



Diocesan First

Bishop Matthew Clark confirming one of the members of the Confirmation class at Holy Cross, Ovid, Saturday, Sept. 29. The Confirmation was Bishop Clark's first in the Rochester diocese.



Distinguished Scout

Retired Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, once simply an Eagle Scout, now is a Distinguished Eagle Scout. The first Catholic bishop in the country to be so designated, he is shown receiving a plaque from Paul Von Bacho, northeast regional chairman of the Catholic Committee on Scouting. Father Robert J. Winterkorn, chaplain, also took part in the award ceremony, last week at St. John Fisher College.

All in the Family

By Sarah Child

To Halve Or Halve Not

For too long now I've been aware that lack of organization, self-discipline, call it what you will, has been one of my biggest problems. I do what I do when the mood strikes. Consequently, there is always something around the house waiting to be finished.

Yesterday, for example, I swabbed down half the kitchen floor (the stickiest part) and then because the weather was so perfect turned in my sponge mop and took the dog for our morning walk.

When I got back, half of the tomatoes got picked, pureed and cooked down, the rest saved for a rainy day.

Later I checked through the mail sent home from the office, tackling a few pieces, tabling the remainder.

Anointing

A communal anointing ceremony will take place at St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 4536 St. Paul Blvd., at 11 a.m. on Saturday Oct. 6. The anointing ceremony is co-sponsored by the Liturgy Committee, Human Development, and Parish Life Committees at St. Thomas.

Refreshments will be served after the Mass. Members of St. Thomas parish invite families, friends and neighbors to attend the ceremony.

no longer do things by halves.

I may have succeeded too well in some things. For lunch I finished off all of the apple crisp, read through an entire romance in one sitting and watched the dumbest of all the soap operas straight through to the bitter end.

In other areas I did not do so well. If this column appears to end abruptly it's because I've gone back to the tomatoes.

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Jail Ministry

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Christian love for others simply does not differentiate between people in jail and those who aren't.

Interfaith Ministries describes its philosophy as "bringing a non-judgmental caring to persons in the Monroe County Jail ... A person's guilt or innocence is of no real importance in view of our objectives, and Jail Ministry is not concerned with rehabilitation or trying to change a person's life style or values."

Bonn simplifies the philosophy saying, "We just want to be there when we are needed."

RIJM, co-sponsored by a large number of faiths and individual congregations, including the Diocese of Rochester, works exclusively with non-sentenced prisoners in Monroe County Jail.

Bonn said that the prisoners are usually young and poor. Most of them are in the County Jail because they are not able to make bail.

RIJM volunteers visit prisoners on a weekly basis to provide "a bridge between the inmate and the outside," he said.

Duties which the volunteer performs often include contacting family members the prisoner may want to see, contacting a lawyer, picking up a paycheck, helping the prisoner arrange for the treatment of drug or alcohol problems or just being there to talk to.

The volunteers are allowed to meet with the prisoners privately in the same rooms provided for their lawyers. The prisoner's family, on the other hand, are only allowed brief visits, looking through a window, and talking to each other on a telephone.

The volunteers come from a wide variety of backgrounds, according to Carol Garner, RIJM community coordinator. Most however, "come from church backgrounds," she said.

There are currently 50 people involved as volunteers. More than 7,000 persons pass through the jail every year, so volunteers are always needed.

Both Garner and Bonn feel that the main reason RIJM has continued to be successful is the enthusiasm of the volunteers. "It's incredible that our volunteers keep this program going so strong," Bonn said.

He added, however, that the work isn't as satisfying as some other ministries. "What volunteers often find is that there isn't a damn thing they can do for the

prisoner except to say I care and I'll be with you while you're going through this," Bonn said.

He said that this frustration may inhibit prospective volunteers, including the clergy.

"The Christian Church has had a hard time getting involved in prison visitation. Sometimes we have to push the Church a little. They don't seem to want to acknowledge that a ministry exists in the jails."

Four ordained clergymen are currently involved in RIJM. The picture is gradually improving. Three men who are studying for the permanent diaconate have chosen prison work as their special ministry, and several parish groups, including Corpus Christi and St. Thomas the Apostle, are also deeply involved.

In order to keep the program going strong RIJM conducts regular training workshops for new volunteers. A three-part training program is scheduled for Oct. 16, 18, 22 all beginning at 7:30 P.M. for those interested in becoming volunteers.

Bonn explained that the first meeting gives an overview of the program and covers RIJM's philosophy and goals. The second session explains the court system and gives volunteers an idea of what happens to people from the time of their arrest until their trial. The third, and most effective session, according to Bonn, features a role playing where an experienced volunteer plays the part of a prisoner and the new volunteers practice how to deal with them. Bonn said that the role playing "destroys a lot of myths that many people have about prison and prisoners, and gives them a chance to practice how to conduct a visit."

To make sure the new volunteers get the most out of the workshops RIJM tries to limit the number of participants to 20. There are still openings for the October workshop Bonn said and if there is a runover, a second series will be scheduled.

The RIJM office is located at 101 Plymouth Ave. South and the phone number is 325-1942.

"What we offer are challenges to individuals who want to put their faith into action," Bonn said. It is a program for those who feel they should follow Matthew's mandate.

NEXT WEEK: A report on how two parishes, Corpus Christi and St. Thomas the Apostle, conduct their ministry to those in prison.