

COURIER-JOURNAL

16 Pages

Wednesday, August 10, 1977

NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

20 Cents



FATHER JOHN DREXEL

Brazil Missioner Seeks Help for Abandoned

By JOHN DASH

One of Father John Drexel's favorite jokes is to tell strangers that, although unmarried, he's the father of 16 children. Before his audience's shock abates, the Brazilian missioner shoves in, "It's true, 16 adopted children."

The children are abandoned waifs that the Rochester-born Oblate of Mary Immaculate has found wandering the streets of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Their mothers, many times, are women forced into prostitution by the social and economic pressures of life in the fast growing city.

The population of Sao Paulo, the priest says, increases each year to such an extent that it would not be an exaggeration to say it is like adding the urban population of Rochester.

But the children, while they are the first of Father Drexel's concerns, are not the only missionary endeavor the 45-year old priest has.

In the 15 years he has spent in Brazil, he has served as national director of the Cursillio Movement, has become a well-known television personality, teaches in the diocesan major seminary, has co-founded a publishing house,

produces a radio program, and "has learned to be a good beggar."

Also in those 15 years spoken English has become strewn with Portuguese words pronounced in the Italian fashion characteristic of Sao Paulo's dialect.

Also in those 15 years he has grown increasingly aware of the role government plays in the preservation of social and economic injustices.

And, prayer: he has begun the practice of Eastern discipline in his prayer. He cherishes the definition of a priest as "A mystic with hands."

Father Drexel is home this Summer assisting the programs in the Communications Department at St. John Fisher College, and visiting with his parents, Mr. and Mrs. John J. Drexel of St. Helen's Parish.

Of the reported tensions between the hierarchy and the military government in Brazil, Father Drexel noted recently that, "The bishops are really accepting their responsibilities as pastors — conscious of human rights." He said the Cardinal of Sao Paulo, Paul Evaristo Arns, "Dom Paulo," "gives his priests a real motivation to struggle to defend Gospel values — very beautiful, very positive."

As an example of the

priests' defense of Gospel Values, Father Drexel cites the cases occurring within his own community of censorship, of participation in student demonstrations, of adopting new life-styles.

His own unit, for instance, has moved into a small house on a side street in Sao Paulo, "out of a mansion," without telephones, without running water.

Father Drexel is perhaps most noted in Sao Paulo as the producer of radio and television programming and as a television star in his own right.

His community recognized his fierce commitment to using the airwaves to communicate the

Continued on Page 2

Bishop's Condition

When contacted on Monday, Aug. 8, sources at Lenox Hill Hospital in Manhattan indicated Archbishop Fulton Sheen's condition was about the same as has been reported over the last few days. He is in stable condition but still in intensive care.

The Archbishop is recovering from heart surgery performed on July 15.

President Carter's Envoy Due at Vatican Next Month

Rome (RNS)— President Carter's newly appointed personal representative to the Vatican is expected to make his first call here in the Fall.

A spokesman for the American Embassy said that David Walters of Miami would present his credentials after Pope Paul's mid-September return from Castelgandolfo.

The presidential envoy to the Vatican is not based in Rome, but makes two or three visits a year for special talks or ceremonies. Henry Cabot Lodge, Mr. Walters' predecessor, was here last on June 19, for the canonization of the American, Bishop John Neumann.

The American Embassy maintains a small Vatican office, and the State

Department has a Vatican desk. The United States and Mexico are the only major countries that do not recognize Vatican City as a sovereign state.

Mr. Walters is a Catholic and a specialist in international law. His appointment does not require Senate confirmation because the envoy is considered a personal aide to the President.

Buses Cut from Budget, State Action Is Pressed

BY JOAN M. SMITH

busing couldn't be reinstated.

The ax which has been threatening to cut budget funding for parochial and private schools students' transportation outside city limits, finally fell. On Aug. 4, the Rochester School Board met and according to all reports were going to pass the school budget without the promised cuts and without confirmation of municipal overburden aid payments from the State Legislature. A last minute vote change, however, changed the picture and the cuts were made.

The on again — off again budget dilemma began last April when the school board announced its proposal to eliminate the busing funds. Since then the diocese has been busy trying to stop the move; mobilizing protest marches, arranging for speakers at the public hearings, and circulating petitions.

"Frustrating," was the word used by Sister Roberta Tierney, superintendent of Diocesan Schools, when contacted about the reversal. She reiterated the administration's opinion that the proposed bus cut should never have been made. That it was unnecessary because 90 per cent of the City School District's cost is reimbursed by the State.

"Transportation is the heart of the issue," she declared, explaining that if overburden is finally passed most budget cuts could possibly be reinstated gradually. But busing being such a big issue, it would be difficult reinstating it "without making headlines."

Elizabeth Farley whose sudden vote change sent the budget through with cuts intact viewed the situation differently. She told the Courier she saw no reason that if and when the aid is passed and as soon as contracts were awarded,

Gary Smith, School Board president, told the Courier, "It would depend on when the overburden is passed. He noted that if the Legislature reconvenes in October, as presently planned, and passes the aid, "I am positive all the programs would be reinstated."

If, on the other hand, the Legislature uses its prerogative and waits until January to meet and pass the aid bill the programs will be lost due to the lateness in the school year. And even with the passage of the overburden bill, which

would free money for the 1978-79 year, Smith doubted the programs could be salvaged and reinstated into next year's budget because "of the fiscal picture becoming darker and darker."

The Diocese will now not only be working to convince the Legislature to reconvene but also will be trying to convince the school board to call an emergency meeting to reinstate the transportation funds. In the meantime, as this article goes to press, busing funds have been curtailed with the result of a foreseeable added financial burden to families exercising their right to freedom of choice in education.

School Office Shifts Traditional Holiday

"For sound educational continuity," was the way Timothy Leahy, assistant superintendent of Diocesan Schools, explained the decision to follow the City School District's school calendar, eliminating the long Easter vacation Time off at Easter for the elementary schools this year will consist of Holy Thursday, Good Friday and depending on individual school district plans, Easter Monday. There will be a February and April recess Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays will remain the same.

The Catholic High Schools have also made the move to this new schedule. Aquinas will have Holy Thursday and Good Friday off with long week-ends in February and April.

Cardinal Mooney, however, is retaining its usual two week Easter vacation. The school will not take the February or April recess but has allowed for a long week-end at Washington's Birthday. "We feel strongly that our

religious holidays are being taken away," commented Sister Maureen Flood, vice principal, in discussing Mooney's decision to retain the traditional Easter vacation.

Nazareth Academy will close Holy Thursday, Good Friday and will take the February and April recesses. Sister Mary Jean, principal, in discussing the school's decision, emphasized the difficulties caused to families that have children in various schools each operating on different vacation schedules.

This was also a reason St. Agnes decided to follow suit. "Uniformity is really better," noted Sister Anne Guerin, principal. She pointed out that now married couples teaching at different schools would have the same vacation time and students would be off the same time as their friends.

According to sources at Bishop Kearney, the school will close during Holy Week. Continued on Page 2



A Date to Remember

Last Saturday, Aug. 6, was the 32nd anniversary of the nuclear destruction of Hiroshima and some 80,000 of its residents. "This is a date which should not be forgotten, which should remain as a perennial warning for the whole of mankind," said Vatican Radio, in an editorial calling for an end to nuclear armament. Under the banner of "Mobilization for Survival," demonstrations were held around the world during the weekend. The one pictured, in downtown Rochester, was organized by workers at the St. Joseph House of Hospitality.