

CLUSTERING *When Parishes Cancer Mass Work Together Set Sunday.*

BY MICHAEL GRODEN

Parish ministry is slowly changing from what it once was. The well defined geographic areas that separate one parish from another are giving way to the needs of neighborhood communities which often overlap parish boundaries.

Pastors, associate pastors, pastoral assistants and lay leaders have begun to look for new concepts in pastoral ministry.

One such concept being studied by some parishes in the diocese is clustering, the joining of two or more parishes to achieve common ministerial goals.

Three Rochester parishes, Corpus Christi, Our Lady of Mount Carmel and St. Francis Xavier are among those that have started some cluster activities and

are studying the feasibility of others.

Father Laurence Tracy, pastoral administrator at Mount Carmel, stressed that this new concept does not mean the consolidation of individual parishes into one "super parish."

"Parish identity must be maintained," he said. But there are a number of individual parish programs which can be combined.

Father Tracy added that the pastoral planning group representing the three parishes is examining programs "one at a time," and that parishioners are consulted before any actions are taken.

Some cluster activities which have begun include Religious Education, a senior citizen group, a cooperative hospital visitation program and a

"Teen Reality" prayer group for the area's youth. The planning group reported that so far there has been a good response from parishioners.

Father Tracy concluded saying that the primary reason for clustering is to improve parish ministry, not to save money as many people think.

He concluded that clustering emphasizes "community." Parish boundaries are artificial. They don't stress community. There is one ethnic community, for example, that is settled smack dab on the boundary of two of our parishes. In the past we'd split them up, but with an area ministry we wouldn't have to do that.

Father Edward Golden, pastor at St. Francis Xavier, said that he hoped clustering will promote lay leadership.

All three parishes are in primarily black and Spanish-speaking neighborhoods. Consequently, the planning group feels a real need for "indigenous" staff members.

They said that there are very few black or Spanish-speaking clergy or religious in this diocese so that the obvious place to find these representatives would be from the laity.

Msgr. George Cocuzzi, urban vicar for the diocese, also promotes clustering. He too stressed that individual parish identities be maintained but would like to see these communities "get into a cooperative spirit."

He said that clustering can avoid duplicating programs as well as make better use of ministerial staff and parish facilities.

Msgr. Cocuzzi hopes that cluster programs can "evolve to formal agreements between parishes" which would bring these separate communities closer together.

He added, however, that cluster parishes should "take their time" in establishing their programs.

In upcoming issues the Courier-Journal will take a look at other examples of clustering throughout the diocese.

A special Mass noting Cancer Sunday has been scheduled for 11 a.m., Sunday, March 27 at Corpus Christi Church, 864 E. Main St., Rochester.

Father Joseph W. Dailey, parish administrator, has arranged the liturgy for the Mass which will be dedicated to the spirit of hope in the face of cancer. The mass is open to all.

Another diocesan church, St. Vincent de Paul in Churchville also will include the theme of hope in regard to the disease as part of its liturgy that day.

Both churches will use daffodils, the symbol of the anti-cancer drive, as decoration.

Choir to Perform '7 Words'

The St. Charles Borromeo choir will perform Dubois' cantata "The Seven Last Words of Christ" at St. Mary's Church, Washington Square at 3 p.m. on Sunday, March 27.

The presentation, planned by Father Charles Bennett, associate pastor at St. Mary's, and the Downtown Ministries, will be sung in English.

It will be enhanced by visual projections of Renaissance art works of the Passion and actual scenes from the famed Oberammergau passion play from the collections of Father Robert McNamara.

Soloists will be Aldo Mannoni, as Christ, Mary Fico, soprano, Don Schreiber, tenor, and Brother Robert DeLeone, C.S.C., baritone. Judith Ann Bowman will be the organist.

According to director George Geibel, the 52-member St. Charles Borromeo Choir is unique in having many members from outside the parish boundaries, including other denominations.

The presentation is free.

Father Mahon, CPPS, Ordination Slated

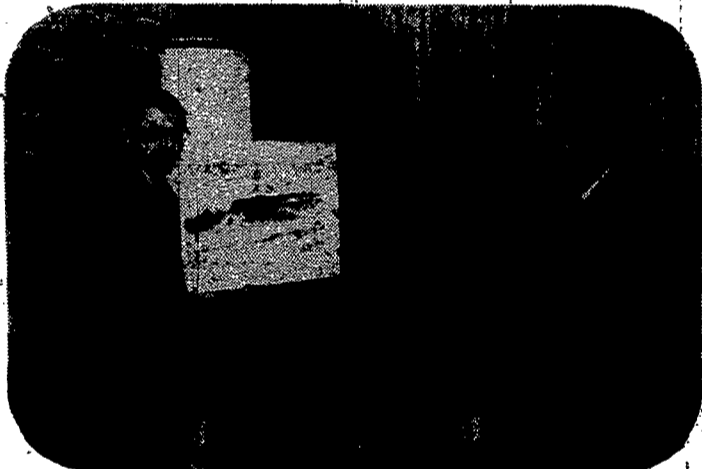
Father Ronald Mahon, a native of Chicago, who has been working in the Rochester area for the past seven years, will be ordained a priest in the Society of the Precious Blood by Auxiliary Bishop John E. McCafferty at St. Anthony of Padua Church, on Friday, March 25 at 8 p.m.

Father Mahon joined the society in 1969. Since his arrival in Rochester, Father Mahon taught CCD at St. Leo's in Hilton and was an

assistant chaplain at Rochester General Hospital. He has been associate pastor at St. Anthony's since 1973 and has headed the parish's religious education program.

The new priest has a BA in Psychology from St. John Fisher College and is presently completing his Master of Divinity degree at St. Bernard's Seminary.

Father Mahon will celebrate his first Mass at 12:15 p.m. on Sunday, March 27 at St. Anthony's.



BASH Art

Walter Podgorski Jr. (left) presents his painting "Summer's End" for auction at BASH '77 on March 26 to Father Richard Noonan, SJ, director of development at McQuaid Jesuit High School, and Mr. and Mrs. Robert Reiser, BASH Coordinators.

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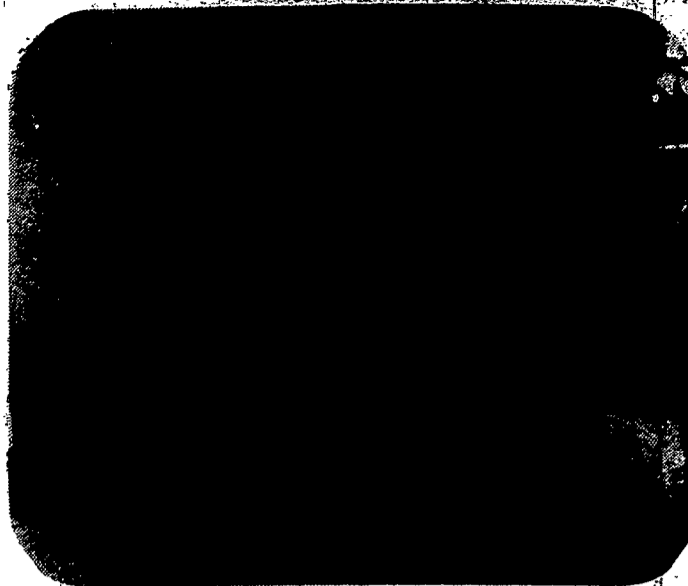
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Spring Fashion Gala

On Thursday, March 31 at 6 p.m. a spring fashion show will be held at McQuaid Jesuit High School. The public is cordially invited to view the Collectables-Spring Sportswear event sponsored by the McQuaid Parents Club. From left are Mrs. William McDonnell, president; Mrs. Earl Lipman, chairman of the show; Ms. Ellie Rankin who will be the fashion commentator.

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