

Pilgrimage to Piffard

Early in the morning of Nov. 3, 75 members of the University of Rochester Newman Community set out on the fifth annual pilgrimage to the Abbey of the Genesee at Piffard. Parking their cars about five miles from the Trappist monastery, they walked through meadows and woods, arriving on time for the 5:30 a.m. Mass. The hike was punctuated with periods of prayer and reflection. In the top photo, the white coat shining through the darkness identifies Sister Sue Hoffman, who shares the UR Newman chaplaincy with Father William Lum. At right, Brother Anthony, OCSO, greets the pilgrims in the chapel. Below are some of the students at Lauds and Mass.



Photos by Terrance J. Brennan

U.S. Bishops Open Meeting

Washington — A pastoral letter on racism, "non-inclusive" language in the liturgy and a report on the Latin American bishops' meeting in Puebla, Mexico, last winter are on the agenda for the fall general meeting of the U.S. bishops in progress here.

chaired by Auxiliary Bishop Joseph A. Francis of Newark, N.J.

discrimination against racial minorities.

Strongly worded, it calls attention to the persistent injustice of racism both at home and abroad. It calls for personal conversion in racial attitudes as well as changes in society to eliminate

The proposal on liturgical language came from a committee chaired by Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee. Its purpose is to facilitate full and active participation of the entire assembly in liturgical actions.

More than 250 bishops from throughout the country are participating in the four-day session which began Monday.

The proposed letter on "racism in our day" was prepared by a subcommittee

Special Concert

Auburn — The St. Mary's Church Choir will perform a special concert in honor of St. Cecilia, patroness of music, on Sunday, Nov. 18 beginning at 4 p.m. Soloists for the concert, held in the church at 15 Clark St., will be Anne Shayler and Darwin Parker. The public is invited.

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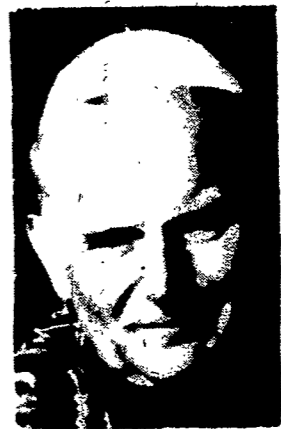
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The Open Window

By Father Louis J. Hohman

Preparation For Sacraments Helps Family

Dear Father Hohman,

In this day and age when there are dozens of meetings and especially meetings which pertain to one's children, I have to ask this question: after all these years without them, why are parents now coming to preparation programs for their children's reception of the sacraments? We have them for Baptism, Penance, Confirmation and Holy Communion, and if the family has more than one child it becomes a real burden after awhile. What is the reason behind this new program? Why wasn't it important in times past?



(Signed) E.G.

Dear E.G.,

One of the reforms we have tried to implement since Vatican Council II, and the decree on the reform of the liturgy, is the elimination of a lot of the superstition that accompanies the reception of the sacraments. By superstition, I mean the radically false idea that simply receiving the sacraments accomplishes their purpose. There is a teaching that the sacraments work, as we say, "ex opere operato." This means that they accomplish by themselves what they are intended to accomplish. The very work performed is the thing which achieves the purpose. That is not necessarily true, because everything given is received according to the container in which it is received. If there is no openness to the gifts of Jesus Christ — then those gifts are not receivable.

Preparation for the sacraments is meant to open

up the person receiving them. It is not enough simply to instruct the children. They need help in this matter above and beyond what they get in the parochial school or in the religious education program. They need support and a source of information and knowledge, as well as a love for the sacrament right in the home. There are so many parents who are poorly instructed in the meaning and the purpose of the sacraments that this kind of instruction is felt to be necessary. There is also the factor of building up inspiration and enthusiasm for the reception of the sacrament so that the one who receives the sacrament will be more open to its gift.

To get back to the superstition element, if we think that we can just put these sacraments on our children and something will happen to them automatically, we are sadly mistaken. If the preparation programs are approached in a spirit of generosity they can be an immense help not only to the children but to the parents in their religious lives.

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