

Blessed Trinity School 'A Vision and a Dream'



SISTER WALTER ANNE O'MALLEY

By Mary Ann Ginnerty

"The ingredients that made the Blessed Trinity Merger work were hard work, public relations, good communications, determination and above all enthusiasm," said Sister Walter Anne O'Malley, SSJ, principal.

Blessed Trinity School, which enters its fifth year in September with an enrollment of 560, formed by merging three Auburn schools: Holy Family, Sacred Heart and St. Alphonsus.

"It was a vision and a dream and the result of

initiative and effort on the part of many people," Sister Walter Anne said.

"The promise from the beginning was a school which would provide quality education, a school in which good teaching and scholastic achievement will and must predominate," she said.

Planning began in September, 1972 with all three parishes planning together. By November, 1972 an interim school board was established composed of three members from each of the existing school boards. The Board meetings, frequently under the direction of Dr. Joseph Rowley, regularly reported the results of many hours of work spent eliminating or anticipating possible problems to their own parishes.

"A great sense of respect and mutual trust was developed as all worked to unify the school into a separate entity and not an extension of the three parishes," Sister Walter Anne pointed out.

Of course there were many hurdles she acknowledged. One original plan had been to disperse kindergarten through grade 8 among the three existing school buildings. This

concept proved unwieldy, the decision made to pool resources and locate at what would be the former, St. Alphonsus school.

"Parents were alerted to how the thinking developed. Presentations were made concerning the over-all program. The people knew that when a presentation was made it had been well thought out. Parents were kept abreast of all the developments," she said.

Sister Walter Anne pointed out the three parishes had had parish schools for many years. While there are no parish boundaries in Auburn, there is strong parish identity. She declared that the fear of loss of parish identity did not materialize.

When dealing with the children the policy was never to ask what school they were from. The parents were encouraged to take their children to Mass in their own parishes. All sacraments are administered in each parish. The CYO is on its own. Sisters go to all functions in each of the parishes, and have representation on the councils and education committees.

"Blessed Trinity was born in January, 1973 when the

students in the three schools voted on the name. The doors opened in September 5, 1973" she said.

"It is crucial to involve local people in the decisions she said. You have to have people who can run meetings, sift out nonessentials, stick to what has to be done. You need people who are finance men, builders, educators, parents, the nuts and bolts people, to borrow a phrase," said Sister Walter Anne.

When Sister Walter Anne speaks of the many long hours spent in planning and how proud she is of the awards and achievements which have come to Blessed Trinity since its inception, it is obvious where her heart lies.

The first to try and give credit to everyone involved, she summarized the success of the merger as undoubtedly due to prayers on the part of all concerned being heard and answered. The untiring effort of the school boards, the support of the Diocesan superintendent, and the dedication on behalf of Catholic education on the part of all seemed to turn the tide.

Lunch Fun

A child's lunch box needn't be just a container for carrying sandwiches. It can be a colorfully decorated kit containing a variety of foods that make lunch a fun affair.

The grade school bunch have a special pal to sit down with if they carry a lunch box imprinted with King Kong, Howdy Doody or another cartoon favorite. And parents can be sure the kit is safe if it contains an unbreakable thermos.

Just as it's important for lunch toters to select their favorite characters, it's important for them to be involved in planning their menus.

A weekly planning session also doubles as a nutrition lesson for them. Here is a child-tested recipe youngsters will want to try:

CHOCOLATE BANANA

1 ripe banana, sliced

1 cup orange juice

1 cup cold milk

1 tsp. chocolate syrup

Place all ingredients in blender. Blend until smooth. Makes two, 1 cup servings.

Parents

Help

Reading

Parents and the general public are important forces in the reading education of a community. Besides encouraging activities in the home which help children develop reading skills and foster a love of reading in their own children, parents often become involved in school and community reading programs.

Dr. Jack Cassidy, member of the International Reading Association Board of Directors and supervisor of reading for the Newark, Delaware School District, suggests that parents find out what their community is doing in the area of reading and then participate.

In the school, people can actively participate in a volunteer tutoring program. Volunteers do not always work directly with students, says Dr. Cassidy. Often, they help construct teaching materials, check workbooks, or do other jobs which help the teacher find more time to work with individual children.



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