

ALMANAC

Prayers Help Those Weather Predictions

By MARGARET CONNOLLY

The weather man blew in the other day, on the first snow storm of the season. His talk is as fast and non-stop as the winds that shake 67 Chestnut, so we forgot to ask him, "What prediction had you made for this day?"

Well, next year at this time it will be "wet in the Great Lakes area," according to the Farmers' Almanac. Ray Geiger, editor and owner, will stand by that prediction, because he has three sisters who are School Sisters of Notre Dame, and one priest-brother, and they all pray that he won't fall flat on his face. Or so he believes.

"I have a lobby in the Hereafter," he says.

He hands out cards that say, "To Heaven with You!" Or, whether the observation is appropriate or not, "You are a beautiful Woman..." He is a performer — a verbal hooper.

And as one's Irish neighbor used to say, he is "more Catholic than the pope."

He likes to tell about setting up Nocturnal Adoration Society chapters — in New Jersey, Maine, Australia. The late bishop of

Buffalo, then Father James A. McNulty, helped him overcome what he took to be institutional opposition. "Within a month I had 1,000 men signed up for the society," Geiger reported.

His life story is sprinkled liberally with the names of high-ranking clergy, not to mention celebrities in general. Little wonder: he came to Rochester on the heels of a whirlwind tour of southern Ontario where he had given eight newspaper interviews and made several television appearances, in his spare time. It's all business, of course. He promotes his wares — the Farmer's Almanac ("that's my baby!") and the little plastic gadgets he invents and produces in Lewiston, Me., to promote the wares of others in the market place. Advertising gimmicks: "Here's a pen that will write for five miles without stopping. If you have loose diamonds (or aspirin tablets), you can put them in this Pixie Pouch."

The reason for coming to Rochester at this time is that the Farmers' Almanac has a new outlet here — Columbia Banking. "That has to be in the story," Geiger says, "so people will know where to get it." The almanac is free; you don't even have to be a customer of the bank.

Geiger took over the publication in 1933, when times were hard and he was a recent graduate of Notre Dame, with a bachelor's degree in philosophy. He gets out six and a half million copies a year, and he is going to keep doing that for another 25 years. That will carry him to his 92nd birthday, and he will have had a chance to look at the 21st century.

What was there in his background to indicate that he would become the weather man for North America?

"I was born in 1910, in the wake of Haley's Comet, and

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RAY GEIGER



Photo by Terrance J. Brennan

Although most of us regret the coming of winter, it makes it all worthwhile to see the way an early snow accents the beauty of autumn's passing.

Vatican Action Seen Symbolic

By JOHN DASH

The announcement of the Vatican's decision to rescind the U.S. penalty of excommunication imposed on persons who have remarried after divorce drew a rather diffident response from the Office of Family Life last week.

Sister Kathleen Kircher, a member of the team which staffs the office, said that, according to canon lawyers, the action was more symbolic than effectual.

She noted that for some time, canonists and the U.S. bishops considered the original excommunication sanction to be invalid.

She characterized the

action to be a symbolic one, "a gesture of reconciliation," between the Church and divorced and remarried Catholics.

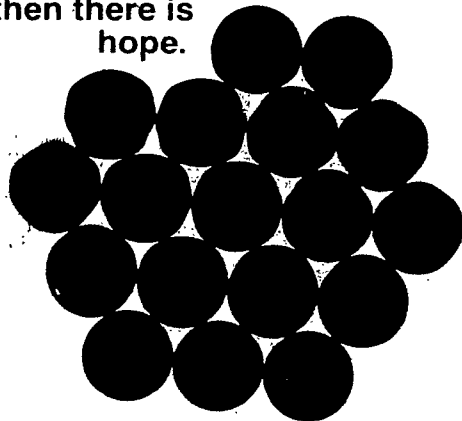
The announcement of the Pontiff's decision was issued on Nov. 10 by the United States National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The conference had voted at its general meeting in May to petition Rome for removal of the penalty which has been in effect since the Plenary Council of Baltimore so decided in 1884.

It further was announced that the papal action is retroactive.

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When single efforts join together, then there is hope.



The Campaign for Human Development is scheduled for next weekend. See editorial, Page 4, and photos, Pages 14, 15.

Courier-Journal
Christmas Fund
100 Neediest Cases To Begin Next Week