

COURIER-JOURNAL

Southern Tier-Auburn Geneva

Compassionate Friends Aid Grieving Parents

By MARTIN TOOMBS
Southern Tier Editor

Naples—Four couples who have lost a child through death are organizing to "offer friendship and understanding to other bereaved parents" in Naples and the Genesee Valley.

The local chapter of the international "Society of Compassionate Friends" is beginning with two couples in Naples and two in Genesee, Mrs. Willis Moore explained here. They will offer compassionate support for other parents who are mourning the death of a child.

"There is no death so saddening as the loss of your beloved child," a Society brochure states. "We expect old folks to die someday, and frequently it is a blessing to them. We expect that as we grow older, our contemporaries will leave us from time to time.

"But no parent is ready to accept the death of a child, cut off by accident or illness from all the parents' dreams and plans."

"We have all come through" the trauma of the death of a child, Mrs. Moore said of the couples forming the group, and other parents "will come through." But the assistance of a couple who have completed the grief cycle can be helpful, she noted. There are stages of grief, she said, "that no one knows

unless they've gone through them."

Mrs. Moore explained that the group intends to make contact with parents in the area who have had a child die, and invite them to participate in the program. If they choose to, the couple will be aided by a couple who have completed the grief process. An attempt will be made, she explained, to match the type of death so the understanding between the couples can be as great as possible.

Immediately following the death, she noted, the parents receive support from relatives and friends. But "the grief takes a long time," she noted. "This is when they need someone," especially someone who understands what they are going through.

In addition to dealing with their grief, parents also need support for their marriage, and to help their other children deal with the loss. Mrs. Moore reported that divorces following the death of a child are not uncommon.

Mrs. Moore noted various reactions their other children had to the accidental death of their son three years ago; one daughter talked freely of him, while another avoided any mention of his name.

Some persons tried to console them by reminding them that they had six other children, Mrs. Moore noted, not understanding that that

made no difference; other children could never replace the one that died.

Having other children at home did help, she reported, as it made it impossible for her to ignore her daily routine. Dinners still had to be prepared, and the school and church programs she might have avoided, she said, she attended because of the other children. She added that she could see a special need for help for parents who lose an only child.

As the local chapter grows, Mrs. Moore explained, it is hoped that couples "would receive help and then be able to give it" by becoming "compassionate friends" for another couple. "People would decide for themselves when they would be ready and able to help somebody else," she noted.

They expect the group to grow slowly, she noted, explaining that the large area the group covers is probably necessary in a rural area. She noted that one of their members attended a national convention recently, and was the only one there representing a non-metropolitan area.

The Society of Compassionate Friends, founded in Coventry, England, in 1969, had its first American chapter founded in 1972. About 50 chapters are currently operating nationwide, Mrs. Moore said.

Members are all bereaved parents; those interested in the group's work but not personally involved can join as associate members.

Group meetings, couple-to-couple conversations, and support through telephone conversations all will be part of the program, Mrs. Moore explained.

Mrs. Moore and her husband, Willis, noted that Father Robert Smith, who recently left the pastorate of St. Januarius, Naples, was assisting their efforts to form the group. She also cited Father Smith for his support when their son died, although they are not Catholic, she noted.

Mrs. Moore said that she welcomes any calls from local persons wishing to participate in the group, as well as from persons in other areas who want information on how to get a group started. She may be contacted at 374-2100. In Genesee, Mr. and Mrs. Terrel Price, 243-3593, or Mr. and Mrs. Gaylord Brewer, 243-3763, may be contacted for further information.

St. Mary's Festival Aug. 6

Rexville—St. Mary's annual chicken barbecue and parish festival will be Sunday, Aug. 6 beginning at noon on the church grounds. Hand-crafted items and other booths will be available.

Catechetical Sunday Opens School Year

Washington, D.C. (RNS)—"Sharing the Light of Faith" has been chosen by the education department of the United States Catholic Conference (USCC) as the theme of the 1978 Catechetical Sunday, to be observed by Roman Catholic parishes throughout the country on Sept. 17.

The theme is taken from the title of the National Catholic Directory, approved by the U.S. Catholic bishops last November, to establish policy guidelines for Catholic religious education nationwide.

In conjunction with the observance of Catechetical Sunday, the USCC education department has prepared a special booklet of liturgical helps and program selections for participating parishes. The

event will mark the opening of a new school year of catechetical activities for children and adults.

The booklet has been designed "to assist all catechists in hearing and responding to their call to ministry, to deepen their personal faith, and to help them share it with others through the light of the Holy Spirit," said Msgr. Wilfrid H. Paradis, USCC Secretary of Education.

Available in both English and Spanish, the booklet contains a section devoted to the special problems and needs of handicapped persons in their efforts to express the faith and make their full contribution to the worshipping community.

Its liturgical and

educational helps include suggestions for homilies, bulletins, and banners; commissioning rites; commentaries for Sunday liturgies; prayer services; and program suggestions. The materials are intended for a wide audience and can be used at various times throughout the year.

"The best efforts in catechetical ministry have little or no effect without the action of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of both catechists and those being catechized," Msgr. Paradis said.

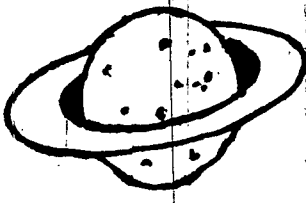
St. Charles Borromeo
DEWEY AVE. PHARMACY
Prescription Specialists
COSMETICS—TOILETRIES
PHOTO-FINISHING
2910 Dewey Avenue 865-2210

A. W. BELBY & SON
Funeral Home
James Rotsell
Darrell O'Brian
139 Walnut St.
Dial 936-9121
Corning, N.Y.

Hicks
Home Heating Inc.
424-4848 271-4650

M. L. ALLEN & SON
Corning, N.Y.
Quality Furniture
62 Bridge St.
Phone 936-8431

WHEN IT'S TIME FOR A
DIAMOND
THEN IT'S TIME TO SEE
Bernard J. Hensler & Son Jewelers
Est. since 1931
Open Thurs. Eves. Till 9
922 Sibley Tower Bldg.
Phone 454-6918



and on the seventh day he rested . . .

WHAT WAS GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE CREATOR OF THE UNIVERSE IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR MY-TEE MUFFLER

Open Daily at 8 a.m.
ON SUNDAYS WE REST

MY-TEE MUFFLER/BRAKE
family owned & operated since 1958
Corner WINTON & UNIVERSITY • Phone 442-9360
We accept all Major Credit Cards

OUTDOOR GAS GRILL SERVICE-REPAIRS

For Natural Gas & L.P. Models
• HOSES • FITTINGS
• BURNERS FOR MOST GRILLS

Bring in the parts in question for faster service

A Complete Line of Accessories
Permanent Coals
Sales - Service - Parts

K&M INSTALLATION
306 Norton St. at the RR Tracks 544-5770
Mon.-Fri. 9:00-5:30; Saturday 9:30-4:30

DALE SCOTT'S
Southland
LINCOLN MERCURY

No One Will
SELL
You a Lincoln or Mercury
FOR LESS MONEY
THAN
Southland
LINCOLN MERCURY

2452 W. Henrietta Rd.
476-1080
HOURS: Open 7 days per week, 10:30 AM to 7 PM, Sunday noon to 7 PM