

State Catholic Conference Lists Legislative Concerns

Albany -- Reflecting concern for the poor, the helpless, the prisoner, the sick and the child, the State Catholic Conference outlined its legislative interests last week.

"They are not our legislative goals," said Charles J. Tobin, executive director, "but goals we hope the Legislature will accomplish in its efforts to fulfill its mission to do the greatest good for the greatest number."

Briefly the conference is urging the state to assist:

— The sick in meeting their health care costs through affordable insurance as well as keeping the hospitals in business with reasonable reimbursement rates;

— The child in getting the best education he or she can and, at the same time, to be fully protected against disease as well as to be encouraged to good health.

— The needy person in acquiring the basic daily needs. "Poor people are living on a 1971 assistance level in our state. They're paying 1979 bills on grant levels established in 1971," Tobin said.

— The unwed mother. "We urge the Legislature to take a realistic look at helping the unwed mother and her children," Tobin said.

— Homeless children in finding a "loving" home.

— The unborn child

and the criminal. Tobin stressed, "No one should be condemned to death by the state... neither the unborn nor the criminal." The conference urges an end to the state paying for death either at the abortion clinic or in the electric chair.

— Those in jail or under prosecution. Since the great majority of citizens who break the law are eventually returned to society, the conference feels that there should be concern about them at all times.

"These are just highlights," Tobin said. "We will support specific programs as they are announced and make our views known on those we do not support."

Oriental Custom

Manila (RNS) — Bishop Edwin B. Broderick, executive director of Catholic Relief Services, observed the first day of Tet, the Vietnamese New Year, Jan. 28, with the "boat people" aboard the refugee ship Tung An, anchored off Manila Bay.

He expressed the hope that the 2,700 refugees on the Tung An might soon find "a place to call home."

CRS has been providing them with special 250-calorie buns baked at a downtown Manila school in a CRS project that gives on-the-job training to elementary school children and high school dropouts.

CRS, the overseas relief and development agency of American Catholics, also has provided more than a ton of blankets for the people aboard the Tung An.

Seniors' Party

(It turns out that the Senior Citizens Social Club can't have a dance every Sunday at the Triangle Community Center, as the club announced last week. Because of renovation work, the hall was not available Feb. 18. Lee Williams, president, reported. There will be dancing, however, this Sunday, Feb. 25. John Capone's Orchestra will play at the Birthday and Anniversary Party of the Month, from 2 to 5 p.m. The center is at 380 Andrews.

Advocacy Program Seeks Volunteers

The problems of today's mentally handicapped, although still serious, seem to be gradually improving. New therapies, medication and special training programs are allowing more mentally retarded people to lead self-sustaining, independent lives than ever before.

There are many special programs going on in Monroe County geared toward helping the mentally retarded, but a serious problem still exists. Many people who need these services are not aware of them.

Patricia Willis, executive director of the Monroe County Coordinating Group on Developmental Disabilities, says that many mentally retarded are going without the special help they need and are entitled to. Her agency, funded by the Monroe County Board of Mental Health, is working to remedy this problem.

The coordinating group provides advocacy and referral services for developmentally disabled people of all ages, but deals primarily with those 21 years or older who have graduated from special education programs and have been unable to find suitable programs to address their special needs.

One of the ways in which the coordinating group tries to close these "service gaps" is

through its Citizen Advocacy Program, which links a volunteer with a mentally retarded person who is having difficulty getting into specialized training programs, workshops or group residences.

"We find that advocates can be very effective in helping their proteges find their way through the often complicated maze of paperwork and procedures they encounter when they

come in contact with the service system," Willis said.

The coordinating group is looking for more volunteers to help these people. An informational meeting on the program is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 27 at the agency's new office, in the Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 N. Fitzhugh St. For further information interested persons may call the office at 454-6560.

Diocesan Tuition Subsidies Available

Sister Roberta Tierney, director of Education for the Diocese of Rochester has announced the diocese will be offering tuition subsidies for the 1979-80 school year in two areas: for students attending a Catholic secondary school and for elementary students attending city Catholic elementary schools.

This will mark the fourth year for the high school subsidy program and the third year for the city elementary program. Both programs have as their purpose the help of the economically disadvantaged child who wishes to receive a Catholic

education but otherwise could not afford to do so.

Information and application forms for these programs are available as follows: **Secondary Tuition Subsidy;** forms available at each Catholic high school, March 1 (student must be registered and accepted to apply); **City Elementary Subsidy;** forms available at each city Catholic school and parish, March 1. Applications and reap- plications awards will be announced by June.

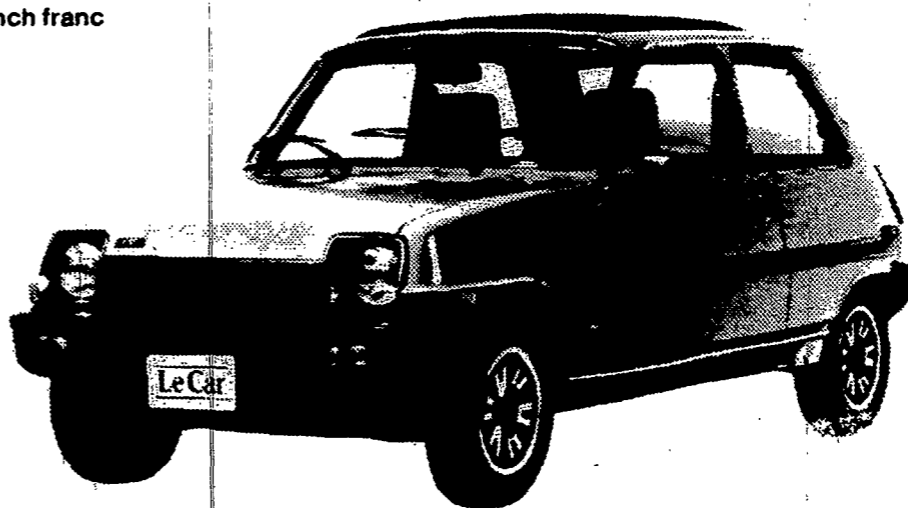
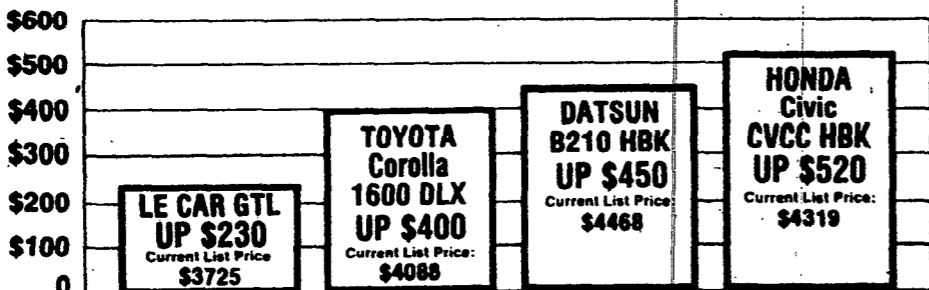
For additional information contact individual schools and parishes or Sister Elizabeth Erbland, diocesan office, 328-3210.

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