

ON THE RIGHT SIDE



Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

When Father Edward Foy, pastor of St. Peter and Paul Church, Elmira, was preparing to go with Fathers Paul Schnacky, John Lynch and the Geffel twins to a two-month course in modern theology at Dunwoodie Seminary, Yonkers, the parish had to be covered. The bishop's office arranged for Msgr. Francis Burns of St. Bernard's, and Father Richard Murphy of Notre Dame High School, Elmira, to care for the parish for six weeks. I was assigned the final two weeks: Nov. 6-20. It was an especially convenient time, because Father John Leary of St. Mary's had invited me to preach at their 40 Hours, Southside Elmira. That began Nov. 7. Father Joseph Gaynor had invited me to preach at the Eucharistic Day at St. Charles Borromeo the following Sunday. So this gave opportunity of meeting most of the priests of the area, a group whom I greatly admire.

I have long pondered the difference between Rochester Catholicism and Elmira Catholicism, a brand which seems to be shared by Auburn, Geneva and Corning. My entirely personal conclusion is this: Elmira is composed of families with roots. They have preserved strong family and parish traditions and loyalties. For generations the parish schools have strongly influenced the formation of the parishioners, who talk of their former teachers and priests with an affectionate respect and

Christ Church Slates Advent Lessons, Carols

A service of Advent Lessons and Carols will be held at Christ Church Dec. 5, at 4 p.m.

The Lessons will be read by the Rev. Edward E. Willott, III, rector of Christ Church, Pittsford; The Rev. Richard W. Comegys, rector of St. Stephen's Church, Rochester; the Rev. Canon St. Julian A. Simpkins, Jr., rector of St. Simon's Church, Rochester; the Rev. Robert M. Wainwright, rector of St. Paul's Church, Rochester; the Rev. Bruce E. Hanson, rector of St. Luke's Church, Rochester; and the Rev. Robert J. Page, priest-in-charge of Christ Church, Rochester.

Carols will be sung by the Choir of Christ Church under the direction of Dr. Wayne Barlow of the Eastman School Faculty.

A reception given by the Servetus Club of the church will follow the service. The public is invited. The church is on East Avenue at Broadway.

humor as they do in recalling their parents and grandparents. Elmira has a strong sense of the doctrine of the Communion of Saints.

On returning home to Webster, I cull thoughts to assess what was accomplished in those two weeks. First of course, were the daily and Sunday Mass. Nothing is greater than the Mass. Then, having a priest in charge, gave a security to the parishioners. The Shepherd bringing the flock to the fields of the Lord is profoundly biblical.

At three parish Masses I homilized on prayer, and the facts that so many youngsters do not know the traditional prayers. We sold 350 of the 32 page *Treasure of Prayers* book at five for a dollar. At St. Charles, Elmira Heights, I spoke on the same to the Altar and Rosary Society, and sold all that were left, about 150 more. So throughout Elmira, over 500 prayer-fruit trees have been planted, and will continue to bring forth the fruit of prayers for a long time. Meeting with most of the local priests, and most of the local Sisters too both at St. Joseph's Hospital and Notre Dame High School, a splendid school, was an inspiration to my own soul. When we read about funny clerics and funny Sisters whose weird thoughts and antics make the newspaper, it is a solace to be with these good, devoted instruments of Our Lord and His Mother.

The finale was curious and instructive. Friday, my last day, I phoned Kevin Doran, manager of Station WLEA, Hornell, 65 miles away, and arranged to hop over to Hornell to make a radio tape for our Legion of Mary *Magnify the Lord* program. On the return to Elmira, two hitch-hikers were waiting just outside Hornell. "Hop in, boys."

"Oh, hello, Father! Thanks very much for stopping."

"We're going home for Thanksgiving vacation to New Jersey. We're students at St. Bonaventure's. One was a junior the other a senior. After we discussed the hopes about the St. B. basketball team, and my informing them proudly that I am a friend of the family of Larry Weise, their Director of Athletics, I asked: "Do you 'men' know who St. Thomas More was?"

The junior had never heard of him. The senior had heard of him, and vaguely thought something disagreeable had happened to him, but what, why, when and where were not within his ken.

My car has a cassette recorder, so I can listen to lectures, instructions, etc. en route. With me was a set of Father Bernard Basset's *BiCentennial Retreat Conferences* given in Maryland. They are about the founding and holding of the Catholic Church in the Colonies, and the early States.

One talk is on St. Thomas More. So I said, "Settle back, boys. God planned for us to meet so you can learn about a great Saint." For 25 minutes they discovered something about one of the greatest of men, called "The Man for All Seasons."

When these two fine young men got out I pondered: "That senior went to a Catholic High School. Together they have spent nearly six years at a Catholic College. What has happened to Catholic education?"

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