



Coming Down

Photo by Terrance J. Brennan

The end of an era is being marked in the diocese as St. Patrick's Church, whose parish was the oldest in the diocese, comes down. The parish was formally dissolved in 1976 but religious ceremonies were continued there until Sunday, June 17, when the community joined St. Francis of Assisi and St. Anthony's parishes. The razing of the building is the culmination of plans made when the parish was dissolved.

The Church 1979

By Father Andrew Greeley

Is Marriage Encounter Effective?

"I'll admit it: I'm skeptical about 'movements.' I realize that enthusiastically committed collectivities are part of the human condition and make major contributions to human welfare and happiness. Still, I am with each passing year more concerned about the capacity of a 'movement' to impose social control, to require of its members rigid organizational discipline, stern ideological orthodoxy and undeviating behavioral conformity. The only movements that don't scare me are those whose leadership seems to be aware of the risks of manipulation, authoritarianism and depersonalization that are involved in movement enthusiasm. But precisely because movements are enthusiastic, it is very hard for the leadership to be self-critical about social control. On the contrary, much of their energy seems to be consumed by conflicts over intertribal orthodoxy and then with schismatic groups — the splintering of the original Notre Dame charismatic community is one example of such internal conflict.



Fr. Greeley

I have had the same reaction to the marriage encounter "movement." The technique, it seemed to me, on a priori grounds ought to be a very useful one. But turning a technique into a panacea and hard-selling it to others has always seemed

to me to be unwise and counterproductive. However, everyone has their own tastes, and because my tastes don't run in the direction of movements is no reason why other people shouldn't be movement enthusiasts.

Recently I had the opportunity to serve on a doctoral dissertation committee. The dissertation in question discussed the impact of marriage encounter — about which, it might be imagined, I was profoundly skeptical. The previous scholarly literature on the impact of all encounter-like experiences appears to indicate that although they may be enjoyable, their effectiveness is not very great.

The dissertation by Commander Richard Dempsey, USNR, has persuaded me that the marriage encounter technique may be the most effective brief psychological learning experience yet devised. I continue to have grave reservations about the movement's enthusiasm and the controls it implies, but on the basis of Father Dempsey's brilliant dissertation, I am constrained to admit the marriage encounter folks have something to be enthusiastic about.

The dissertation surveyed people just before a marriage encounter, just after it and then six weeks later. The surveyed people were compared with those on a waiting list who had yet to make marriage encounters. Three different tests were administered: a marital adjustment, a marital satisfaction and a self-disclosure inventory. On all three tests, there was no change in the control group

and an extraordinarily strong change in the marriage encounter group. Moreover, six weeks after the experience the differences between the two groups were increasing. One will have to wait for a follow-up a year after the marriage encounter to make a definitive judgment; but one is virtually forced to say that no psychological training experience described in the literature has that kind of impact.

Commander/Father/Doctor Dempsey explains the power of change by saying that the marriage encounter alone, of all similar techniques, does not isolate a person from the ordinary network of his relationships. The other techniques may really shake a person up because he is taken out of his ordinary network of interaction and dragged through an emotional wringer. In marriage encounter, however, the principal "other" in any interaction network is also present and in fact the relationship itself is the object of the training experience.

At one time the marriage encounter movement was considering elaborate and sophisticated research on its effectiveness. I have the impression that this research did not take place because there was some unease about what the findings would be. On the basis of Father Dempsey's work, I am sure such unease is groundless. Marriage encounter ought to do an elaborate and sophisticated national survey, not merely to prove its effectiveness but to obtain better understanding of why it is effective and on whom it is effective. Such research, it would seem to me, would be very useful both for the marriage encounter experience itself and for the rest of the country.

Transportation Bill Is Approved

Legislation sponsored by Fred J. Eckert in the State Senate and Gary Proud in the State Assembly which requires the Rochester School District to transport private and parochial school students outside city limits, has been signed by Gov. Hugh L. Carey. The law applies if the Rochester School Board transports any students at all.

The law provides a solution to what has become an annual

busing crisis in Rochester. In recent years, the school board has proposed that nonpublic school students be denied transportation to the schools of their choice.

Proponents of busing have argued that Rochester could restrict the freedom of a child to attend a nonpublic school outside the city simply by restricting transportation to within the city limits. With similar schools within the city limits unable to accommodate those pupils, a significant number might have had to transfer to public schools. Any potential saving in transportation costs would

have been absorbed in added enrollment costs in the public schools.

The Rochester Federation of Catholic School Parents, the State Catholic Conference, Mayor Thomas P. Ryan Jr. of Rochester, and the Rochester City Council backed the new law. State Sen. John Perry voted in favor.

Anniversary

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph S. Cammarata of Woodhaven Drive, Penfield, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary Sunday, July 15, at a party given by their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Louis Meleo, and their granddaughters, Rosemary and Michele. The reception and dance at Valley Park followed a 5 p.m. Mass at St. Joseph's, Penfield. A family friend, Father Tom Tallarida, concelebrated the Mass with the pastor, Father James M. Moynihan.



LT. HAHN

Germany Choice Of Westpointer

Robert F. Hahn II was graduated June 6 from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point and will be stationed in Germany with the First Infantry Division after completion of training at the Ranger School, Fort Benning, Ga. His West Point courses included engineering and the humanities, with a concentration in German studies, and he received a BS degree with his second lieutenant's commission. He was on the Dean's List for four years.

Hahn is a graduate of St. Jerome's School and Bishop Kearney High School, class of 1975. His parents are Mr. and Mrs. Robert F. Hahn of 108 Fairlea Drive; his grandparents, Mrs. Lucy Crombach and Mr. and Mrs. Edward J. Hahn Sr.

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