

Father Dozia Wilson:

It's Time for New Growth At Saint Bridget's Church

By John Dash

Things are changing again at St. Bridget's Church. The center of controversy in the late 1960s, the pioneering establishment for diocesan community outreach in the 70s is now launched "on a different stage of growth," with the appointment of Father Dozia Wilson, a man who sees himself as engaged in pulling in and home planning.

Interviewed last week, the 34-year-old "administrator," of the parish (a title used, he said, because, although he fully intends to act as "pastor," he is not incardinated, or canonically affiliated with the diocese) plans on tripling the Sunday congregations, on raising funds to renovate the parish plant, on strengthening the parish religious education program and on emphasizing the Sunday liturgy as the center of parish activity.

And that's only a part of Father Wilson's plans for the parish.

In addition, he wants to establish programs for youth, programs to include soft ball, drama, a drum and bugle corps, music, and programs for men in the congregation.

But most of all, he wants to tell the people who work for the church how important their services are.

"I feel that it's important that people know that," he said. "Some people have never been told that what they're doing is essential to the

operation. I feel if people really knew and felt that their roles were essential, they would do them much better."

He admitted that he may have already tread on some toes with his philosophy. He cited the instance of dismissing all of his altar boys the first week he arrived. He said that he set up a system in which an altar server must spend from 10 to 12 weeks in preparation for a role at the altar, at the end of which time he would be formally invested in the position. Since the inauguration of the new program, "Kids have been responding like crazy. You wouldn't believe it. They're banging on the doors to get in," he said.

Father Wilson is also insistent on developing the parish's religious education program. Once a month, he said, he invites all the teachers for a meeting. He opens the meeting with a dinner he has prepared by himself. This is followed by a light discussion of the religious education program, followed again by deeper discussion of improving the program in the future and ways to accomplish that. The meeting concluded with a celebration of Eucharist.

He wants the education in his parish "right back to the basics," he said.

On the renovation program, Father Wilson estimates that it will cost \$135,000. He wants that money raised in the community and by the community the parish serves.



FATHER WILSON

"Things are continuing to happen here," the priest said, and that fact will be a major incentive for fund-raising.

In addition to his pastoral duties in the diocese, Father Wilson is also on staff at the Office of Black Ministries, travels once a month to Elmira Prison to celebrate Mass, and is working on a religious education program for Attica State Prison.

And in conclusion, Father Wilson wants to reach, through the broader community, "people who are unaffiliated with parishes, Catholics. There are some very talented people we want to reach," he said.



Cardinal Mooney faculty enjoy a few relaxing moments during the day seminar.

School Informed About Legal Impact of Divorce

In Newsweek, (Feb. 11), Albert Solnit, director of the Yale Child Study Center in New Haven was quoted as saying, "Divorce is one of the most serious and complex mental health crises facing the children of the 80s."

The feature, Children of Divorce, went on to report that the problem is formidable in numbers with currently 12 million children under the age of 18 whose parents are divorced.

It is this phenomenon that was the focus of a Cardinal Mooney High School faculty in-service day, Feb. 11, sponsored by the Office of Family Life. The program dealt with the psychological, religious and legal aspects of

divorce and their impact upon the ministry of education. The psychological ramifications of separation and divorce upon children were discussed in the morning session by Dr. Janet Foy, Pastoral Counseling Center. This was followed by a panel consisting of parents both with and without custody, of a child who examined the relationship of school personnel to the single-parent family.

The afternoon's segment was led by Attorney Thomas Rohr who discussed divorce and its legal impact on families and schools. He explained that there is no law that denies a non-custodial parent a right to see his or her child's report card, talk to the

child on school grounds, attend school functions concerning that child, unless there is a specific court order against it, or a signed statement from the custodial parent directing school authorities to do otherwise. In absence of these two stipulations, Rohr told school officials they had to use their own discretion in granting such requests from non-custodial parents.

Closing out the day's agenda was Sister Kathleen Kircher, SSJ, director of the Rochester Diocesan Ministry to Separated, Divorced and Remarried Catholics. She examined the Roman Catholic Church's teachings about divorce and remarriage.

Liturgy Workshops

Wayland — St. Joseph's Parish is sponsoring two liturgy workshops by Father Robert Kennedy, diocesan Liturgy Department director. The first will be Thursday, Feb. 14, and the second

Thursday, Feb. 28; both at 7:30 p.m. in the school. Geared for ushers, lectors and choir members, the programs are open to any interested person.

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Sister Mary Ellen Cragan, Saint Monica's School, 241 Genesee Street, Rochester, N.Y. 14611

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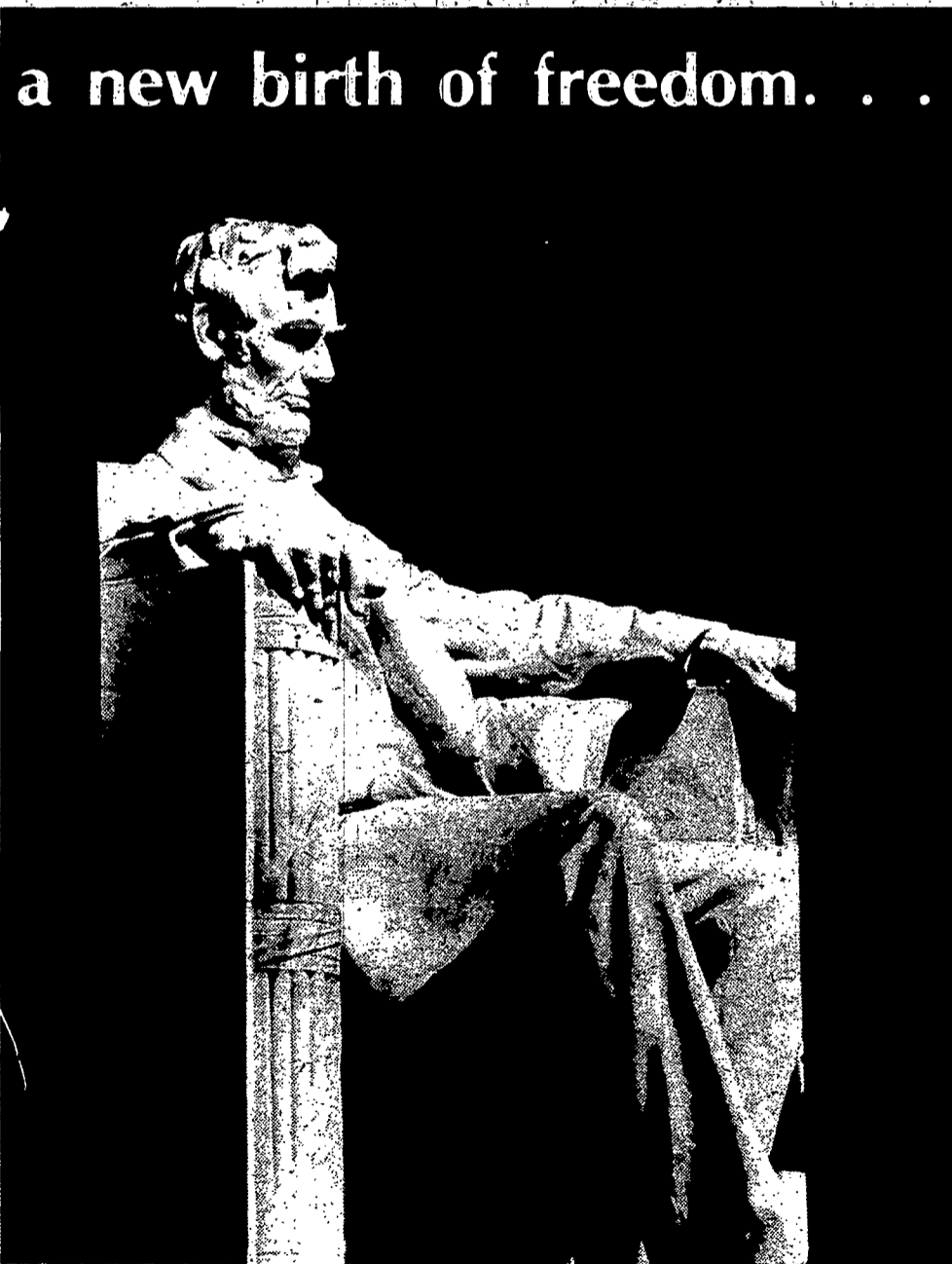
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