



SR. MARY IDA

Sisters Preparing For Those Retirement Years

In recent months Sister Mary Ida Lynch has joined up with Sisters Mary George Dash and Philomena DeSocio, in a relatively new ministry: preparing sisters for their retirement years.

Sister Mary Ida was asked by the central committee of the Sisters of St. Joseph last Spring to address herself to the problems encountered when her fellow sisters retire.

Those problems, she says, frequently center on an attitude held by many that apostolic service and commitment to the Gospel require those in ministry to continue working until they can no longer function.

Hers is a "non-pressure" ministry, she says. Her title is coordinator of pre-retirement and retirement planning.

Interviewed in her office at St. Ann's Home, the sprightly sister joked that even with her title and duties "I don't consider myself retired, but I suppose that's what it is."

Her ministry takes shape in a variety of ways. Not only is she educating herself for her duties but she is also establishing a number of programs to ease the transition to retirement.

For instance, she leads small groups in discussion on weekends at the Motherhouse Space on the fourth floor has been reserved just for these gatherings. They're called leisure weekends, she notes, during which sisters "will have time for prayer, rest — or just talking."

At these weekends,

"There is time to use the way you want to... an opportunity to 'get away' from the pressures of day-to-day activities, she says.

She is impressed with a statement recently made to her that "one should start thinking about retirement as soon as one starts working."

Corollary to that sentiment: "It doesn't matter what you're planning but that you're planning."

"One big concern," Sister Mary Ida has "is that unless people think about retirement, it becomes more threatening the closer it approaches. You really can't quite relax."

Establishing comfort with leisure, therefore, is one of her biggest duties.

She tells sisters "Do what you enjoy doing, reading, music, TV. All that rebuilds in a way."

She feels that preparing for retirement allows sisters "time to explore their potential," she says. "Also at that time you have a chance to help people." She cites many instances of retired sisters and sisters nearing retirement taking on a whole new career.

Another program she offers is an "Over and Under Club," a monthly program for sisters, "a fun thing," where the sisters drop by for cards and talk and other recreation. The sisters had a cabin party recently and there is talk of organizing bus trips to area landmarks.

Sister Mary Ida has been a member of the St. Joseph's community since 1933. She took her vows in 1934.

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Directory Awaits Vatican Approval

Washington, D.C. — The National Catechetical Directory adopted Nov. 17 by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops is a 254-page document providing guidelines for the religious education of Catholics of all ages. The bishops will organize a staff to work at the diocesan level on implementation of the guidelines.

The directory was endorsed by a vote of 216-12 after long debate on 300 proposed amendments. It must now be approved by the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy.

Basically a pastoral document, the directory steers clear of mandatory catechetical prescriptions and stresses that faith is nurtured through a life-long process of spiritual growth. It is based on norms derived from the General Catechetical Directory issued by the Vatican in 1971. The document is

Cdl. Wright Near End of Vatican Role

Boston (RNS) — Boston-born Cardinal John J. Wright, the only U.S. Catholic prelate heading a Vatican congregation, has indicated that he is "rounding out" his responsibilities in Rome and that he may be returning to this country soon.

The founding bishop of Worcester, Mass., and former bishop of Pittsburgh is now 68 and nearing the end of his second term as prefect of the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy. With ill health restricting his movements lately, he does not expect to remain in the Vatican post long, he told the Boston Globe.

entitled Sharing the Light of the Faith.

Archbishop John Whealon of Hartford, chairman of the policy and review committee, told newsmen at the bishops' semi-annual meeting that the directory was a "foundational or source" document, not a catechism or textbook. It should help the nation's Catholics to

"live a life of faith through adequate catechesis," he said.

The new directory, product of the broadest consultation in the history of the U.S. Church, was developed jointly by the Eastern and Western rites and takes a positive approach to other Christian and non-Christian religions. It "will bring into focus the

valid developments in catechesis since Vatican II," in the words of Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin of Cincinnati, outgoing president of the bishops' conference. He said it was similar in content and approach to the paper worked out at the October Synod of Bishops that will be the basis of a papal document on religious education.

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