



Photo by Susan McKinney

Father Robert Smith in the rectory of St. Margaret Mary's Church discusses the Society of Compassionate Friends

## Society of Compassionate Friends Organizes Rochester Chapter

By JOHN DASH  
"Losing a loved one like a parent or a spouse is oftentimes like a burial of the past; but losing a child is like the burial of the future."  
The same grieving is there, said the pastor of St. Margaret

Mary's, but the quality is altogether different.  
Father Robert Smith last week commented on a ministry he has become engaged in in the past few months. The genial former pastor of St. Januarius

Church in Naples has been the catalyst for founding two chapters now of the Society of Compassionate Friends, a gathering of those who have lost children.

The society, an import from England, was started there by an Anglican priest, Father Simon Stevens, about a decade ago. The Rochester chapter held its first meeting last week.

The society collects no dues, Father Smith said, but does seek contributions for such expenses as mailings.

The membership in the group is limited to those who have lost a child; its goals are both to console and to counsel.

Frequently, Father Smith said, grieving parents are confronted with statements from sincere but misguided friends — statements such as "It's God's will," or "Thank God that you have three other children," which wound the parents deeply.

The society helps parents cope with such statements. The group also counsels the parents who have friends who treat the death with utter silence, speaking and behaving as though the event of the death did not happen, that the child lost indeed never existed.

Father Smith said that membership in the society is not limited to those who have lost children recently. He noted that parents with children dead some 15 years attend the meetings.

The confidentiality of the meetings is strictly observed, the priest stated. The meetings are open to anyone who has lost a child, regardless of religious affiliation.

The next meeting of the society will take place at St. Margaret Mary's School on Monday, Sept. 13, at 7:30 p.m.

### 25th Anniversary

Father Harold Reusch, CP, a former Rochesterian who has served with the Passionist Fathers for the past 20 years as a missionary to the Philippines, celebrated the 25th anniversary of his ordination with a Mass at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Aug. 27, at St. John the Evangelist Church on Humboldt St.

Father Reusch was ordained at St. Michael's Monastery in Union City, N.J., on Feb. 27, 1953. His mission assignment is to Quezon City on Manila.

## Word for Sunday

By Father Albert Shamon

### Work Has Twofold Purpose

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 16:21-27. (R1) Jer. 20:7-9. (R2) Rom. 12:1-2.

Labor Day weekend demands a word on labor!



Sometimes a man's work, like his marriage, is a mess. So many gripe about their work. You've heard some say, "The only good thing about my job is the wages." Others voice their discontent with, "I should have a bigger job," and so on.

The fault is not with the work we do, or the institution of marriage; the fault is with ourselves, with how we do our work.

I think most people today have forgotten the purpose of work. Suppose I asked you, "Why do you work?" Wouldn't 99.9 percent answer, "I work to earn a living, to make money?"

And yet that is not the only reason why we work. We work to earn a living, but the other reason why we work should be to produce a work of excellence. Take a watchmaker, for instance, why does he work? One reason is to earn a living. But the other reason is just as important: to produce a good watch! In fact his earning will depend on the excellence of his production.

The trouble today with so many regarding their work is that they have lost sight of the twofold purpose of work. They work only to earn. When a person works only for money, then his job

becomes only a job—a drudgery, a thing that he does half-heartedly, slipshodily and carelessly. He suffers and the job suffers. That is why there is so much tension in work, so many with ulcers, so great a need for tranquilizers. Too many are working just for money.

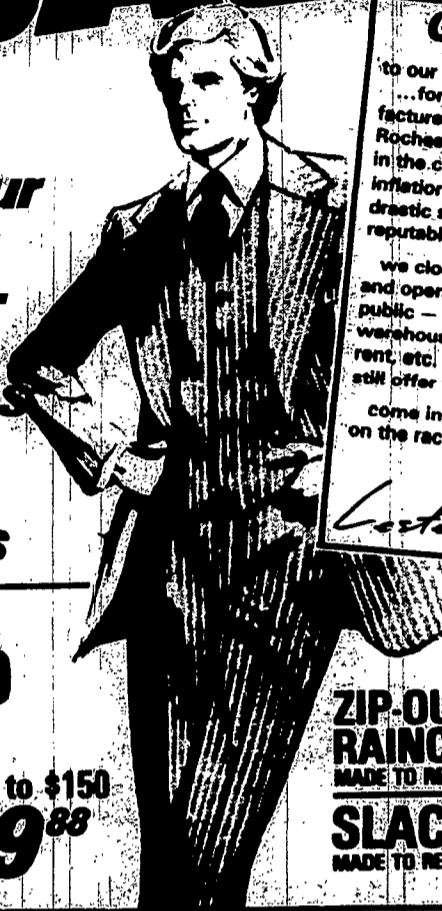
Only by remembering that we work not just to earn but also to produce a work of excellence can work enrich and ennoble us and become a Christian witness. When we work not just to earn but to do something as best we can for God's sake, then there will be a satisfaction and a contentment far greater than any money earned can ever buy.

In the Middle Ages, when men had the faith, they had the Christian concept of work. They worked not just to earn, but to produce a work of excellence for the glory of God. As a result the thirteenth century became the greatest of centuries. The great cathedrals were built. I remember climbing to the top of a spire of the Cathedral of Chartres in France, and the guide pointed out to me the perfection of the carvings on the spire, so high above the street level that no eye could see them. Yet they were flawlessly done, because these men saw their work not just as a source of livelihood, but as a share in the creative activity of God. So they produced their best, even if no human eye, only God, would ever see it, and they were happy.

Two stone cutters were carving rocks. A passerby asked them what they were doing. One said, "We're cutting stones." The other said, "We're building a cathedral." How do we look at our work? Just an earning? Or a production, a creation—a work of excellence?

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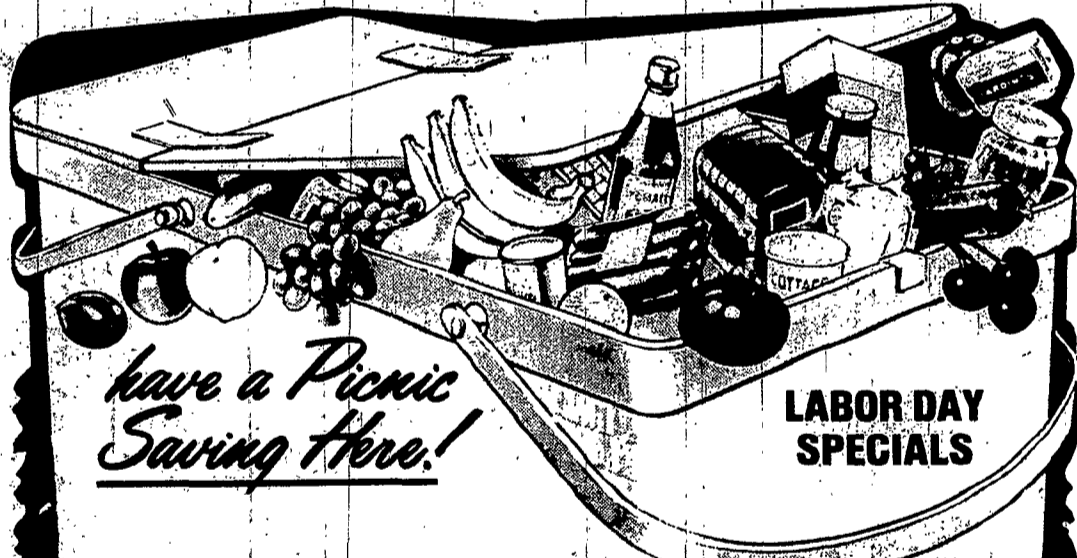
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