

St. Joseph's Board Affirms OB Unit Stand

BY MARTIN TOOMBS

Elmira—The Board of Directors of St. Joseph's Hospital has responded to the vote of the Finger Lakes Health System Agency (FLHSA) Executive Committee to close St. Joseph's obstetrics unit by affirming its commitment to the continuation of obstetrics at St. Joseph's.

Following a board meeting July 1, board chairman Judge Daniel J. Donahoe announced that "the Board of Directors is prepared to exhaust all avenues of appeal in order to retain the obstetrical service at St. Joseph's."

Three days earlier the FLHSA Executive Committee voted 11 to 7 to close St. Joseph's obstetric unit.

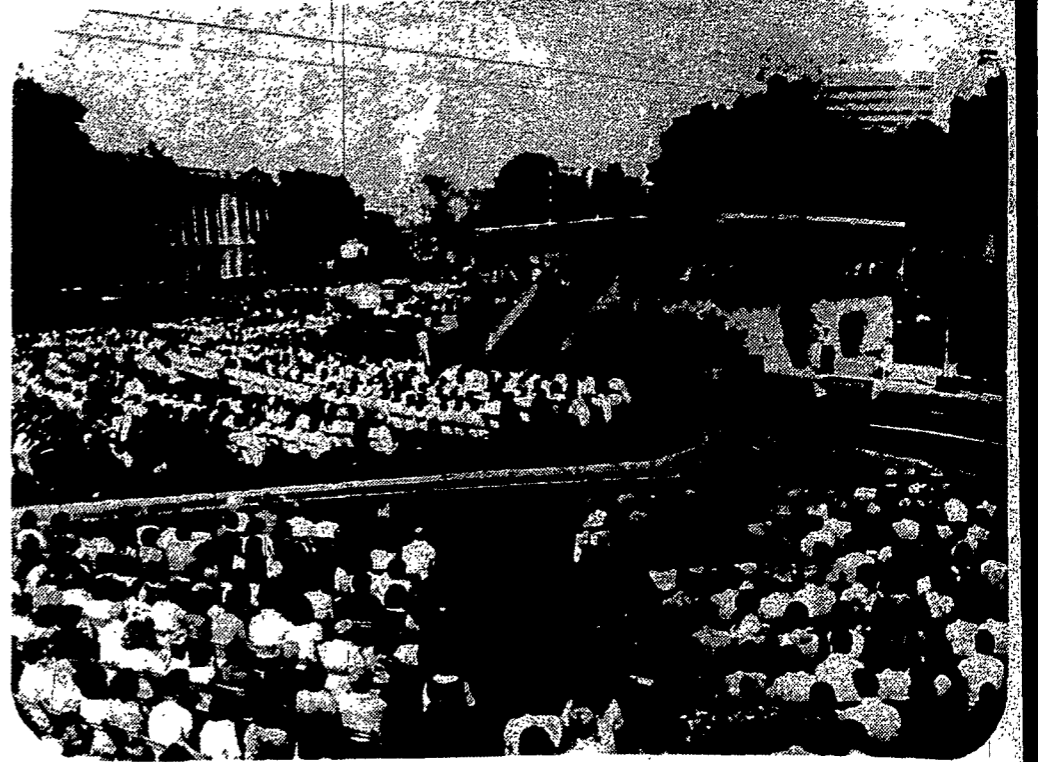
Sister Martha Gersbach, hospital administrator, stated that "immediate steps are being taken by hospital officials to pursue all alternatives available to insure the continued provision of obstetrical services at St. Joseph's. We are extremely sensitive to the feelings and concerns being expressed by the people regarding this matter."

The final decision concerning the fate of St. Joseph's obstetrics now rests with the state Commissioner of Health, Dr. Robert P. Whalen. Dr. Whalen also has before him a report from the state Catholic Conference on obstetric units in religiously-sponsored hospitals. Three state Catholic hospitals, including St. Joseph's, have

requested special waivers of fiscal penalties so that they may continue operating obstetric units.

Sister Martha also extended her gratitude to those who attended the two hearings on the obstetrics issue, June 6 and June 28, in support of St. Joseph's position.

"Persons speaking at the public forums addressed values which touch upon rights and freedoms basic to our lives as American citizens," Sister Martha commented. "We believe that the women in our local community should have the right to choose the hospital where they obtain maternity services. We are prepared to dedicate our efforts to preserve the rights and values which are so precious to our citizens."



Final Celebration

Several thousand worshippers gathered in Philadelphia to witness the final liturgical celebration of the canonization of Bishop John Neumann on June 26. Observers at the Mass ranged from small children to senior citizens to handicapped persons. (RNS)

'White Warriors' Warn El Salvador Priests

San Salvador (RNS)—An extremist right wing terrorist organization called the White Warriors Union (UGB) has issued threats to all Jesuit priests in El Salvador, telling them to leave the country by July 20 or face death.

Radio San Salvador disclosed that the UGB sent a message to all local and foreign news media in the capital accusing the Jesuits working in El Salvador of being leftist guerrilla sympathizers. It ordered them to leave within 30 days or be systematically executed.

The broadcast noted that there are about 80 Jesuit priests, mostly foreigners, in El Salvador and that they had refused to comment on the UGB message. One unidentified Jesuit was quoted as saying that members of the Society of Jesus were ignoring the death threats and will continue working as before.

The UGB was set up about three years ago for the alleged purpose of combatting growing leftist guerrilla activity in the country. A few months ago, it claimed responsibility for the death of a Salvadorian priest, Father Alfonso

Navarro Oviedo, at his parish house outside San Salvador. The killing was ostensibly in retaliation for the kidnapping and subsequent murder of Foreign Minister Mauricio Borgeonovo Pohl by members of the Popular Liberation Forces (FPL).

Last March, Father Rutilio Grande, a Jesuit working with poor farmers, and two companions were slain by machine gun fire while on the way to Mass. Both Auxiliary Bishop Arturo Rivera Damas of El Salvador, and Father Cesar

Jerez, provincial of the Jesuits in Central America, have received death threats from the UGB.

In the last several months, El Salvadorian government officials have expelled more than a dozen foreign priests who were charged with subversive acts and inciting poor farmers to acts of violence and terror. Recently, the Catholic bishops of El Salvador accused the government of "persecution of the Church" in the name of national security and anti-communism.

Msgr. Eckl

Continued from Page 1
dained June 6, 1901, by Bishop Bernard J. McQuaid, first bishop of Rochester.

After a single assistantship, at Immaculate Conception, Rochester, he advanced to a pastorate at the age of 32, in his eighth year out of the seminary. He served as pastor of St. John the Evangelist in Greece for five years before his appointment in 1914, to the new Portland Avenue parish. He became a diocesan consultant in October, 1947, and the following month, Pope Pius XII named him a domestic prelate.

Spanning as it did the whole history of St. Andrew's, Msgr. Eckl's priestly career was woven inextricably into the fabric of parish life. The major milestones he observed were milestones also in parish chronology, and many were marked by celebrations of new parish achievements.

When the parish marked the end of a half century in 1964, a member wrote in the souvenir booklet that Msgr. Eckl and St. Andrew's had become "synonymous terms."

He was the first resident pastor and the only one for 50 years. Taking the reins on St. Andrew's Day, Nov. 30, 1914, he held them until January, 1965, in his 88th year. He continued to live and work at St. Andrew's, and the Msgr. Eckl Birthday Party became one of the more persistently "annual" of parish events.

The 25th anniversary of his ordination was the day the cornerstone was set for a new church.

By his Golden Jubilee, he had overseen first, the completion of the original church and school structure, in 1914; the building of a rectory, in 1916; the opening of the present church, in 1927, and the construction of a new convent, in 1949.

In 1953, an addition to the school was finished, and in 1957, on his 80th birthday, Msgr. Eckl reopened the rectory, newly expanded and redecorated.

Hale and hearty in old age, he visited the sick and elderly and continued as adviser to the St. George Benevolent Society, a group he had organized in 1920 to provide members with a measure of insurance against accident and ill health.

He liked to get around, and took to hitch hiking after it was no longer practical for him to drive a car.

But he had been one of the early motorists. As pastor of St. John's, 1909-1914, he ran the country roads in a "flivver" that eventually came into the possession of St. Andrew's. According to parish chronicles, it brought in \$1,100 at the parish fair of January, 1915. Msgr. Eckl, the story goes, drove the car in from Greece, "thence down the flight of stairs into the basement and up onto the stage, where it became the center of attraction."

St. Mary's Establishes Group Medical Practice

Eleven physicians of various specialties will open a group practice July 18 as "an integral part of St. Mary's Hospital," the hospital announced last week. Their quarters will be in the St. Mary's Professional Office Building, 909 West Main.

The group, named Family Health Associates, includes internists, pediatricians and specialists in obstetrics and gynecology. Office hours will be 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday; Wednesday evenings and Saturday mornings. Physicians will be on call for

emergencies around the clock. Appointments can be made now by calling 235-4210.

Dr. Peter D. Mott, an internist who directs the program, emphasized that "you may select doctors for yourself, for your children or for the entire family."

The announcement from the hospital said St. Mary's had "identified a shortage of more than 60 physicians" in the western sector of city

and county. Several community agencies helped set up the program on a \$150,000 grant from the Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation and \$25,000 from the Monroe County Office for the Aging. The hospital still is seeking additional start-up funds and expects the program to break even by the fourth year of operation. A second office will be opened late this year in the Churchville-Chili area, the announcement said.

COURIER-JOURNAL TOUR OF EUROPE With Father Edward Steinkirchner



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Free Eye, Ear Clinics

Free eye and ear screenings are being held for pre-school children from three to five years old at 28 locations throughout Rochester and Monroe County. The hours are 9-3 p.m. The program is sponsored by the Eye Conservation Committee and the Monroe County Association for the Hearing Impaired.

Spanish interpreters will be available at two locations, St. Michael's Church on July 25 and Lewis Street Settlement on Aug. 5. In addition, interpreters for the deaf will be at the Health Association on Sept. 1-2.

For further information please call The Health Association at 271-3540.