

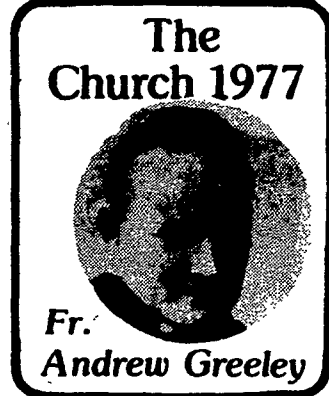
# 14621 Sets Convention

A convention has been called for this Saturday night by Group 14621, a community association identified by its area's zip code number. All residents of that postal zone are invited to attend the meeting at St. Andrew's School, 923 Portland, from 7 until 10 p.m. Oct. 22.

John Salter, diocesan director of the Human Development Office, will be keynote speaker. There will be displays and workshops

on various neighborhood problems, election of officers, and a party at the close of business.

Group 14621 recently received a grant from the treasury of the National Campaign for Human Development. Its membership includes representatives of the five Catholic churches in the area. Its commitment, says President Kathy Romanoski, is "to building a better neighborhood.



My recent column on rotten sermons produced an interesting flood of letters. From the laity came agreement, including a note from a man who is trying to do a dissertation on the subject of the laity's right in strict justice to good sermons - subject to restitution. Let him try to collect.

From the clergy came more of the usual warnings about "stridency" and "ineffectiveness." Saying that most sermons are rotten - even with empirical evidence to back up your assertion that the laity thinks so - is "strident" and "ineffective," I guess.

A lot of folks have been warning me about "ineffectiveness" lately, including one slightly vicious cleric from Seattle who has been writing letters around the country saying that I have become "ineffective" because I am "strident." The most recent unsolicited advice came from the moralist Charles Curran; he bore false witness against the Notre Dame "Vatican III" social scientists and instead of correcting his misstatement of facts, he wrote me a pious homily on my "effectiveness" - a characteristic exercise in American clerical passive aggressive behavior though not what one would expect from a moral theologian who imposes such stern standards of social justice on others.

Well, to Charles Curran and all other such passive aggressive types I respond as follows: I don't give a hoot about your "effectiveness." I will not pull my punches so as not to offend either the envious clergy or the pompous bishops of the land, or the bungling lay journalists I don't much care whether I have any influence or not. I care only whether I have enough integrity to tell the truth as I see it.

I will not say that an ineptly planned meeting is a historical breakthrough - even if I lose a friend or two in the hierarchy because of it. I will not pretend that there is decent social science scholarship at the Catholic universities, even if this makes a few provosts and ex-provosts angry. I will not assert that a psychopath in not a psychopath no matter how high the ecclesiastical offense might be. I don't give a hoot whether they seek my advice or not. While God

gives me life, they are going to get it, regardless.

I will not pretend that the USCC/NCCB staff in recent years has shown a high quality of excellence in its work, no matter how unpopular it may make me in that isolated ivory tower. I will not sing the praises of the "Call to Action" or the Catechetical Directory even if my criticism makes it unlikely that the hierarchy will seek my advice. I will not be a party to the charade that the "National Catholic Reporter" is a competently edited journal.

Nor will I soft-pedal research findings because such findings disturb either pious, nunish school superintendents or Vatican bureaucrats, or CCD ideologues. Life is too short to hold back on speaking the truth because people will listen to you if you tell them only half-truths. If such an approach offends old friends, that's too bad for them.

I do not especially enjoy being in opposition but given the chaos in the American church today and the number of fakes and phonies being celebrated in and by the "National Catholic Reporter" every week, a priest whose livelihood does not depend on the church has no choice but to be in opposition, not if he has any shred of intelligence or integrity left.

Anyhow, I suspect that you have more influence by telling the truth than by pulling your punches. Though it is not expedient for me to boast, I will still boast as St. Paul said. I would wager that there are few, if any, associate pastors in America who eat more breakfasts, lunches or dinners with bishops, archbishops and cardinals each year than I do. Many of these get-togethers are in secret and many with those who are constrained to disagree with me in public. Virtually all of those who come by night, however, urge me to keep on speaking the truth.

I wonder how many say that to Father Curran or the priest from Seattle

### ANOINTING RITE

A special Mass, incorporating the anointing rite, will be celebrated for the sick and the infirm at 11 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 22, in St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 4530 St. Paul. Msgr. Richard K. Burns, pastor, will be assisted by Father Daniel Holland, his associate; Deacon James Peters and priests of the area. Everyone is welcome to take part and stay for refreshments afterward. Those needing transportation should call the rectory, 342-2323. The celebration was arranged by the parish council's liturgy, human development and parish life committees.

## Facts for Monroe County Voters

# Answers to Your Questions About Taxes

**Q Taxes are so confusing. Just tell me the facts. How much have county tax rates gone up in the last five years?**

**A Here are the facts:** Under Republicans, the average county tax rate has gone up 4% in the last five years. (That's an increase of \$1.27.)

**Q Well, that sounds good, but how does the 4% county tax increase compare with other areas?**

**A Let's take a look.**

#### • City Tax Rate

Since Democrats took control of City Council, the city tax rate has gone up 44%. (That's an increase of \$17.45.)

**The message is clear: The Republican majority in the County Legislature has held the line on county taxes; the Democratic majority in City Council has not.**

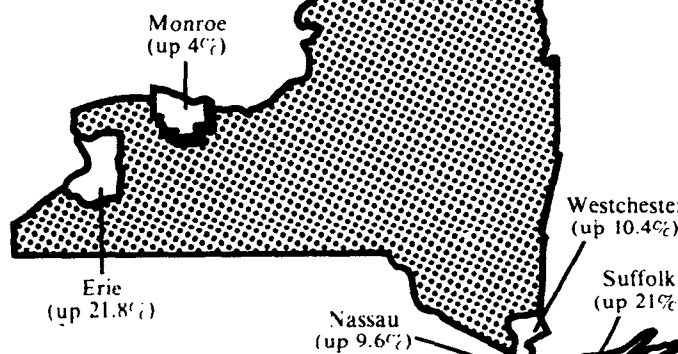
#### • Cost of Living

Since 1972, the cost of living in Monroe County has gone up more than 44%, while the county tax rate has increased only 4%.

**The message is clear: The Republicans have held the line on county taxes during a difficult economic period when increases in the cost of living hurt our buying power.**

#### • Other Counties in New York State

If you compare the five largest counties in the State (outside of New York City), you'll find that Monroe County had the lowest tax increase in the last five years.



**The message is clear: Throughout New York State, few other county governments have been as successful as the Republicans in Monroe County in controlling the spiral of government spending.**

**Q Okay. You convinced me. It's clear that Republicans have held the line on county taxes. Now...**

**why are some people complaining because the Republican majority had to cut the county budget in order to hold the line on taxes?**

**A** It does sound confusing, doesn't it? But it all comes down to human nature. You see, when it comes to spending money, the hardest thing for any group to accept is the cut-back that affects them... especially in terms of government services.

**Q You mean, everybody is all for putting the lid on spending... except "don't cut the budget for my favorite project!"**

**A Exactly.** When Monroe County was hit hard by the effects of the nationwide recession, several things happened:

- Unemployment jumped to almost 9%
- Welfare costs skyrocketed by \$34 million in two years. (That's a 37% increase.)
- And, expected sources of income, like the sales tax revenues, dropped way below forecasts. (People delayed spending money for major purchases during this uncertain period.)

**Q So you're telling me that people are complaining because the Republican majority saw these major problems and voted to cut county expenses and hold down taxes?**

**A Yes.** The Republican legislators knew they faced many tough decisions. And they knew that, anytime they had to say "no," they were bound to make some people angry. But they made the tough decisions anyway. Now, at election time, it's easy for Democrats to criticize those tough decisions and to make promises for more spending to special interest groups.

**Q What do Republicans promise?**

**A Just this:**  
**To continue to work for progress in Monroe County, while we hold the line on taxes.**  
 We think the message is clear:

- By holding the line on taxes, Republicans protected the public interest, not the special interests.
- By holding the line on taxes, Republicans held down the impact of a tax increase on individuals, especially older people on fixed incomes.
- By holding the line on taxes, Republicans enhanced business confidence in Monroe County. Confidence to stay here and expand, creating new jobs and a sound economy.

**Q I agree that Republicans have done a good job in the county. But I vote for the candidate, not the party.**

**A Fine.** But when you go into the voting booth on Election Day, ask yourself this question: If Republicans voted to hold the line on taxes for you yesterday... then shouldn't you vote for Republicans today... otherwise, who will have your mandate to hold the line on taxes, tomorrow?

This November, you're voting for a candidate—and more. You're voting for Republicans who will continue to hold the line on county taxes for you.

## Vote Republican. It matters.

Paid for and authorized by Monroe County Republican Committee, Thomas Gosnell, Treasurer