

Southern Tier

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Father Illig to Headline Evangelization Program

Bath — The executive director of the National Bishops' Committee on Evangelization will be the featured speaker for a workshop on Evangelization being conducted by the Steuben-Region at St. Mary's, Bath, Thursday, Dec. 11, at 7:30 p.m.

Paulist Father Alvin Illig's 45-minute talk will be part of a program which also will include presentations by five groups doing evangelization work in the diocese. Following those separate meetings, Father Illig will summarize the evening.

Workshop participants will be able to hear detailed

presentations by one of the five groups discussing their evangelization projects.

Father Elmer Schmidt and couples from St. Margaret Mary Parish, Apalachin, will make a presentation on evangelization through parish renewal. Sister Margo Mann and parishioners from Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Rochester, will describe the parish's "Fishers" program.

Evangelization among families and through families will be addressed by Susan and Frank Staropoli of the diocesan Family Life Office.

Evangelization among and through youth will be

discussed by Sister Christine Lloyd and youths from St. Patrick's, Seneca Falls. Father Bernard Carges and some parishioners of Immaculate Conception, Ithaca, will discuss organization of a parish Evangelization Committee.

Father Illig's efforts are an attempt to reach out to the 70 million unchurched Americans and to the 12 million alienated Catholics to be "fishers of men," and bring them into the life of the Church.

To accomplish this task, Father Illig's office has been supporting implementation of "programs of invitation," in the country's 18,600 parishes.

A Gift: A Memory

Apalachin — A hospital employee whom they don't know well provided Patricia and Paul Ivancie with a memory of their daughter which they cherish and which also has "touched so many" others, according to Mrs. Ivancie.

Their daughter, Jennifer, died last spring after a battle with cystic fibrosis which had dompted six of her eight years.

Jennifer lapsed in and out of consciousness that last day, April 14, in Wilson Memorial Hospital, in Johnson City. Weak and having difficulty speaking, she managed to tell her parents that she had been

talking with Jesus and "we're soon going to His house."

Joining the family that evening was one of the many friends Jennifer had made at Wilson Hospital, Donna Marsheski, who is a receptionist in the Emergency Department. Mrs. Ivancie remembers Mrs. Marsheski joining the family in prayer outside Jennifer's room.

It was two weeks later when they got the accompanying poem in the mail. Mrs. Ivancie recalled, "It touched me so deeply," she said, that she took it to her parish, St. Margaret Mary, Apalachin, and fellow parishioners duplicated it so

they could have copies. Eventually it also was published in a Wilson Hospital publication.

Mrs. Ivancie noted that Mrs. Marsheski told her she had written the poem "straight through," and had not done any re-writing.

Written from the perspective of Jennifer and addressed to her parents, the poem fills in the lapses of consciousness that she had that evening. The poem expresses the ambiguous but optimistic feelings Jennifer may have felt as she teetered between the world she had known and "Jesus' house."

Mrs. Ivancie commented that she has "felt that the Lord wanted the poem used," and so has encouraged its distribution.

Sage Program Dec. 7, 8

Ithaca — The annual Sage Chapel Christmas program will take place at Cornell University Sunday, Dec. 7, and Monday, Dec. 8, at 8:15 p.m. There will be an admission charge of \$1; children under 12 years of age will be admitted free.

The program will feature a chimes concert and several selections by a handbell choir, directed by Chris Haller. Appearing as guest artists are contralto Edith Read and organist George Damp.

University organist and Sage Chapel choirmaster Donald R.M. Paterson will direct the choir, which among other selections will present the first performance of Patterson's arrangement of the carol, "Deck the Halls," and his Verses for Advent.

The Christmas decorations in the chapel are being prepared under the supervision of Raymond T. Fox.

Readings for the occasion also will be presented.

The Gift

To Mommy and Daddy,

Mommy and Daddy I saw you, sitting at the end of my bed. Mommy you were so tired, and Daddy you kissed my head. I only wished I could tell you, that I was doing fine. The angels were singing to me, and Jesus was telling me, "Its almost time."

First He showed me where heaven was, and then the pearly gates. Then Mommy, He told me, "Honey, if you're not ready a little, time we can wait."

He took me around in a great big place, so pretty and so bright. He let me play with new friends, who didn't even fight.

It was so lovely there, and you know it's always day. Mom and Dad I'm sorry, but I really wanted to stay. It was hard you know to make-up my mind, And I lingered on for quite some time.

I thought of you both and how you felt over me. And the love we all had that no one could see. The joys that we share are sometimes so hard to leave, And Mommy and Daddy, you both took such good care of me.

Then Jesus showed me that you would both do well, And that He loves you in a way no words can tell. That's when I knew, Mommy and Daddy, I couldn't wait. And I said, "Okay Jesus, take me through those pearly gates."

It won't be long Mommy and Daddy, before our family is here, And we'll be together again as we were there. Jesus promised me when that time was at hand, That I'd be there greeting you in His heavenly land.

Meanwhile I'm praying and still loving you all, And just waiting on the Lord till He makes that call. I'm going to play now, Mommy and Daddy, on heaven's greens, And I promise you both I'll see you in your dreams.

In God's Love,
Jennifer

Sarah Child



All in the Family

Embarrassment Of Riches

On the morning of Thanksgiving Day just passed I wake too early and am not thankful about anything. I swallow experimentally to see if the throat is still raw, at the same time going through the list of everything to be done before dinner is served. I feel defeated before the day has started.

It has been a month of viruses and concomitant symptoms. Two others in the house have strep infections while the remaining complain of assorted aches and pains.

Downstairs I put on the water for coffee, ashamed of my lack of gratitude as I stand in a warm kitchen surrounded by all kinds of mechanical conveniences to help me with the preparations. In addition, a 20-pound turkey is waiting for stuffing, vegetables ready to go in the oven, pies already done sitting on the sideboard in the dining room.

On the ledge over the sink my eye catches the two identical bottles of penicillin, one prescribed by pediatrician, one by the internist.

Thank God, I think, for modern medicine, and belatedly realize I have given my first heartfelt thanks for the day. My helpmate appears, cheerful and already proffering assistance. Another quick thank you.

We drink our coffee and read the ads in the morning paper and it is time to get dressed. It will be the first Thanksgiving Mass we have missed in quite a few years. Too many of us sick. I am depressed again. I need the warmth.

The oldest soccer player makes her way laboriously down the stairs. Her foot has been in a cast for four weeks and she has another four to go. I fret about that and then think again. Only eight weeks she limps. Not a lifetime.

Throughout the day we make telephone calls to our families and are cheered by good reports. My mother is gaining strength. Her voice sounds like it used to, free of pain. How much I have to be thankful for!

After dinner we read, watch football, take naps. At some point the oldest, a neatnik, sorts old Sunday Times magazines. The cover of a few weeks before captures my attention: Ugandan children, bellies swollen from starvation, stare up at me accusingly. The only time my children have been hungry is the time period between getting off


the afternoon school bus and making it to the refrigerator.

I look around at my family, warm, safe, full of the bounty of the land. I swallow again, checking on the throat unconsciously, hoping it is still a little sore to somehow make up for the embarrassment of riches that is mine.

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