

## Group Opposes Death Penalty

When some 100 representatives of religious groups from throughout the state converged on Albany last week to voice opposition to restoration of the death penalty, the Rev. Virginia Mackey of the Judicial Process Commission of the Genesee Ecumenical Commission was one of the main participants.

She read a statement from Rochester area religious leaders, including Bishop Joseph L. Hogan and Episcopal Bishop Robert Spears. In part the statement said: The final, irreversible human judgment upon others represented by the death penalty puts those who render it in the place of God, in whose hands and wisdom alone, we believe, lies the power to speak this final word. Its use invests human society with a claim to wisdom and truth which is idolatrous.

The day-long lobbying effort was jointly sponsored by the American Friends Service Committee, State Council of Churches, New York State Coalition for Criminal Justice, New York Civil Liberties Union, Quaker Information Center and the Judicial Process Commission.

State law currently mandates the death penalty for the killing of police officers and correction guards. At a morning briefing session, Assemblyman Mark Siegel urged the group to generate support for his bill to abolish capital punishment in the state.

James Cashen, representing the State Catholic Conference, reported that the bishops of New York had decided to take a position against capital punishment this year since they were convinced the issue would be raised in

the legislature. He said they had studied a 1974 resolution of the U.S. Catholic Conference and other Church teachings before arriving at their decision.

Senate Majority Leader Warren Anderson said he felt certain that a bill on capital punishment would come up in the legislature's current session. He indicated that the governor's promise of a veto would not necessarily be decisive.

## Deaths

### Sr. Eva Marie

The Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Eva Marie Schreiner, SSJ, was celebrated May 17, 1977, in the Motherhouse chapel by her cousin, Father Joseph Aubin of Morrisonville, and 12 other priests.

Sister Eva Marie, who was a consultant in the Office of Planning and Development at Nazareth College, died May 14.

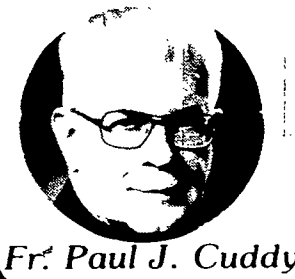
The celebrants included Msgr William Shannon of Nazareth, who gave the homily, and Fathers Edward Lintz, Robert Kreckel, Joseph Reinhart, Benedict Ehmann, also, Basilian Fathers John Robbins, Joseph Trovato, Norman Tanck, John Cavanaugh, Charles J. Lavery, John Murray and Robert G. Miller.

Sister Eva Marie's relatives, all cousins, include Mrs. Geraldine Long, Mrs. Rhena Goodberlet, Henry Zimmer, Leo, Lester and Louis Schreiner and Mrs. Clare Hutchinson, all of the Rochester area.



Representatives of the National Coalition Against the Death Penalty lobbied recently at the State Capitol in Albany. From left are James Cashen, State Catholic Conference; Rabbi Bernard Bloom, State Federation of Reform Synagogues and New York Board of Rabbis; the Rev. Virginia Mackey of the Judicial Process Commission of the Genesee Ecumenical Ministries, and Dr. James Smucker, president, State Council of Churches. (RNS)

## ON THE RIGHT SIDE



Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

On May 11 the chaplaincy at Canandaigua V A Hospital had a workshop. Along with other clergy and social workers I was invited. Father Joe Keating, the chief Honcho of the chaplains there, had asked me to fill in for a few days last January, so I was familiar with the set-up. There are 1,000 patients and about 1,000 employees—doctors, maintenance people, social workers, nurses, attendants, dietary workers, etc. It is a big operation and well administered.

The annual workshop was originated by Father Gerald Kelly four years ago. The guest speaker this year was Dr. George Freemesser. He has three claims to our esteem. He is a Basilian priest working in Canada. He is a registered and practicing psychiatrist. He is the twin brother of our own Father Paul Freemesser, copastor of Saint Michael's parish, Rochester.

I rarely listen to lectures or retreat conferences without an internal questioning of some statements which should be clarified or qualified or

withdrawn. In fact I have great sympathy for the people in the pews who listen to us, and who must squirm at some of our slips which should be qualified or clarified or withdrawn. Even the Sheen tapes have some comments which would better have been qualified or clarified or not made at all. But perfection lies only in God. The Freemesser talks, overall, were fine.

The speaker spoke about "the ability to cooperate; ability to create a community experience; being healed, and bringing our own healing to the Community." All this is simply the Gospel in social language. The admonition to "stop, look, listen" regarding ourselves is good, and is one of the reasons why people ought to make an annual retreat. Priests and Sisters are directed by the Church to make an annual retreat. Married people, and single, need a time for prayer, self-examination and release from daily pressures as much as religious. Commenting on this need, Dr. F. said: "So many marriages come to the psychiatrist simply because the couples have not stopped and looked at each other."

I could have cheered when the speaker quoted Mother Teresa of Calcutta, who said: "There is greater poverty in the United States than in India. You are hungry for love." (Send me \$3.25 and I will mail you a wonderful tape of a talk Mother Teresa gave at Notre Dame College, Baltimore.)

After the formal talks,

and question periods, a panel to react to the talks took their places. It was composed of Rabbi Judea Miller as moderator, Dr. Warren Porter, a neurologist; a red-headed Dr. Helen Denham, a psychiatrist, and Dr. Thomas Sonne, a psychologist.

Dr. Porter stressed the danger of isolation through non-communication. For years I have observed numbers of people who live intimately together, yet they do not communicate. Dr. Sonne, a native of Dansville mentioned that the English poet John Masefield wrote a poem after WWI entitled "Rehabilitation", and said: "This is the noblest work of all." Out of the blue he quietly said: "Saint Joseph in his care for the Holy Family, is a model of fidelity." After getting over the happy shock I wondered: "Do today's Sisters of Saint Joseph instill in the hearts of their pupils the devotion to Saint Joseph which the Sisters of yesterday did?" Our Webster Sisters of St Joseph assure me that they do. Deo gratias!

Dr. Denham's concern is especially for the thirsty, which certainly is an important corporal work of mercy. I was mindful of Fr. Vincent Collin's invaluable little booklet, Acceptance, which has sold over a million copies.

It was a good conference. I give thanks to God, to the VA Chaplaincy, and to Dr. Freemesser for being able to participate.

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