

Catholic Education

A Call Follow Ministry of Catechist

By Sister Roberta Tierney, Director
Department of Education

Freedom of choice to select an educational institution for children has been defended and lauded as one of the basic freedoms in our country. We believe in and support the preservation of the freedom for parents and young people. However, there is another freedom of choice related to education and that is the freedom to teach in an institution in which values and faith can be shared. The teaching profession is a vocation — a response to the call to promote growth and development in others through knowledge, attitudes and understanding.



The dimension for a catechist — a teacher of religion — is even deeper. The responsibility calls for a witness to the Gospel message modeled by Christ and exemplified by the action of the teacher. The Vatican's Declaration on Christian Education tells us:

"But let teachers realize that to the greatest possible extent they determine whether the Catholic education can bring its goals and undertakings to fruition. They should, therefore, be trained with particular care so that they may be enriched with both secular and religious knowledge, appropriately certified, and may be equipped with an educational skill which reflects modern-day findings."

As we move into the second semester of this academic year, we are grateful to the men and women who serve as teachers and administrators in all of our programs of Religious Education. There are times when the effects of their programs are difficult to measure and a period of " doldrums " dominates. We need to draw strength and encouragement from the words of St. Paul that there is need for the one who sows to prepare for the one who will reap!

In the next few months, as parents select the educational program for their children, may qualified men and women answer the call to serve as catechists, teachers or administrators in the programs in our diocese. It is our responsibility, as persons who have received the Word, to be ministers of the Gospel. A true Christian cannot be selfish by hoarding the treasures received, but needs to show his/her gifts to bring the Good News to others.



Sending Love

At St. Patrick's in Seneca Falls a new one day modified Pre-school Program will be added, March through June, for three year olds. Kindergarten registration is the week of March 9 while Pre-school registration is the week of March 16. Above, pre-schoolers Mary Ann Howe, George Laughlin and Kellie Kromer along with their teacher, Mrs. Deborah Jones, make hearts to celebrate Valentine's Day.

Register During March

Corpus Christi school will be registering students for the 1980-81 school year during the month of March. Individual appointments will be made and interested parents can call the school, 325-5850.



Pleasant Learning

Fourth graders at St. Thomas More enjoy their learning center which is a mini-library for children who finish their work early.

Schools Register For 80-81

The last weeks in February and the month of March will be recruitment time for the Rochester Diocesan Catholic schools. Each school has its own formula and timetable for registering youngsters in the various educational programs, like pre-schooler, and kindergarten, for the 1980-81 school year. For information concerning dates, times, and locations, contact your parish, secondary school, or Office of General Education, 328-3210.



Community Faith

The students of St. Philip Neri School on Clifford Avenue gather to honor Our Blessed Mother.

Quality Education Guaranteed

The schools in the Rochester Diocese have taken specific steps over the past few years to assure quality education. At the elementary level we have developed curriculum guides for all major subject areas. These guides are based on New York State mandates and were developed in dialogue with state education personnel. Five years ago the education system of the diocese initiated Project Upgrade. This consisted in the development of subject area time allotments, review of classroom teaching schedules, improvement of the development of classroom testing, initiation of semester examinations, and development of policies on homework and standards for acceptance of students' work. We have expanded our programs to include opportunities for three and four year old children. Consequently, we have experienced a dramatic rise in the

standardized test scores in the diocese over a four year period. A formulated chart is the result of stanine scores taken from the Stanford Achievement Tests. It indicates the percentage of students in each of the stanine groupings. In reading, the national norm indicates that 23 per cent of the students in the nation will fall in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd stanine, whereas only 5 per cent of our students are in the below average stanine. In math, the normal percentage of students that fall in the above average stanine is 23 per cent, but our test results indicate that 35 per cent of our students are in this stanine grouping. The significant variation in percentages between the national norms and the scores of the diocesan schools can be attributed to the many programs initiated in the schools and the dedicated and competent personnel that continue to provide quality education for our children.

STANINES	READING			MATH		
	Below Average 1-2-3	Average 4-5-6	Above Average 7-8-9	Below Average 1-2-3	Average 4-5-6	Above Average 7-8-9
ROCHESTER-DIOCESE						
1976	9%	60%	31%	10%	59%	31%
1979	5%	57%	38%	7%	58%	35%
NATIONAL NORMS	23%	54%	23%	23%	54%	23%



Concentration

Allan and Michael Cronk are intense while they work on the Rosner Program in kindergarten at St. Michael's in Penn Yan.