

# Business in the Diocese

Herman "Bud" Bulling was elected chairman of the Advertising Council of the Diocese at its 29th annual business meeting last week.

Others officers elected are Owen Crumb, vice chairman; Dorothy Cotton, secretary; Peter Whitcombe, treasurer; Karl Fleischmann, director at large; Richard Bartlett, past president, and Dexter Johnson, president.

Rita C. McCarthy of Nazareth College is among the new members of the Board of Directors of the Genesee Region Educational Alliance for Health Personnel, Inc.

She also has been elected

secretary of the organization which plans and communicates between health care facilities, health career educational institutions and health professional associations in the Genesee-Finger Lakes-Southern Tier regions.

Others officers elected are Owen Crumb, vice chairman; Dorothy Cotton, secretary; Peter Whitcombe, treasurer; Karl Fleischmann, director at

# Insights in Liturgy

By Father Robert J. Kennedy

## Thematic Liturgies: Yes or No?

"The theme for today's liturgy" has become a constant refrain to begin the Sunday celebrations of the Eucharist. Used either as a call to worship by the lector or as an introduction to the Mass of the day by the presider, this theme attempts to capture the essence of the particular celebration so that the assembly will understand what it is about to do. But when one hears things like "the theme for today's liturgy is the Human Development Collection," one has to start asking serious questions about themes and the thematic approach to liturgy.

The first question is about the appropriateness of liturgical themes. The liturgical year and cycle of readings does not provide the Church with an organized syllabus in Christian doctrine or Christian living. Nor should it. For the liturgy is a celebration of the mysteries of faith, not a classroom for instruction. A good celebration expresses, fosters and nourishes faith, and so there is really only one theme: in Christ life triumphs over death. And our response to it is "Thanks be to God!"

It is true that the liturgical seasons of Advent-Christmas and Lent-Easter-Pentecost focus our attention on the various aspects of this Christian mystery. It is also true that the readings and prayer texts of a particular day present one, and often several, themes related to this Christian mystery. Finally it is true that the Gospel message must touch down in the real lives of real human persons today; if not, it is falsified.

But some warnings should be issued. For example, each liturgical celebration is so rich with themes that an opening statement of theme must never be too narrow for the diverse needs of this particular congregation. Also, a theme-rich celebration should not have another theme imposed upon it by some outside group or concern, no matter how legitimate or worthy the issue or the group. Right-to-Life Masses, Daffodil (cancer prevention) Masses, Human Development Masses, Communion in

the-Hand Masses, or Religious Education Masses are redundant at best; but, at worst, they nullify the very nature of the Eucharistic celebration and make the Church's gathering a political arena and not a place of prayer.

A second question would then arise about WHY a liturgical celebration should need a theme at all. If the worship is made by all in spirit and in truth, if the Word of God is proclaimed with conviction, if the homily opens up the mystery being celebrated in terms of the needs of the community, if Communion is shared with devotion and a sense of responsibility to the community then why is there need for a theme which would provide more words in an already too-wordy liturgy?

If the purpose is so the congregation will better understand the readings of the day or the liturgy as a whole, what do we mean by "understanding?" The Word of God and the Sacrament of Christ are not concepts to be intellectually grasped, but a mystery to be lived. And comprehension of this mystery depends less on explanation and more on the quality with which the rites are carried out.

If the purpose of theme is to raise consciousness, the problem with those who might have this need lies with previous or present religious formation or inadequate preaching of the Gospel message. This will not be resolved at the liturgy, and it is an injustice to use the congregation as a "captive audience."

If the purpose of theme is to instruct the people, one must first ask again if the liturgy is a classroom, second, how effective a means this is, and, third, how much instruction the people really need. With regard to this last point, our congregations should really be given much more credit for understanding what they, the liturgy and Church are all about.

Does all this exclude the use of themes in the liturgy? Not necessarily. But if they are chosen, they should be developed as the LAST step of liturgical planning, and they should be worthy of the liturgy as summit and source of all Christian activity, in touch with the season and the liturgy of the day, sensitive to the needs of the congregation and not too narrow, and sensibly and clearly stated.



**JAMES YOUNG**  
James J. Young has been appointed executive vice president of Central Trust Company. He joined Central Trust in 1960 as a bookkeeper and since then has worked in various departments and capacities. Most recently he was group vice president in charge of administration. Young is a director of the Genesee Valley Group Health Association, Batty and Hoyt, Inc., and Rochester Management, Inc. He and his wife and their three children live in Pittsford.



# Lesson in Government

A Language Arts assignment for the fifth grade class at Our Lady of Mercy grammar school in Greece, developed into a full scale study of government. Above, Assemblyman Roger Robach lectured students on the various organizational categories of government departments.

## BOCES Workshops


Parents of children who have special needs are invited to take part in a number of workshops Saturday, Feb. 3, at the Foreman Center, 41 O'Connor Rd., Fairport. Workshops and displays will deal with services provided by legislation. Dr. Daniel Burrell will talk about the psychological

impact of childhood disability on families. The program, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., was arranged by parents associated with Boces I and II and the Parents Unite Committee. Child care is offered at no charge. For details: Dave Moran at Boces I, 377-4660.

## Blue Army Vigil

The monthly vigil sponsored by the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima is scheduled for Feb. 2 at Holy Rosary Church. Father Michael Cerretto will celebrate the opening Mass at 9 p.m., and Father Robert Meng, the closing Mass at 6 a.m. Saturday.

# The Facts about Planned Parenthood



- FACT** In 1975 about 35,000 abortions were performed at Planned Parenthood abortifacients. The number of their referrals to other abortion centers is not known.
- FACT** According to Planned Parenthood's "Five Year Plan" they hope to perform 80,000 abortions a year by 1980.
- FACT** In April 1978 Planned Parenthood circulated a "bigot-pack" of cartoons smearing Roman Catholics. One of the cartoons shows a Catholic bishop holding a can of gasoline and a book of matches; the caption says, "Now we're losing the flock on the subject of abortion but we're not worried... We've got the faithful out burning down the clinics." (Copies of these cartoons may be ordered for \$1.00 from Friends for Life, 180 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60601.)
- FACT** Planned Parenthood has promoted a pro-abortion "comic book," geared for teenagers, entitled *Abortion Etc.* On the back cover is a caricature of the "Assumption of the Blessed Virgin" depicting a pregnant Mary with the idiot face of *Mad* magazine's Alfred E. Neumann. The caption says, "What, me worry?"
- FACT** Planned Parenthood's "Five Year Plan" affirms their support of experimentation on living aborted babies.
- FACT** In 1975 Planned Parenthood supplied contraceptives and abortifacients to more than 300,000 teenagers. They hope to increase that number to more than a half-million by 1980. The number of teenagers referred for abortions by Planned Parenthood is not known. Planned Parenthood states, however, that abortion is "a necessary back-up to contraceptive failures."
- FACT** The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights has charged that "Planned Parenthood's youth activities amount, in effect, to a positive encouragement of sexual activity among teenagers. Showering these young people with contraceptives and provocative literature results in a tremendous peer pressure that makes teenagers who do not engage in sex feel abnormal. Planned Parenthood, like certain unscrupulous businesses, is creating a demand for its own services."
- FACT** Over 70% of those who received Planned Parenthood's contraception, sterilization, and abortion "services" had incomes near or below the poverty level. Planned Parenthood has been accused of campaigning to eliminate poverty by eliminating poor people.
- FACT** Planned Parenthood receives charitable contributions from many chapters of the United Way and similar groups.
- FACT** The American taxpayer funds more than 40% of Planned Parenthood's budget.

The HUMAN LIFE CENTER is doing everything possible to off-set Planned Parenthood's anti-life, anti-family, anti-religion thrust. To continue the apostolic work of helping others, the HUMAN LIFE CENTER depends on contributions from people who respect human life, marriage, and the family. Contributions are used to promote loving chastity, enrich marriages, and defend human life from fertilization to natural death.

# The Human Life Center

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THE HUMAN LIFE CENTER is supported by people who care!

YES, I want to share in the work of the Human Life Center, defending and promoting human life, marriage, and the family everywhere.

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Please make your check or money order payable to: THE HUMAN LIFE CENTER

Return to: The Human Life Center, St. John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota 56321

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