

Diocese to Revamp Regionalism

By MICHAEL GRODEN

A report on Regionalism, prepared for the Office of Pastoral Ministry by Sister Ann Miller, RSM, has triggered revision plans to more clearly define the purpose and goals of regionalism in the Rochester Diocese.

In the beginning of the report Sister Ann states, "The present pluralistic mode of operation had revealed a number of difficulties and flaws: ineffectiveness of the leadership role of the regional coordinators; communication problems; inefficient grouping of parishes and institutions; apathy and weariness among the personnel because of an increased work load with little return in interest and enthusiasm on the part of the region."

She gave four general recommendations that would clarify the vision and purpose of regionalism, maintain and strengthen existing structures, involve the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) in the process and prepare an education program for regional leadership.

Father Douglas Hoffman,

director of the Office of Pastoral Ministry, said that although he disagrees with some of Sister Ann's findings, "The general thrust (of the report) is very good. I'm very pleased with the extent of research Sister Ann did."

He added that Sister Ann had "lots of cooperation and lots of input" from the people she consulted, and that "this study will make it possible to come up with a soundly revised plan for regionalism in the diocese."

The year-long study included input from all regional coordinators, DPC members, Sisters Council, Priests Council, Pastoral Ministry staff, Regional Standing Committees, Social Ministries Parish Council members, past coordinators and the Office of Urban Ministry.

Father Hoffman said that the revision process has already begun.

The Regional Development Sector of the Office of Pastoral Ministry, headed by Linda Decillis, is now formulating a new model for regionalism that will be a "conceptually coherent

regionalization plan" he said.

Ms. Decillis is working closely with Msgr. William M. Roche, chairman of the regional coordinators and the other coordinators in the diocese. They will submit their recommendations for approval of the Diocesan Directors in January, 1979.

The date of implementation for the regional revision is

July 1, 1979.

Some of the recommendations from Sister Ann's report, Regional Development is using as a guideline, are: possible realignment of regional boundaries (a separation of the Livingston-Steuken region into separate regions was suggested in the report). Re-establishment of coordinating teams, the possibility of a lay person or woman religious becoming a

coordinator, and a restructuring or possible abolishment of regional standing committees were also recommended.

The report on regionalism is also being studied by Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, the Board of Directors for the diocese, the presidents of the DPC, the sisters Council and Priests Council and all ten regional coordinators.

School Board Says No To Busing

Rochester families who opt to send their children outside city limits to private and parochial schools will be paying the transportation cost this year.

Though there was a possibility of busing fund reinstatement, last Friday, the Rochester School Board voted 4-3 against such action. During the special session two resolutions were presented to the board. Member Frank Ciaccia proposed that the Board of Education appropriate the needed funds from the surplus. Ann Morris proposed that the board

request City Council to petition the state for the needed funds. Neither proposal secured reinstatement.

A financial report regarding possible additional educational costs, not covered in the 1978-79 budget, caused some board members to worry about a deficit. According to them, uncertain costs like special education programs, refuse fees, street lighting charges, additional utility taxes and employee negotiations will have an effect on the surplus.

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Insights in Liturgy

By MSGR. WILLIAM SHANNON

What Time Is Church?

One of the problems of contemporary theology is to understand what precisely we mean by Church. In post-Reformation theology primacy of importance was given to the Universal Church, which was identified with the Church of Rome. The local church (the diocese or parish) was thought of as being called into existence by the Universal Church and was church precisely because it belonged to the Universal Church. It was set up by the Bishop and the Bishop was set up by the Pope. Teachings, directives and laws were made in Rome and then handed down to the local church.

Two recent theological insights have tended to change this perspective. The first of these insights was the revival of the notion of collegiality, namely, the realization that the Universal Church is the concern not only of the Pope, but of all the bishops. What we call the Universal Church is not a monarchy, but a college, made up of the heads of local churches (dioceses). The Pope is the head of the college of bishops, precisely because he is the head of a local church — the Church of Rome. The Universal Church is not the Church of Rome, rather, it is a fellowship of local churches, with the Church of Rome as the center of Catholic unity.

The second insight which has helped to clarify our understanding of the Church is the realization that it is in the local church that the saving activities of church take place. It is in the local church that the Gospel is proclaimed and

that Baptism and Eucharist are celebrated. It is in the local church that the presence of Christ and His love are experienced.

If I may presume the prerogative of another COURIER columnist and be anecdotal for the moment, I recall an event that happened some years ago, when I was stationed at Sacred Heart Cathedral but helped out with catechizing at St. Anthony's Church. A young boy at St. Anthony's asked me one day: "Father, what time is church?" I chided him for not saying: "What time is Mass?" As I reflect now, his question, though I am sure he did not realize it, showed good ecclesiological insight.

"What time is church?" It is any time that God's people gather together to celebrate baptism and the other sacraments, to proclaim God's Word and especially to celebrate Eucharist. The Greek word for church, *ekklesia*, means "a calling together of people". The church is a gathering of people called together by God to celebrate over and over again and in diverse ways the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

The Church exists at all times, but achieves its highest actuality in its sacramental moments and especially in the moment of Eucharist. The church is an event that happens at a particular time — and it happens in the local church community.

So, if I may return to the anecdotal style once again, to the young boy (now not so young), wherever you are, my apologies for rebuking you when you asked a perfectly sound theological question: "What time is church?"

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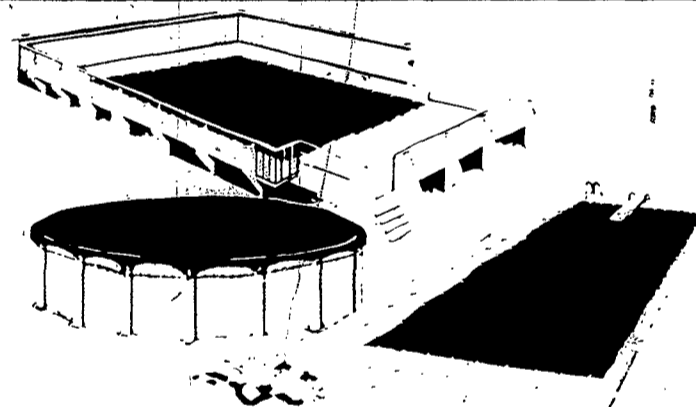
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