town of Irondequoit last week presented a special bicentennial flag to St. Ann's Home and the Heritage and Bishop James E. Kearney was on hand for the ceremony. From left are Donald Deming, Irondequoit supervisor; Father John Hempel, St. Ann's chaplain; Bishop Kearney, who lives at St. Ann's; Anthony J. Costello, Irondequoit councilman and general manager of the Courier-Journal; Mrs. Julia Sawner, who accepted for St. Ann's, and Charles Welch, who accepted for the Heritage.

projects, he said, would be on terrain "great for kids with skateboards."

Parish credit unions could provide alternate financing, Father Enright said, and he inquired if the Bishop Sheen Housing Foundation had expertise in the subject which could be made available. — Mary Ann Ginnerty.

**Elmira** — Bernard Morris, chairman of Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) in Schuyler County, told the foun-

dation members here Thursday night that there is a definite need for housing for the elderly of Schuyler.

He said a study conducted by the Council of Churches in the county showed that "forty per cent of the elderly are living below the poverty level, and they need better housing."

Morris suggested that the foundation look into the possibility of funding trailer park projects which could be available to both senior citizens and younger people. "The one thing I don't think you should do is segregate the elderly," Morris said. "I believe they should be part of any community."

There is "a lack of community leadership," he said. The Montour Falls Housing Authority has no

housing for low income and elderly persons stressed the need for additional funding to help keep their respective projects alive.

Several others connected with housing for low income and elderly persons stressed the need for additional funding to help keep their respective projects alive.

Merle Herr, director of Meno Housing of Elmira-Corning, sponsored by the Mennonite Church, said his organization needed money to assist elderly persons living on fixed incomes.

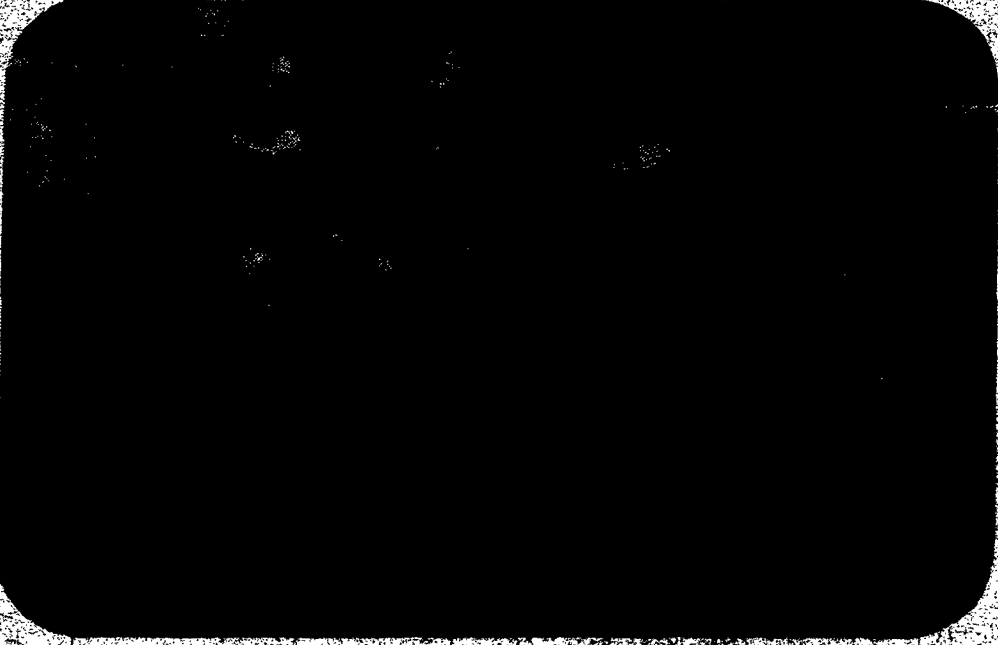
"There is just so much we can do with our limited resources," Herr said. "But one problem we constantly face is the elderly person living on a fixed income and trying to maintain their properties. They need help, maybe this is something your group can assist us with." — Dick Baumbach.



Photos by Susan McKinney

## Heritage

These Holy Rosary girls were among the performers in Sing About America, a show presented by the school May 25 and 26. At left are Sarah Donnellan, Catherine Young, Deborah Federspiel, Susan Patrick-Maxwell and Lee Sailer, kneeling. Left to right in the bottom photo are Monica Culligan, Eileen Connolly, Martha Culligan and Corinne Connolly.



## Voter Registration Drive This Weekend

Volunteers from 100 parishes in the diocese have attended seminars on the new voter registration law, preparing themselves for a registration drive during the weekend of June 12-13. They will set up tables outside the churches after each Mass, and help unregistered voters complete the mail-in registration cards.

More than 10,000 forms have been distributed in the diocese. The drive is part of a statewide effort in response to the National Bishops Conference statement, "Political Responsibility: Reflections on an Election Year."

In urging support for the project, Bishop Joseph L. Hogan noted that 64 per cent of the eligible voters failed to vote in 1974, and that it is necessary to "take steps to loosen the bonds of apathy."

Recently passed legislation will make it possible for those who enroll in a party 60 days prior to the September state primary to vote in the primary.

State Catholic Conference Secretary Charles J. Tobin, Jr., said of the drive, "we share the benefits of freedom, and this is one way of showing appreciation and interest."

## Jewish Leader Responds To Anti-Catholic Charge

From Newsprint An Ecumenical Newsletter

Commenting on a Catholic sociologist's contention that anti-Catholicism exists in the nation's Jewish community, a leader of the American Jewish Committee says that there is some truth to the charge, but that to say that nothing has been done about it is incorrect.

Rabbi Marc H. Tanenbaum, interreligious affairs director for the American Jewish Committee, made this comment following an address by Father Andrew Greeley at the

annual meeting of the Jewish organization. Noting that, by raising the issue of anti-Catholic feeling among some Jews, the priest-sociologist had performed a "useful service," Rabbi Tanenbaum outlined a series of Jewish actions designed to create better understanding. Among these he said, was a study of Jewish textbooks that resulted in the elementary and secondary grades. He cited also Jewish efforts, in cooperation with the National Council of Churches, to bring about a constructive resolution to the problems of Northern Ireland.