

New Facility Opens For Pregnant Teens

Sister "Kate" was up to her elbows in pastry dough one early morning last week, carefully measuring out cups of flour and lard and spoons of cold water into an enormous bowl. Beside her were bags and heaps of ripe apples, ready for paring and chopping.

Sister Katherine Vaeth was baking pies for a luncheon, hosting senior citizens in the neighborhood of Melita House, the latest establishment of Rochester's re-burgeoning Catholic Worker Community.

Melita House, opening this week, is a "place of refuge" for unwed pregnant teens — a place where the young women live, are educated, and are cared for during their pregnancies.

Sister Vaeth, Sister Susan Altpeter and Vicki Wilkins constitute the first staff.

Sister Vaeth said last week that the project of establishing the house began last spring when she and another person who is no longer associated with the house petitioned the parish council of St. Michael's Church to obtain properties on Evergreen Street as the house of refuge.

The council, she said, agreed to give them the more than 80-year-old convent which until the mid-70s housed the School Sisters of Notre Dame, and further agreed to do some repair so that it would be suitable for its new use.

The building itself has full facilities for housing, feeding and counseling 12 persons who are pregnant. In addition Melita House will ac-

commodate a number of sisters who are working in other ministries in the area.

Sister Vaeth said that major repairs and redecoration were done by the parish council. Expenses, she said, for the first year, will involve only general maintenance, and heating. All foodstuffs are donated, all teaching will be by volunteers, she said.

Young women will be accepted into the house on the recommendation of agencies, particularly the Catholic Family Center, she said. The other expenses of running the facility will be met by counting on donations to the Catholic Worker Community.

The house itself, a large brick structure, features the high ceilings of turn-of-the-century architecture. In a small walkway between the church and the convent there is a small chapel where the Blessed Sacrament is reserved.

A brochure describing the Melita House program points out, "In order for our ministry to exist and grow, we must continue to call on the generous and sacrificing support of our community and friends."

Special needs the brochure lists in the brochure as: "Monetary donations; volunteers: women and men willing to share their time and talent, e.g. house sitting, cooking, driving, crafts, workshops; clothing; women, maternity and infant; food; canned goods, fruits, vegetables; personal items, e.g. shampoo, soap, brushes, etc."

Melita House may be contacted by calling (716) 232-3656.

Fr. Paul J. Cuddy



On the Right Side

On Irish Husbands

This dialogue took place with a mid-thirties Irishman, Sean, and myself.

"Sean, do Irishmen make good husbands?"

He pondered, then said: "I would say no."

"Why?"

Sean: "Because by tradition their mothers spoil them. Girls hardly count. But the sons are their mothers' joy. Kind of like Synges' 'Riders to the Sea.' But I suppose it's changing, especially with more women working away from home. Now many men are helping with the housework. My brother and I never did a dish. My mother, God rest her, was a wonderful woman. A strict disciplinarian, God knows, which didn't hurt us. But she considered it sissy for men to do dishes and the work women usually do."

"But why do you think Irishmen make poor husbands?"

Sean: "Well, after supper they leave home for the pub, and leave the family alone. Irishmen enjoy the companionship of men, and a few jars."

I know enough Irishmen who are fine husbands and fathers to realize that Sean's description is only a generalization, but probably with a strong "fundamentum in re." However, the Irish do have a maddening inconsistency. For example, they undoubtedly have deep Faith, a great kindness, a glorious humor. Few equal them in their fidelity to Sunday Mass. But their attitude toward drink and drunkenness is one of a calm, amused tolerance. They seem almost not to recognize their harmful effect on families, the drain on their finances, the hurt to their own spiritual lives, the scandal within the Church. What perpetuates this condition is a social custom called "The Rounds." To illustrate: a man enters a pub and joins four friends. One sets up "a round" of drinks, usually a pint of Guinness stout, for his four friends and himself. Then each is pressured by a long social custom to do likewise. This means that each has two quarts and a pint of beer in his system; his mind is mildly fuzzed; his money, often needed for the family, is dissipated. Each one, despite the firmness of his religious convictions, is absurdly fearful of being considered a cheapskate. So the evil continues.

We Americans are in no position to shake the finger in judgement. Ten million Americans are alcoholics, more than a third women. Alcoholism rates third, just after heart attacks and cancer, in deaths. Half of the fatalities from automobile accidents are attributed to alcohol. And I am not sure that Catholics in America are much different than Americans of no religious practice. In Ireland, alcoholism is the number one social problem, and even

women are increasingly being drawn into the dreadful vortex.

There is a strong effort by the Church in Ireland to encourage total abstinence through the Pioneer Movement. A Pioneer is a total abstainer. He, or she, wears a little enamel badge of the Sacred Heart on the lapel or breast. It is recognized and respected so that the "rounds gentry" will not badger a Pioneer to drink, or to "set up a round."

At the Shrine at Knock I met two fifty-ish women, wearing the Pioneer badge. I exclaimed, "Ah! You are Pioneers. That's good!" One replied proudly, "And next year, I will get the silver pin, thank God." "And what does that mean?" "That's 25 years as a Pioneer. And next month County Mayo is having a big Pioneer rally right here at the Shrine of Our Lady." Someone told me that there are 100,000 Pioneers in Ireland. May their numbers increase to a million. And may that idea take root in the souls of millions of Americans who need it badly.

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Bishop Dennis W. Hickey

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Irony Seen In Poland

Warsaw, Poland (RNS) — In an ironic twist of events Mass has begun to be broadcast on a weekly basis for the first time in more than 30 years of Communist rule in Poland on the same day that the nation's bishops launched a strong attack on the state-controlled mass media, charging it with propagating "erroneous" moral principles and with bringing "immorality" into Polish homes.

Silver Tea

The Rochester Federation of Women's Clubs will hold its annual Silver Tea at the Susan B. Anthony House, 17

aired Sept. 21. Its broadcast was one of the concessions obtained by striking shipyard workers on the Baltic Coast when they also won the right to set up independent labor unions.

The bishops, also on Sept. 21, published a communique which was read in churches throughout the country, charging the media with "immoral influence and dishonest propaganda."

Madison St. from 1 to 4 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 9. Elna of London will present a strolling fashion show.



PATON

Parents and Teachers of Nazareth (PATON) officers are: Mrs. Philomena Lupiani, treasurer; Mrs. Mary Lou Boss, corresponding secretary; Mrs. Eleanor Sciscioli, recording secretary; Philip Barone, president, and Marc Zicari, vice president. Activities planned by the organization are: Fashion Show, Oct. 24; Potluck Supper, Nov. 6; Garage Sale, Nov. 22-23; and a Dinner Dance, Jan. 24.

POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT

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Congressman

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Authorized by The Congressman Horton Committee; Alan J. Underberg, Treasurer.