

# Mercy Hospital To Close July 31

**Auburn—** Mercy Hospital, Auburn's only Catholic hospital, will close July 31, the day its state license expires.

The 60-year-old institution gradually has been converted into a long-term care facility and now is down to 30 beds and a few patients.

The hospital has been plagued with increasing difficulties in fulfilling a mandate given it by its founder, Father William Payne, in 1917.

"As early as 1963," a spokesman noted, "the Sisters of St. Francis (who staff the hospital) realized...the building was in need of renovation and remodeling. An independent firm conducted an in depth study that resulted in the decision to build a new hospital. Architectural drawings were made and submitted through the appropriate processes for approval."

However, within the ensuing years, "other studies were conducted by both public and private institutions, agencies and legislative bodies. Because of the plethora of studies, confusion reigned supreme," the spokesman said.

Finally, in the late 60s, the Health Department and the Regional Health Planning Agency concluded that Auburn needed but one

acute health care facility and that was to be Auburn Memorial Hospital.

Mercy hospital agreed at that time to gradually phase out its acute care delivery.

In mid 1972, the spokesman noted, Mercy reduced its number of certified beds from 108 to 95 by eliminating its obstetrical and pediatric services. This was done at the request of the State

Health Department.

Within the last two years the hospitals beds have been reduced to 30, its emergency and operating rooms have been closed.

"The next 40 days will be filled with sorrow," the spokesman said last week. "Sorrow for all the work, sacrifices and tears that have gone into making Mercy a quality hospital. Sorrow that Father Payne's dream of the Catholic

hospital for the citizens of Auburn will no longer be fulfilled. Sorrow that Mercy will be one of a growing number of Catholic health facilities being closed throughout New York State. Sorrow that all the friends, both past and present, won't have the opportunity to have the quality of care again."


## Mary Sullivan, RSM Named Dean at RIT

Mercy Sister Mary Sullivan, who has taught since 1969 at Rochester Institute of Technology, will become dean of the College of General Studies there on Aug. 1. Currently on leave, she is finishing a year of study at Cambridge University in England.

Announcing her appointment, Dr. Todd Bullard, provost, said that she would bring "unusual experience and academic talent to this position." He spoke of her "broad work within the college and in institutional affairs." Sister Mary's community activities have included teaching English to inmates of the Monroe County Jail, establishing a rehabilitation home for female drug addicts in New York City and recruiting children for Project Head Start in Harlem. The College of General Studies offers degree programs in criminal justice and social work.

Notre Dame. In 1974, she studied at Yale under a summer grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. She was president of the former Catherine McAuley Sisters College from 1965 until 1967, then taught at Marymount College in Tarrytown until she joined the RIT faculty.

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