

# NAWR 'A Sense of Hope'

By JOHN DASH

For Sister Marlene Vigna the recent convention of the National Association of Women Religious (NAWR) in New Orleans, and every meeting of that group gives her "a sense of solidarity with those sisters listening, struggling, and in pain, waiting to respond and make good things happen in the Church."

"It gives just such a sense of hope," she said last week, on her return to Rochester where she serves as pastoral assistant at St. John the Evangelist Church.

The Sister of Mercy was the official delegate of the Diocesan Sisters Council to the national meeting which drew more than 500 religious women from around the country.

Sister Marlene pointed to Sister Marie Augusta, SND, as one of the convention's speakers who had the most impact on the assembly.

Sister Marie Augusta, a professor of sociology and author and lecturer, keynoted the convention's theme, "My People, Let Go: Human Rights and Economic Oppression," in a lecture on economic systems.

She told the sisters that their's are three places: "with the poor as they reach out in violence to take what is rightfully theirs; with the non-poor, to help them release their corporate grasp on the resources the poor need for survival; with the miserable as made so by the struggle entailed in the first two, to assuage their suffering in the midst of needed changes."

Sister Marlene noted that her "favorite" was the third.

Sister Marlene pointed out last week that "one of the important things that came out of the convention was the realization that there was a need of structures for grassroots sisters to respond," to current issues.

NAWR has embarked on a two-year study and experiment in providing such structures, she said.

NAWR bills itself as "the only grassroots Sisters' membership group in the country," according to a press release issued at the close of the meeting last week.

The release states NAWR claims "thousands of Catholic Sisters in Councils from nearly 100 dioceses and 4,000 individual memberships (including lay men and women, clergy and religious brother associate memberships)."

A nun who helped plan the controversial Call to Action conference of the U.S. Catholic bishops last year in Detroit gave credit to sisters for pioneering the Church's social services, and suggested they should now lead the way to develop social justice.

Sister Margaret McCafferty, PBVM, said that "whether or not we move into the 80s with a Catholic community fully aware of its responsibility, fully committed to justice, depends heavily on us who are gathered here."

She said that it was the sisters who made the most significant contribution to the Detroit social justice conference by pushing and prodding their local bishops into sending delegates to the "Liberty and Justice for All" program.

Sister Jane Marie Lueke, chairperson of the women in the Church and society committee of NAWR, told the delegates that there "is no conflict" in being against abortion and for the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to the Constitution.

However, she cautioned, "We have to deal with the fact that Catholic women are polarized over the issue of abortion" to the point of interpreting support of ERA as support of abortion.

Sister Kathleen Keating, NAWR chairperson, stated that the ordination of women to the Catholic priesthood "will come about — probably before the year 2,000."

"Probably the most vocal push for the ordination of women is in the American Church... There are a lot of committed people working on it, and the movement is getting stronger... I would like to see it come about without breaking up the Church, without a schism," she said.



Sister Marlene, right, and Sister Susan McCarthy from New York City.

## And, by the Way . . .

In the course of the telephone interview with Sister Marlene Vigna, the Courier-Journal reporter remarked that Sister's voice sounded as if she had caught cold during her stay in New Orleans.

"No," Sister Marlene replied, "But my heart is racing. There's an envelope on my desk." That envelope, she thought, contained word that perhaps, after eight examinations, she had finally managed to acquire enough points to achieve her Master's degree in British and European Literature.

The phone receiver clatters on the desk and the sound of footsteps falling away. Silence. Then a scream from far away. "I don't believe it. How could they do that?"

## Diamond Anniversary Celebrations Planned

**Corning** - St. Patrick's Parish has set Sunday, Sept. 25 for festivities celebrating the parish's 75th anniversary. Bishop Joseph L. Hogan will be the main concelebrant at a Mass at 4 p.m., which is expected to draw many priests and sisters who formerly worked in the parish.

Parishioners currently are receiving information about the celebration and the parish's history.

The parish started as a mission of St. Mary's, Corning, in 1886, in a former Salvation Army barracks on

The envelope simply contained an application form for graduate degree studies at the school. Disappointment.

End of Conversation.

Ten minutes later the phone at the Courier desk rings. Sister Marlene. She has called the school. It was an oversight, forgetting to inform her of her degree when they had mailed her the application for the doctorate program.

"It's been 20 years," she reveals, "since I took French."

"I had to translate a section of The Stranger, Albert Camus," she says.

Congratulations, Sister Marlene.

East Market Street. It was established as a parish in 1902, moving to its present location on what is now known as Denison Parkway. The parish, consisting largely of Corning's Irish immigrant population, opened its school in 1903.

On the occasion of the anniversary, the parish is beginning an endowment to provide financial security for the parish's future. Parishioners are being asked to make a special donation to the endowment to ensure that the parish's services will be available to future generations.

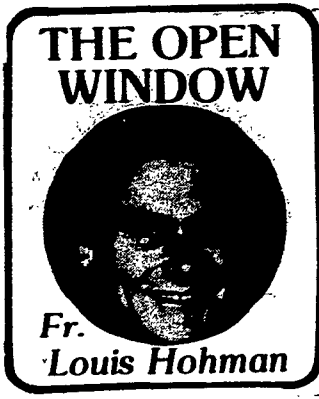
### ARSENIC

Holy Family Theatre will present Arsenic and Old Lace Aug. 25, 26 and 27 in the school auditorium, Jay and Ames Streets; curtain time, 8 p.m. General admission is \$2; students and senior citizens, \$1.50.

### Elmira DCG Sets Liturgy

Elmira - The Elmira Divorced and Separated Catholics Group is sponsoring a Mass Sunday, Aug. 21 at 7:30 p.m. for all divorced or separated Catholics in the area. The Mass, in St. Patrick's Church, will be celebrated by Father Kevin Murphy, St. Patrick's co-pastor.

The group also is sponsoring a panel discussion Sunday, Sept. 18 at 7:30 p.m. in St. Patrick's Hall. The panel of priests will discuss their experiences with the marriage tribunal.



Dear Father Hohman,

Reflecting on a letter to the editor in the Courier some time ago, I have begun to wonder myself if the Church (especially in Rochester) hasn't been turned over to the left-wingers. I could not go along with what was said in the letter about the Church being communist infiltrated, but I do feel that there are some indications that our diocese in particular and the American Church in general is being swayed much more by left-wing elements than by traditionalists. One evidence of this is the Call to Action Conference which was cited in the letter. That Call to Action Conference seemed to me to be made up mostly of people who had far out, left wing causes. Some of these were the ordination of women priests and liberalization of marriage laws and actually many others.

We have also seen in the last decade or so great liberalizations of Church policy all the way down the line from the changing of basic liturgy of the Mass to receiving Communion in the hand. It doesn't seem to me as though the traditionalists have much to say about the way the Church is governed. I simply wonder if this is good for the Church in the long run.

Signed, L.Z.

Dear L.Z.

Your letter brings up a point which I know is a matter of concern to many people but it does not simply deal with one or two issues, but with many which have affected the Church in the last 15 years. The first thing that we must remember is there is no concerted effort against traditionalism except in so far as the Vatican Council tried to update the Church and to bring its practical, pastoral thinking in line with modern needs and modern patterns of thought. This is not to say that there was any surrender to these modern patterns of thought, but merely a taking them into consideration. The thing to be remembered is that little or no adaptation had taken place to the signs of the times for almost 400 years.

There is a separate problem here relative to many traditionalists who see any kind of shaking to their security as a shaking of divine reality. The truth is that the problem has more to do with their own

psychology, in many cases, than with the reality which we call divine truth. I think that anyone with an open mind is willing to recognize the fact that nothing which is of the essence to Christian belief has been removed or destroyed through Vatican II or through any changes in practice that have taken place since that time.

There are also many people who felt because of the triumphalistic stand of the Church in pre-Vatican II times that any change had necessarily be evil and erroneous. This is simply not the case as even a cursory examination of the Church before these times would indicate.

As far as the Call to Action Conference is concerned, the idea was passed around in this diocese that the delegates were basically left-wing types, mostly from the Office of Human Development, and therefore would have very avant-garde and, to some, weird ideas. That would be a falsification of the real picture, because Call to Action related to dozens of other dioceses which used a more democratic process of obtaining delegates and which were on the ground floor before the first conference ever took place. It is also true that the Rochester Diocese got itself onto the ground floor in plenty of time for the second conference and in that conference our diocese was well represented through the findings of numerous surveys taken on a diocesan wide basis. So that I think a search for domination by left-wingers is a new kind of witch hunt which can only be divisive and harmful in the long run.

P.S. - The Courier-Journal has gone out of its way to make the voice of traditionalists heard, and their ideas expressed.



### Jamboree

Jim Cimino and Darrel Gearhart, above, build a bonfire for the Rochester-Monroe County contingent at the recent Boy Scout Jamboree held at Moraine State Park, Pa. More than 25,000 scouts and their leaders attended the gathering. At right, Fred Phillips, Longhorn District chairman from Rochester, looks over some of the patches that were traded during the six-day event.



### SOME THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER

By Ed Sulewski  
When we meet a serious crisis, our emotional needs suddenly become a great concern. Our emotions are a vital and central part of our personality. The experience of great joy or great sorrow are emotional responses to life. Yet often we have only a slight awareness of how our emotions develop, and of how we can best handle them. Like other areas of our being, our emotions have developed over a period of time. Everything that has happened to us has, in some way, left its mark. One experience can bring on a powerful emotional impact, while another may influence us without a conscious awareness, and still change our feelings. If we are to understand and wisely manage our grief we need to know how it develops and then how it can be controlled. No. 19  
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