

# Irish Nun Learns To Live with Death Preaching Peace

By Jan Fisher

Columbia, Md. (RT) — In Belfast, Northern Ireland, Sister Mary Grant has learned to live daily with fear, hurt and death.

"It didn't take me long to realize that when I walked out the door in the morning, I might not come back," Sister Mary, a native of Dublin, said.

The ecumenical pacifist movement she participates in even in the midst of war brings Catholic and Protestant families together in small neighborhood groups.

While bombs explode in the background, individual

Protestants and Catholics meet in each other's homes to pray and socialize. And it's all with "the brotherhood of man in view," she said.

Sister Mary is several weeks into a three-month tour of the United States to promote her book, "Yes, Lord," published by Our Sunday Visitor, a Catholic publishing house. "Yes, Lord," set in verse, contains her reflections of the situation in Northern Ireland, along with her views of hope through it all.

While in this country, she's tried to keep in touch with what is going on back home. "A lot has happened since I left," she said. "I saw a small paragraph in the papers just a

while ago on a bomb blitz. I recognized the names of the location. One of our houses is near there."

"Ours is a community of nuns belonging to the Little Sisters of Assumption, an order of voluntary professionals. Each sister operates in the field of family and group work according to her own particular bent."

Sister Mary, a nurse, most recently worked with families with a terminally ill member. But her activities she said, include a general healing ministry and a ministry of reconciliation.

The issues in Northern Ireland are political, and not based on religious disagreements, she feels. The conflict, rather, is between the Republicans, who lean toward a united Ireland and usually are Catholic, and the Loyalists, who favor continued rule by England and generally are Protestant.

She appears to be more concerned with the effects of war on people. In the Irish Catholic "ghetto" where she works, she said, unemployment is at 60 percent.

"Officially there is no reason why Catholics can't apply for a job," she said, "but it's a point in fact that they either won't get it or won't be able to keep it. Then, too, just traveling through the Loyalist area puts one's life in danger."

Sister Mary told of going home one evening after dark through a Loyalist area. "Every street I drove down was barricaded. As I would turn my car around to try another route, I heard doors opening. I was afraid to ask directions to the through-street for fear my southern accent would be detected. Signs on the walls said 'No Pope here.'"

Sister Mary said that during the day there generally are three entrance-exits in an area, but after dark, only one. She finally found it, she said, after experiencing the fear that every North Irish Catholic encounters daily outside his or her own neighborhood.

Living in these conditions for so long has caused deep emotional wounds in the people. In the small groups she's started, she said, "It's the first time in many of the people's lives they can receive loving, caring and living support."

It's essential, she believes, to have peace first of all on an individual level, then "within the microcosm of a small group which will really live Christianity. For too long," she said, "we have had only a formality of Christianity."

"I have learned that I won't always be liked for what I stand for — it's not a soft, cushy thing, swooning on the seventh heaven of people finding Jesus — it hurts — it costs.

"But I believe nothing can happen that will outweigh the supreme advantage of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."



## Sculptured Hands

These are the hands of the late Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, cast in sculpture by New York City artist Ray Shaw. Shaw has cast the hands of many notables, including Albert Einstein, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Helen Hayes, Jack Dempsey, Fannie Hurst and Mischa Elman. (RNS)

## MPB Notes 50 Years

School children at Most Precious Blood Church will celebrate the 50th anniversary of their church building dedication with a party on Monday, March 3.

The Aquinas Band will play and birthday cake will be served for the occasion.

The event is one of several commemorating the anniversary of the parish. The

## Fr. De Jaegher Dies at 74

New York (RNS) — Father Raymond J. De Jaegher, a Belgian-born priest and internationally known expert on Asian affairs, died here Feb. 6 after a long illness. He was 74.

The author of more than 100 magazine articles published in various

## NFP Slates Information Sessions

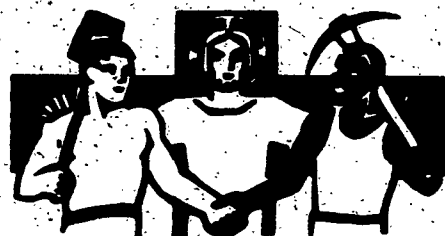
Two Natural Family Planning information sessions have been scheduled: The first will be from 7:30 to 9 p.m., Monday, March 3 in the Kearney Education Building at St. Mary's Hospital.

The second, sponsored by the St. Vincent's Education Committee, is scheduled from 7:30 to 9 p.m., Thursday, March 27, at St. Vincent de Paul in Churchville.

Information sessions are open to the public at no charge and further information is available from 464-8705.

## Night Classes Set for Adults

The Nazareth Academy Center for Adult Education will begin classes in tennis, golf, sailing, dance, slimnastics and yoga the week of March 17. Most classes will meet from 7-9 p.m. Registration may be accomplished by mail through March 7, or in person from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. at Nazareth Academy, 1001 Lake Avenue, Rochester, New York 14613. Schedules and registration forms may be obtained by calling the Continuing Education Office at 663-3263 (9:30 a.m.-3 p.m.).



## Catholic Worker Hosting Forums

The diocesan Catholic Worker community is sponsoring a series of forums on issues of social justice and the spiritual life through May.

The sessions are held every second and fourth Friday at St. Joseph's House, 402 South Ave., and every first and third Tuesday at Bethany House, 169 St. Bridget's Drive (off St. Paul Street).

All the forums open at 7:30 p.m. and are free. Following is the schedule:

March 4, Bethany House, "Women and Their Legal Rights," led by Scott Smith, an attorney;

March 14, St. Joseph's House, "The Death Penalty: Ethical Considerations and Alternatives to Prison," led by Clare Regan;

March 18, Bethany, "What

is Prayer?" led by Sister Margaret Mattie, RSM, of the Mercy Prayer Center;

April 1, Bethany, "The Church in Chile,"

April 11, St. Joseph's, "Struggles and Journey in Grassroots Ministry," led by Father Neil Connelly, Vicar of the Bronx;

April 25, St. Joseph's, "Contemplation and Justice," led by Father William Darling;

May 6, Bethany, "Welfare Rights,"

May 14, St. Joseph's, "Worker's Struggles and the Church," a panel discussion;

May 20, Bethany, "St. Paul and the Gifts of the Spirit," led by Sister Mary Lourdes McCarthy, SSJ.



## Fetal Monitor

Margaret McDermott, RN, demonstrates the use of one of two Pocket Sonicaid instruments recently donated to St. James Mercy Hospital by the hospital's School of Nursing Alumni Association. The instruments detect the fetal pulse, which, through a speaker, can also be heard by the mother. Costing \$425 each, they were purchased through alumni fund raising efforts.

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