

Fun and a Message

Dressing as their patron saints, and learning about them was the project of Mrs. Esther Hetheron's fourth grade CCD class at St. Mary Our Mother, Horseheads, as a celebration of Halloween. Students of the class, beginning from front left, are Lisa Dalrymple, Billy Contando, Karen Howland, Jon Spitale, Kelli Gorman, Carla Coro, Kevin Obalek, Todd Stantz, Jeffrey Masker, Jane Heather Russin and Tammi Floccare.

Divorced, Separated Catholics Cheered by Detroit Proposal

BY MARTIN TOOMBS

The fifth annual convention of the North American Conference of Separated and Divorced Catholics, drew 400 delegates from across the United States and Canada to Notre Dame University Oct. 22-24. The delegates heard such noted speakers as Father James Young, CSP, the founder of the first group for divorced and separated Catholics; Msgr. Stephen Kelleher, an outspoken advocate of divorced Catholics since 1968; Mel Krantzler, author of Creative Divorce, and a counselor who has designed a series of programs on divorce; and Father Anthony J. McDevitt, a canon lawyer.

Father Young spoke at the convention after having attended the Detroit "Liberty and Justice for All" conference during which a resolution concerning divorced Catholics was approved. Spontaneous applause, Father Young reported to the Notre Dame audience, followed the approval of a statement that "we recommend that the Bishops of the United States take the action required to appeal the penalty of automatic excommunication decreed by the Third Council of Baltimore (in 1884) for Catholics who dare to remarry after divorce."

Attending the convention from the Rochester diocese were Rita Lewis, a member of the divorced and separated group at St. John the Evangelist, Humboldt Street, Nancy Flanigan, St. Charles Borromeo's group, and Sister Kathleen Kircher, diocesan coordinator of ministry to divorced and separated Catholics.

Reporting on the conference the morning after their return, Nancy Flanigan said that the packed weekend made her feel that "I had

been gone longer." Noting that it was her first trip to the national convention, she said that the "spirit and enthusiasm of all the people there really hit me." She said that it was encouraging to meet persons who "came from all over the country" who are working toward common goals.

Rita Lewis, who also attended last year's convention, noted that "people were reaching out more" to each other this year, and letting each other know that there are "a lot of other people to share their problems with them."

Father McDevitt, speaking on excommunication and the right of Catholics in a second marriage to the Eucharist, told the assembly that it is a "widespread misapplication of criminal sanctions which has produced the plight" of divorced Catholics. He discussed existing canons, and concluded that "canon law itself does not exclude one from the Eucharist following an irregular marriage. He called for the church to be a reconciling group, because reconciliation is of God. To impute excommunication," he added, "is to impute ostracism." He said that excommunication signals a failure of reconciliation, but in the past no attempt has been made to reconcile those in an irregular marriage.

He also examined the 1884 decision that determined that Catholics in a second marriage must be excommunicated, and said that it is itself faulty and should be lifted.

Opening the Eucharist to those in a second marriage, he said, is not a change in Church doctrine. Pope Paul has said that the Eucharist creates "a climate in which reconciliation can be effective,"

and it is reconciliation that should be the church's goal, Father McDevitt explained.

Mel Krantzler analyzed the psychological aspects of divorce. He noted that divorce is the death of a relationship, and that a "mourning period" is required for adjustment. He noted that studies indicate that divorce is a stress-filled occurrence, second only to the death of a spouse. After the "mourning period," he said, comes self-renewal, which can often result in real personal growth.

Krantzler commented that often divorced persons turn to God and their Church at the time of divorce, and that Catholic priests have been the most effective counselors, because they are not involved in marriage personally and can be more objective.

Sister Kathleen said that she was encouraged by the convention, and noted that she was one of only three diocesan coordinators at the meeting. She reported that several persons were surprised to find that she was involved in an official capacity. Ms. Lewis said that she found "out how lucky we are in Rochester," having "the support we do from the clergy" and from Bishop Hogan.

The assembly also elected a Board of Delegates, and determined priorities for future action. The goals established were: education of the Church community, priests, laity, on the parish level and throughout the hierarchy; communication by the North American Conference of Divorced and Separated Catholics for support, information and creative dialogue; and reform of Church law and procedures regarding divorce, remarriage, and reception of the Eucharist.

Nazareth College Hosts Career Day

The Nazareth College Alumnae Association will sponsor a "Career Focus Day" for all area high school juniors and seniors on Nov. 4. The event will be at the college's Communication Center with registration at 9:45 a.m., followed by slide presentations.

Nazareth graduates involved in various careers will be on hand to discuss their particular vocations

with interested students. Career fields represented will include merchandising, politics, nursing, speech pathology, TV media, biology, banking, and social work.

Those attending should bring their own lunches but beverages will be supplied. For further information the association should be contacted at 385-1490.



MUSICAL EVENTS

Sponsored By

The American Guild of Organists

- Oct. 18—Choral Workshop—David Feller (St. Paul's Church)
Nov. 15—"Conducting from the Console"—J. Melvin Butler (Downtown United Presbyterian Church)
Jan. 22—Organ Crawl—David Andrews (2:00 pm)
Feb. 15—"Music and the Church"—Erik Routley College-Roch. Divinity School
March 7—Workshop and Recital—Marlyn Keiser (Place to be announced)
March 21—Workshop on Improvisation—Dorothy Payne (Place to be announced)
May 1—Hymn Festival St. Paul's Church
May 16—Annual Meeting and Organist/Clergy dinner (Place to be announced)

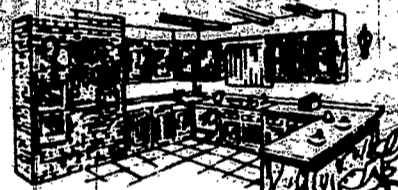
ALL EVENTS AT 7:30 P.M. Unless Otherwise Noted

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Middle East To Be Topic

Theological Issues in the Middle East Conflict will be topic of a presentation and discussion session for Christian Clergy at noon Monday, Nov. 8 at Asbury First United Methodist Church on East Avenue.

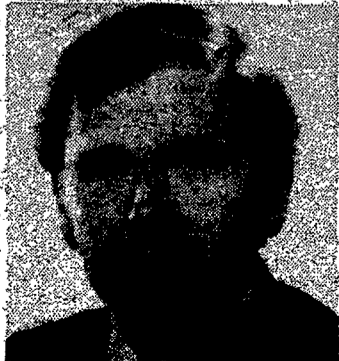
Judy Bjorkman a member of the American Friends Service Committee's Middle East Education Project, will be the speaker at the session sponsored by the Genesee Area Board for Campus Ministry and the Rochester Peace and Justice Education Center.

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