



Girl campers are shown here rooting on contestants at the "winter olympics."



Bridget Keegan, of Ithaca, tries her luck at cross-country skiing.

Winter Camping

In early November, 1977 Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rochester announced plans to put Camp Stella Maris to use on a year round basis. Charities officials hoped diocesan groups and organizations might be interested in using the winterized facilities throughout the year and hired Ray Tette as a full time director to try and reach that goal.

Tette reported last week that those plans took a "giant" step forward during the weekends of Feb. 3-5 and 24-26. He and his staff hosted 96 youngsters (51 boys and 45 girls) in two separate winter camp weekends and both were

pronounced "very successful" by Tette.

The camping programs included cross-country skiing, skating, ice fishing, snow sculpture, sledding and a "winter olympic" competition. Tette noted that one of the most encouraging aspects of the camp programs was that almost half of the campers had not heard about Stella Maris until recently. It showed that efforts (to publicize the camp, located at 3052 East Lake Rd. on Conesus Lake) were beginning to succeed, he said. Another encouraging sign was that the campers came from all over the diocese showing the news is

getting to everyone.

Tette explained that the camping weekends were a "trial balloon" for the facility. The results were "very good" and gave the impetus to proceed on other programs, including programs for the elderly, the handicapped, package programs for diocesan schools, etc.

He added that so far the "key to our success has been our staff and the love they show for the kids."

This year's summer camping season has been expanded to eight weeks, four for boys and four for girls. The season will begin this year on July 2.

EFFECTIVE LIVING

The Cenacle has scheduled an "effective living" seminar for the weekends of March 31-April 2 and May 26-28. It is open to men, women and older teenagers. Principles and techniques involved in improving the self concept will be explained by a team of Cenacle Sisters. For details and reservations: The Cenacle, 693 East Ave., Rochester 14607; 716-271-8755.

myth, as a number of important theologians like John Shea and David Tracy have made clear, is not to give a literal, scientific description of reality but rather to convey a message about the nature of reality. "Close Encounters..." is very explicit about its message. "We are not alone." Does Father Schroth reject that message? Does he believe that we are alone?

Both reviewers and the ordinary public reacted powerfully to this message. Does Father Schroth intend to suggest that such a reaction was not authentic, that there is not a hunger among people for the message that the universe is somehow gracious, that the powers at work in the cosmos are ultimately more benign than malign? Angels—whether Christmas cherubs or Stephen Spielberg's UFO critters—are important not in themselves but in what they stand for, a cosmos in which wonder is still possible. Does Father Schroth really believe that you can find wonder in everyday life if you have lost your sense of the wonderful in the whole universe?

Doubtless, "Close Encounters..." is a flawed movie. The soundtrack was too noisy, a lot of the explanations got lost on the cutting room floor, the behavior of the aliens is baffling (but then what presentable alien would not be a little bit mysterious?). Those of us who commented on the religious theme that was quite explicit in "Close Encounters..." did not intend to canonize the movie but merely to make a perfectly obvious point, that even though religion has been driven out of the academy, out of the elite journals, and of public schools, there is still a powerful religious hunger in society which popular culture reflects.

Business in the Diocese



GAIL SMITHERS

New promotion director for Long Ridge Mall is Gail Smithers of Greece. She previously was assistant director. A former Courier-Journal sales representative, Ms. Smithers is a parishioner at Our Mother of Sorrows. The Long Ridge Merchants Association also elected Donald Musaine of Penney's, board president; Joanne Miller of Bathtique, vice president, and John Compton of Woolworth's, secretary-treasurer.

The Church 1978



Fr. Andrew Greeley

The Commonwealth recently viewed with dismay the phenomenon of the fact that many of us thought that "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" was a movie that dealt with religious themes. It was pure pop culture, we were told, a product of the "neon industry," a caricature of religion. Was it not better, asked the Commonwealth editorial writer (I suspect Father Raymond Schroth, the Commonwealth's wit in residence), to seek God in everyday life instead of seeking him in phony tales about unidentified flying objects? Since we no longer have to believe in "real angels," was it not a mistake to see religion in Hollywood angels (creatures of light, music, intelligence, and graciousness) who got off the UFO-mother ship.

The Commonwealth, once a prestigious and important journal, today is serious on a subject which should be approached playfully, flat on a subject which should be approached imaginatively, and dull on a subject which should be approached with fantasy. It is the old secularist line of Harvey Cox (in his earlier manifestation), the secular theologians of the 1960s, and their second-rate Catholic imitators. Like the Bourbons, the Commonwealth never learns anything and never forgets anything.

The purpose of story,



Snowy artists put finishing touches on a bottle of ketchup. Sculpture of a hamburger is in foreground.

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