

# Sisters Consider Their Progress In Pursuit of Social Justice

Some Catholic sisters are concerned that "the average American house dog has more money spent on it in a year than is received by two-thirds of the individuals of the world." This imbalance was among the data and propositions examined at the national delegate meeting of the National Association of Women Religious (NAWR) Aug. 12-15 in Nazareth, Kentucky, near Louisville.

NAWR, representing more than 3,800 religious women, 100 diocesan Sisters Councils, and lay associate members throughout the country, convened 228 delegates and consultants for a process meeting in place of an annual convention. Attending as representatives of the Diocesan Sisters Council from Rochester were Sister Ann Habershaw, SSND, principal of Holy Ghost School, Coldwater, and Sister Marlene Vigna, RSM, pastoral assistant at St. John the Evangelist, Rochester.

"In the face of hard statistics which show widening gaps between the rich and poor countries of our world, NAWR wanted to test and evaluate the authenticity, effectiveness and solidarity of women religious as we move into the 1980's," said Sister Kathleen Keating, SSJ, national chairperson. "Our commitment to seeking

Gospel justice is only rhetoric if we are paralyzed by any lifestyle structures, or by a limited vision of the ways we could serve and stand with the struggling poor. Rhetoric in the face of so much need would be even greater injustice than non-involvement."

Noting the preconditions of the call to perfection set down by Jesus, "Go, sell what you have and give it to the poor," she asked, "How then in this 20th century can we, as women religious who publicly profess our call to perfection, discover and carry out in our lives selling what we have and giving it to the poor?"

"I would like to think," she continued, "that this is what NAWR is all about — struggling with the meaning of that injunction of Christ in this complex technological,

consumer society we call the United States of America, where extraordinary affluence exists side by side with poverty and oppression... where we consume an excessive amount of the world's resources while millions starve."

A panel of six "sisterwatchers" spoke to the delegates, generally praising the sisters for their efforts for social reform, while calling for them to take more of a leadership role in church reform. The comments were the basis of discussions concerning topics such as the relevance of religious life, ministry to the poor, and the role of women in the Church.

Delegates also examined results of a NAWR-sponsored Think Tank in Chicago May 14-16.

A pro-life affirmation was



SISTER MARLENE

SISTER ANN

discussed, and applauded by the delegates. The program calls for efforts to provide alternatives to abortion; to work toward a Christian attitude toward the aged; for a more Christian understanding

of death and dying; to support the Catholic Bishops in their efforts to eliminate the death penalty; and to work with groups against the evils of militarism and war in all its forms.

## A New Adventure

Kathy Wisner, a member of Our Lady of Mercy High School's teaching staff and also director of public relations is pursuing a business career.

She recently opened, in partnership with Mrs. Joan Lambert, a business specialty agency Professional Secretarial Services. She will, however, remain in her positions at Mercy High.

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