

Revival!

St. Bridget's Parish Sets Week of Prayer

By John Dash

What its organizers hope will be "a sign of us standing together, a sign of powerful ecumenism and racial equality, and a sign of that empowerment which God gives," will be launched at St. Bridget's Church Dec. 8, as the parish opens a week-long revival.

Father Daniel O'Shea, pastor, explained last week that the parish decided to stage a revival, replete with powerful preaching and Gospel music, "because, especially at the end of the year, it's important to be revived in the Lord."

Preaching and leading the singing through the evenings of devotion will be two second year students at Colgate Rochester Divinity School, Rev. David North, and Evangelist Cecelia Williams-Young, the pastoral assistant at St. Bridget's.

Rev. North said last week that the tone of the revival will be "Redemption: the reality and responsibility of accepting the Lord as our personal savior."

Ms. Williams-Young stated that the event is designed for "strengthening and reviving the Christian faith" in the participants.

The revival will open at 7 p.m. on Monday, Dec. 8. Services will be held each evening through Saturday at that hour. On Sunday, Dec. 17, Father O'Shea will celebrate a concluding Mass. Music will be sung by the parish Gospel Choir.



Father O'Shea, Ms. Williams-Young and Rev. North.

Neither of the preachers for the evening programs is Roman Catholic, a fact, they say, which has little relevance to the intent of the revival. "God's Spirit is what has brought us together," Ms. Williams-Young said, although she considers preaching in a Catholic church to be "a real privilege."

"We support each other's ministry," she said, and that ministry is "to bring the message of love."

Father O'Shea said that the revival is intended to be "a sign of the one Christian family. Both the central message and the mission, is one and the same."

"Our messages deal with our response to and intimacy with the Lord," Rev. North said.

Father O'Shea, in conclusion, called "on other Christian churches to pray with us during this week."

Dolores Curran



Talks With Parents

Write That Letter

A scene that haunts me is the one in which a woman held back and waited until all other participants were gone to ask a question after a talk of mine at a local church. That's always a sign to a speaker that the person is hurting and this mother was. Her 18-year-old daughter had OD'd on drugs nearly a year earlier and nobody wanted to talk about it with her. They were too uncomfortable. They didn't know what to say so the deceased daughter became a void in personal conversations with the family — a void that became pointed and painful.

"It hurts when people act as if Cindy never existed," said the mother, tears appearing in her eyes. "I know they mean well but can't you tell people that when parents lose a child, they need to talk about that child. Not about the death as much as about the life... what the child was like, her friends, little stories, how they liked her, that kind of thing." She was now crying openly. "I need to talk about Cindy and

nobody will listen."

She pinpointed an obvious area of family-to-family ministry. I never lost a child, thank God, but I can empathize with someone who has because I can guess at how devastating I would be at such a loss. I can listen, and ask questions about the child and the family, even the circumstances of death. That's what I did that day.

I got home considerably later than I intended but it was a ministry far more valuable than the talk I gave to fifty parents earlier. That woman needed to talk about her daughter, gone from society but not from her heart, and God put us in a particular place at a particular time because I needed to listen.

It isn't just parents of children who have died that need others to listen to them talk of their loss. It's the widowed, the close friends, the grown children of elderly parents — all of us need to talk about the deceased person who was an integral part of our daily life but is now gone. Memory is a kind of reunion. It is the way we give validity to the relationships of a lifetime and establish vivid feelings

after death.

When my mother was widowed, she told me that certain acquaintances of her became scarce in the early months following my dad's death. "I don't think they want to be with me because I might cry and carry on," she said, "but you know I wouldn't do that. I really want to tell them not to worry about it. I'd just like to see them." That was my mother — always concerned more about the feelings of others than her own needs.

But deep down, I know she was disappointed that certain friends didn't take the time or risk to write a note or make a phone call. I'm sure it wasn't because they were uncaring but because they didn't realize they didn't have to say profound words, just everyday ones.

When a tragedy occurs in a family, members tell how important the calls and notes are to the grief process. "It's like we're not alone," they say. A mother who lost a teenage son in a hunting accident which received wide publicity in the papers said the most soothing kinds of notes came from people they didn't even know, people who had read about their anguish in the paper and sat down and wrote a letter, saying, in essence, that they were with them in their grief.

This is the kind of ministry which calls forth the best in us — meeting the heartfelt needs of others whether we know them or not.



CHRISTMAS BAZAAR — Victor's St. Patrick's Church, third annual such event, School of Religion on High Street, Saturday, Dec. 6, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., featuring Christmas decorations, novelties, religious articles, baked goods and an "Elegant Junque" booth.

HOLIDAY PLANT AND FLOWER SALE — Saturday, Dec. 6 following the Masses; Sunday, Dec. 7, til 3 p.m., featuring



National Office

Sister Marie Michelle Peartree has been elected president of the American Association of Homes for the Aging at its annual meeting in Boston. The AAHA is a national organization composed of not-for-profit facilities which render housing, social care and health care for about 300,000 older Americans. Sister Marie Michelle, administrator of St. Ann's Home, is completing her term as president of the New York Association of Homes for the Aging.

Blue Army

The Blue Army Vigil First Friday services will begin with a Mass for the Sacred Heart and The Immaculate Heart of Mary, at Holy Rosary Church, 414 Lexington St., Dec. 5. Father Charles Adams will celebrate the liturgy. Father Ron Antinorelli from St. Philip Neri will conduct the Holy Hour, 10-11 p.m., and Father Richard Kinsky will conduct the 11-12 p.m. Holy Hour.

houseplants, poinsettias and cut flowers, in the school library.

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR — Sponsored by the Altar-Rosary Society of St. Pius Tenth Church, Dec. 6 from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Church Hall, Main Street, Van Etten.

CHARITY BAZAAR — Ninth Annual Advent Festival sponsored by the East Rochester Association of Churches, Dec. 4-6, in the East Rochester Village Mall, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.

CHRISTMAS PARTY — Annual event held by the Catholic Mission Guild, Dec. 10 will begin with Mass at noon, followed by dinner at the Knights of Columbus clubrooms. Reservations 458-9331; 621-7166.

CHRISTMAS FAIR — Sponsored by the Rochester Waldorf Education Association, Saturday, Dec. 6, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Arnett Blvd. YMCA. Puppet shows and storytelling throughout the day.

LATIN ADVENT — The Gregorian Choral under the direction of Father Benedict Ehmman will sing a number of Latin Gregorian Chants for Advent at St. Thomas More Church, Sunday, Dec. 14, at 4 p.m. The event, under the theme of, "How Far Is It to Bethlehem?" will also feature an organ performance of Opus 122 by Brahms.



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Wednesdays During Advent: December 3, 10, 17 at 7:15 p.m.



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