



A member of the Japanese delegation presents Father Paul Marx, director of the symposium, with a doll representing his nation. On right, Dr. Frank Foley of Rochester along with Dr. Rudolf Vollman of Switzerland and Joe Petracca of Rochester get together for a discussion.

NFP Updated and Studied At International Symposium

BY JOAN M. SMITH

In a society identifiable by its use of organizational code letters, the NFP initials are growing in recognition. They stand for Natural Family Planning, a Church sanctioned method of natural birth control which educates couples in the awareness of the natural cycles of fertility and infertility, unmodified by any chemical, mechanical or artificial means.

During the week of June 17-22 an International Symposium on NFP, sponsored by the Human Life Center, was held at St. John's University in Minnesota. Four Rochesterians, involved in NFP on the diocesan level, attended the conference: Mrs. Therese Petracca, NFP volunteer program director for the diocese and her husband Joe; Dr. Francis and Martha Foley, members of the NFP Planning Committee.

The symposium consisted

of seminars, films and workshops and among the noted authorities who attended and presented these dealing with the biological, psychosocial and spiritual aspects of NFP were: Dr. Patrick Dunn, noted gynecologist-obstetrician and New Zealand's pioneer researcher and teacher of NFP; Dr. Kevin Hume, associate of Dr. John Billings of Australia, researcher and promoter of the Ovulation Method and noted educator in human sexuality; Father March Caligari, an authority on Humanae Vitae who also teaches elective NFP courses to high school juniors and seniors in Phoenix, Arizona.

It was this development of school curriculum that Mrs. Petracca pinpointed in an interview as a highly important phase to pursue so that not only the biological knowledge of fertility awareness be taught but also the psychological and spiritual values of NFP

can be shared with the students.

At the symposium, in addition to the new developments on the biological aspects of NFP, the Rochester contingent was made aware of the key elements necessary for the operating of a professional and successful operation; program quality and the importance of having trained and qualified teaching couples who use the method. According to Mrs. Petracca, because of the specialized cases dealt with such as women discontinuing the pill; nursing mothers, premenopause phases and the highly scientific data involved in NFP, it is essential to have professionally trained instructors. Mrs. Petracca indicated that there are 15-20 couples now being trained and certified in the diocese. NFP classes are not held on a regular schedule but the organization is filling parish requests for instructional sessions.

prayer. However, before his death he received \$75,000."

For the life of me I cannot understand what prompts people to begin these things. There is nothing in it financially for them and it is simply a frightening and unbelievably ignorant kind of communication. I will admit that our first tendency is to be a little apprehensive about not circulating the letter, for fear of some weird coincidence. As a matter of fact, I said to my secretary without thinking, "What if something did happen to me after I put this in the paper?"

It indicates that He would play games with people's lives. It says that He would like to trap the unwary and will just see who is going to go for this sort of thing and who isn't. God does not work that way. He wills the salvation of all and would never make our salvation depend upon sending 20 letters to anyone. He has indeed taught us how to pray, and the prayer is a chain prayer. It is called the Our Father. May I recommend it to you as a chain that binds us all together as children of our Father.

DATE CHANGED

A Blue Army holy hour previously scheduled for July 13 will be held instead on Thursday, July 14, at Holy Rosary Church, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

THE OPEN WINDOW



Fr. Louis Hohman

Dear Readers,

It has happened again. I, as well as many other people, have received another chain letter. This one is a real dilly. It starts off with a one-sentence prayer and says, "This prayer has been sent to you for good luck." It goes on to say that you will receive good luck within four days of receiving this letter if you send it on to 20 other people, but if you break the chain you will have very bad luck. It then goes on to cite examples: an RAF officer received \$50,000, says the letter, but lost it because he broke the chain. And this one is the best of all: "While in the Philippines, General Welsh lost his life six days after he received this letter. He failed to circulate this

Gerould's Pharmacies

S. Main St. and Church & Hoffman Elmira Delivery Service 733-6696

Our circle of coverage


Surrounds you with insurance protection designed for your needs and your needs alone.

We'll not only provide you with just the right auto insurance coverage, we'll finance the car too.

Auto financing — another service of our circle of coverage.

JOHN CANEPA AGENCY insurance

451 COOPER RD. 266-5225



Insights in Liturgy

'Blessing' Gives Praise

By DAVID E. NOWAK

The most basic form of Jewish prayer, occurring more than 400 times in the Old Testament, is the **berakah**. Berakah is a Hebrew word which means blessing, or praise, or thanksgiving.

The simplest classification of these **berakoth** (blessings) is into two types: short and long. The short type is a sentence beginning with the formula, "Blessed are You, O Lord our God, King of the Universe," and concluding with the reason for such praise. The long type is a more universal prayer with wider scope and developed within a communal text (e.g., Neh. 9:5-37).

In its four-part structure of opening statement and praise to God; proclamation of the reasons for this praise; petition for the continuation of God's work and its definitive accomplishment, and concluding summary acclamation of praise, the long type of **berakah** is the classic form of Jewish and early Christian prayer. This classic form, the blessing, is one of the bases of contemporary liturgical renewal and insight into the Christian experience of God.

Prayers of blessing can be misleading to modern ears. In popular speech, blessing refers to something given which has an effect on something else. The overtones of "Bless me, Father..." are that a blessing is given to the person. Although this meaning can be found in the Bible (Gn. 27:27-29 — Isaac's blessing of Jacob) and God does bless us with His creative and life-giving command to be fruitful, filling and subduing the earth, more commonly "blessing" is something that people do in reference to God, as in Psalm 104: "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" or in the Canticum of the Three Young

Men: "Bless the Lord, all you works of the Lord."

In the New Testament, the word "bless" has no expressed object; it is God who is blessed. He is the object of praise. Likewise, in the Jewish liturgy, the word has no significant material object. When Jesus "said the blessing" at table, he did not say the equivalent of "bless us, O Lord," but he "blessed God," that is, he gave Him thanks and praise. It is this type of blessing which gave rise to our eucharistic prayers as an expression of the **totality** of our relationship to God in Jesus.

The "blessing" prayer is fundamentally an act of praise: a public, communal proclamation which imparts to the assembly some knowledge or realization. The blessing expresses a religious attitude acknowledging the active character of God. It arises out of a sense of gratitude and is performed as an act of praise.

As in the Psalms, our "blessing" God is not to flatter Him or transmit to

Him some cultic force, but to increase among us the effect of his presence by causing others present to recognize Him. It is not for God's sake that he is praised, but for ours. By joyously telling of His faithfulness, we may know Him in our faith.

We "bless God" to acknowledge His active presence in the ambiguity of our freedom and dependency. Our act of praise is a sign and realization of our consent and answerability to a truth yet to be fully revealed: Our answerability is our entry into a relationship: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jer. 31:33).

We "bless God" in the joyful and longing recognition of the presence of His kingdom. Eagerly seeking God in the language of prayer, we make real the fulfillment of our lives in praise and thanksgiving, reverence and awe.

"Blessed His name, whose glorious kingdom is for ever and ever"

ONCE YOU SEE NAUM'S DIAMONDS AND JEWELRY... YOU WILL NEVER BE SATISFIED WITH ANYTHING LESS!

HOLY GHOST CHURCH FESTIVAL

☆ ☆ ☆
FRI 7 P.M. & SAT. 6 P.M.
JULY 16 & 17
RAIN DATE SUNDAY, JULY 18, 2 P.M.

☆ ☆ ☆
FUN! GAMES!
220 COLDWATER RD. (Off Buffalo Rd.)

Help Us Celebrate Our 100th Anniversary!