

## Regional Highlights

### Northeast Region

William Hunt, St. Joseph's (Penfield), and Ronald Keller, Holy Spirit (Webster), were elected to represent the Northeast Region on the Diocesan Pastoral Council at the most recent Regional Assembly.

NERVE, the region's monthly "newsletter," announced that \$2,293 has been raised so far for the St. Francis Xavier Project. The money, raised by regional parishes, was used for

projects dealing with "housing, crime prevention, traffic problems, and delivery of public services" in the St. Francis Church area.

An information night has been slated for couples interested in making a marriage encounter. The event will begin at 8 p.m. at St. John of Rochester on Wickford Way in Fairport. Father Edward Palumbos, diocesan coordinator for Worldwide Marriage Encounter, will preach at the Masses at St. John's that weekend.



ROSEMARY EDELMAN



RABBI BERNSTEIN



FATHER LAVERY



WATER FALLON

## Classified

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## Nazareth Commencement Sunday

Rosemary Edelman, a Nazareth College "pioneer," will address the 51st graduation class at ceremonies Sunday noon, May 14, on the east lawn of the campus. She will receive an honorary degree, along with Father Charles J. Lavery, CSB, president of St. John Fisher College, and Walter A. Fallon, board chairman and chief executive of Eastman Kodak Company.

Miss Edelman, a member of the first class graduated by Nazareth, in 1928, retired from the practice of law in 1972, after many years with a New York City firm. She served for seven years as director of research for the New York State Law Revision Commission. She is a native of Rochester.

Father Lavery has been president of Fisher since 1958. Before that, he was registrar and vice president of St. Michael's College at the University of Toronto and a member of the

university's senate. He is public affairs chairman for the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities, a member of the executive committee of Rochester Area Colleges and a member of Gov. Hugh Carey's Task Force on Higher Education. In addition, he is active in many community enterprises. Canadian-born, Father Lavery recently became a United States citizen.

Walter Fallon has been Kodak's chief executive officer since 1972. He is a trustee of Rochester Institute

of Technology and the University of Rochester and a director of various industrial and financial institutions. He is president and director of the Industrial Management Council of Rochester and a member of the labor-management committee of the National Council on Alcoholism. He came to Kodak via Union College and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

Nazareth will give 255 baccalaureate degrees at Sunday's commencement and 360 MS degrees in education.

A baccalaureate service for the 615 graduates is scheduled for 5 p.m. Saturday, with Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein, rabbi-emeritus of Temple B'rith Kodesh, as main speaker.

## The Church 1978

By Father Andrew Greeley

### Moral Theologians: Deficient

A long time ago I stopped reading moral theology books, figuring they were mostly worthless both intellectually and practically. I was tricked back into reading them last summer by the publication of "Human Sexuality" and promptly resolved never to do it again. Recently I read James Gustafson's magisterial "Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics," and once again I was appalled by the intellectual poverty of Catholic (and Protestant) moral thought. Jim Gustafson is a very bright man who is unfortunately reporting on the work of men who have much to be modest about.

Back in the 1960s I reviewed the situation ethics debate—Joseph Fletcher, Paul Ramsey, Paul Lehmann—and was shocked by the superficiality and triviality of the discussion. Catholic moral theologians (with some notable exceptions, such as Richard McCormick) are not much better. They lack the theoretical wisdom that comes from incisive minds (like Jim Gustafson's) and the practical wisdom that comes from street experience. The handling of ethical problems is impressive neither as a theoretical intellectual exercise nor as practical personal guidance. One can safely forget almost anything the moral theologians currently have to say.

I think the main reason my reaction to moral theologians is so hostile is that they seem to be so deficient in their understanding of human nature.

For the most part they don't seem ever to have walked the streets of a neighborhood, played in a parking lot, gone to parties or hung around on street corners. If they have done any of these things, they have managed to banish such experiences from their moral reflections.

Neither do they seem to have acquired any wisdom from the disciplines that study human nature. Some of them seem to have read Freud and other psychoanalysts, but they have not absorbed the implications of the psychoanalytic model of human nature. Sociology escapes them completely, save when they are telling us that moral decisions cannot be made by counting noses. When they do make use of social science research—as in the Catholic Theological Society's report, "Human Sexuality"—they aren't able to distinguish between good social science and bad social science, and apparently are unwilling to ask social scientists to make the distinctions.

There are two new subdisciplines which have enormous implications for moral thinking: sociobiology and demographic history. Both are new, uncertain and controversial fields; yet there is much in the two disciplines that throws great light on human nature. One gets the impression that moral theologians don't even know they exist.

There were, for example, two extremely important articles in the Spring, 1977, issue of Daedalus, one by Natalie Davis on the emergence of the "Tametsi" regulation of the Council of Trent (requiring marriage in the presence of a priest and two witnesses), and the other on the sociobiology of parenting.

I suspect most Catholic (as well as Protestant) moral theologians didn't read the articles, or if so, were unaware of their moral-theological (or ethical) implications.

Many writers today refer to three approaches to human behavior: descriptive, normative and predictive. The descriptive approach portrays the way people behave, normative describes the way they should behave, and predictive estimates show how, under certain circumstances, a given proportion of the population will behave. Moral theologians are conscious of the distinction between normative and descriptive; apparently they do not understand the predictive approach at all.

Descriptive analysis says that most American Catholics practice birth control. Normative analysis will say that that is not right (or, alternatively, that it is right). Predictive analysis will observe that, on the basis of what we know about the history of the biology of human nature, most human populations under circumstances of rapid population growth will practice some form of birth limitation. In trying to arrive at a calculus for moral judgment, such analyses simply cannot be ignored; yet as far as I can see, moral theologians keep right on ignoring them.

## Festival Slated Under Big Top

Although sunny skies and slightly warmer weather has prevailed for the past several weeks, the winter of 1978 has not been forgotten, especially at St. Philip Neri on Clifford Avenue. Father Charles B. Connell, pastor, reports that damage done to the church, school and convent have resulted in some very large repair bills.

He hopes this year's parish festival will help ease the situation. The festival, scheduled for May 19-20 from 6-11 p.m. on the church grounds, will once again be held "under the Big Top," in a huge tent covering the grounds.

Father Connell said that last year's "Big Top" festival was so successful he decided to use the tent again.

## Doctorate

Father Robert Collins, former director of the Family Life Office and current chaplain at Monroe Community College, received a Doctor of Ministry degree May 6 from the Colgate-Rochester theological complex. He is a graduate of St. Bernard's Seminary, class of 1966, and has a master's degree from the College of Education at the University of Rochester.

## Summer School

Registration for St. Charles Borromeo Summer School will continue until this Friday, May 12 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the school office. Classes in Math, Reading, English, Music, Beginning French, Perception Readiness and Arts and Crafts are being offered. For further information you may call 663-1220.