

COURIER-JOURNAL

Southern Tier-Auburn Geneva

Southern Tier:
Martin Toombs
268 W. 13th St., B-1
Elmira Heights, N.Y. 14903
(607) 732-3371

Auburn-Geneva:
Mary Ann Ginnerty
294 1/2 South Street Rd.
Auburn, N.Y.
(315) 253-2176

Efforts to Lower Heating Costs Are Working

By Martin Toombs
Southern Tier Editor

Now in the midst of the heating season, those who took steps last fall to reduce their heating costs are reporting success.

Although the first two months of this winter were warmer than last year, parishes that made improvements are reporting significant savings.

Three parishes that installed ceiling fans to push hot air down to the pews and a parish that has lowered the ceilings in the school all report savings in excess of 20 percent.

To compare heating requirements in various years, a measure called "degree days" is used. It is determined by computing the average temperature for a day, and then recording the difference between that figure and 65 degrees.

A spokesman for New York State Electric and Gas in Big Flats reported that in Chemung County December 1978 had 1,037 degree days, and December 1979 had 995, or 4.1 percent fewer. That means that heating requirements for December could be expected to drop 4.1 percent from 1978 to 1979.

Father Edwin Wedow, administrator of Holy Cross, Ovid, one parish that installed ceiling fans in the church, reports a decrease in drafts at the pews, and that he is "very pleased with the fans." It looks as though they have

good results, he said, from the fans and the 10 inches of insulation placed above the church's flat ceiling.

The work has made it possible to use lower thermostat settings in the church, he noted; previously it was left at 70 degrees in order to keep the church comfortable. Now, he reported, he sets it at 60 degrees during the week, and 64 degrees on Sunday, when the doors are opened more. He runs the fans before Mass, he said, turning them off before beginning Mass.

Father James Collins, pastor of St. John the Baptist, Elmira, reports a different approach to the fans: the three fans were installed Oct. 24, and have been running continuously since then.

At first they moved too fast, he noted, but were adjusted. They take the same electricity as a 40-watt bulb, he noted, and there has been no significant increase in the electric bill.

In addition to the fans, the parish also installed plexiglass over the church's stained glass windows. And for the month of December, the church used 29 percent less gas than it had the previous year. Although he had yet to see the degree day comparison, Father Collins said that "I think it's been a good move" to take the steps to reduce heating requirements.

Another church using the fans is St. James in Waverly. Father Edward Foy, pastor, noted that he was told he could expect a 20 percent saving from the fans. But even after allowing for the slightly warmer weather, he reported

a 30 percent saving. Gas usage dropped from 5,398 hundred cubic feet (ccu) to 3,621, he said.

He also has received favorable comments from parishioners, he noted, that the church is more comfortable than before, although the thermostat is set the same as it was last year. The noise from the fans is not a problem, he noted, and there has been no jump in electric bills.

A major heat-saving project took place in Immaculate Conception School in Ithaca last summer, as the ceilings were lowered five feet throughout the large building.

With the first heating bills of winter in, the parish's business manager, Anthony Leach, reports that for the period of Nov. 20 to Dec. 20, the school used 1,728 ccu fewer of natural gas than in 1978. That is a decrease of 30 percent; allowing for the warmer weather leaves a net savings of approximately 25 percent.

But Leach also noted one of the disheartening things for those working to lower heating costs. For December 1978, the 5,857 ccu of gas used to heat the school cost \$1,442. For December 1979, the 4,129 ccu that was used, 30 percent less gas, cost \$60 more; the bill was \$1,502.

To fully understand the savings brought about by the project, it helps to look at what the bill would have been without the reduced use of gas, but with the increased rates. The result in this case is that the bill would have been more than \$600 higher if the heating requirements had not been reduced.

St. James Supervisor Earns Certification

Hornell — Supervisor of the St. James Mercy Hospital operating room, Betty B. (Mona) Harder, R.N. of Arkport, has been notified that she is one of the first nurses in the country to be certified for professional achievement in nursing practice in an operating room.

The Association of Operating Room Nurses, with 28,000 members nationwide, offered the certification program for the first time in 1979, and Mrs. Harder was among the 686 who passed the national examination, the last step toward certification.

To be eligible for certification, a nurse must meet requirements involving experience and peer evaluation before taking the four-hour examination. Certified operating room nurses are entitled to use the initials CNOR after their name.

A native of Rexville, Mrs. Harder was graduated from



MRS. HARDER

St. James School of Nursing in 1960, and except for two years spent in the Air Force, she has served at St. James since. She has been operating room supervisor since 1971.

Bishop Clark to Play Donkey Basketball

Horseheads — The "Saints" and the "Sinners" will square off for a donkey basketball game Sunday, Feb. 24 at 2:30 p.m. at the Elmira College Murray Athletic Center, the "Domes."

Although it is still unknown whether he will be a "Saint" or a "Sinner," one of the competitors for the event will be Bishop Matthew H. Clark.

The event is being sponsored by the Chemung County General Education Board (CCGEB) which

operates the Elmira Catholic schools.

Billed as the "craziest show on earth," and a fun-filled afternoon for the family, tickets for the game are available at the four schools the CCGEB operates: St. Patrick's, Junior High, St. Casimir's, St. Mary's and Our Lady of Lourdes.

Other players will include principals, teachers, parents and pastors from the seven parishes that participate in the school system.

Workshop Offered

Horseheads — St. Mary Our Mother Parish will be the site for a workshop sponsored by the regional Education Committee on women in the Church this Sunday.

The workshop, titled "The Image of God: A Day of Reflection about Women in the Church" is being presented by Sister Joan Sobala and Ada Maria Isasi-Diaz. Three topics will be discussed: current experience, history and Scripture.

Beginning at 2 p.m. and concluding at 9 p.m., the program includes time for a brown bag meal. Participants are asked to bring a Bible. Any interested persons are welcome.

CSW Meeting

Elmira — Brother Edward O'Donnell will be the featured speaker at the meeting of the Divorced, Separated and Widowed Catholics at 7:30 p.m., Feb. 17, in the St. Patrick's Hall.

His talk will be "Changes in the Catholic Church and Our Ability to Adjust to Those Changes." Brother Edward has a degree from Catholic University and is a member of the Theology Department at Notre Dame High School.

A followup discussion on the session is scheduled for 7:30 p.m., Sunday, March 2.

Nutrition Class

Elmira — There will be a pre-natal nutrition class for soon-to-be parents at St. Joseph's Hospital's Doctors' Meeting Room Monday, Feb. 18, at 7:30 p.m. The class will consist of a lecture, film and discussion.



Families Featured

St. Patrick's School, Owego, marked Catholic Schools Week last week with several events in the school. Students made displays illustrating hobbies their families participate in together. Among the many displays featuring such hobbies as baking and camping were these two. At right is Michael Devine explaining the meaning of the items he included in his mobile to Sister Miriam Nugent, principal, and the rest of the school. Above, the Gregoire children, from left, Kevin, Dwayne and Donald explain the display they made showing their family's travels. Missing is their sister, Tonia, absent from school that day.



Photos by Martin Toombs

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