

\$23 Million Building Project Announced by St. Joseph's

By Martin Toombs
Southern Tier Editor

Elmira — "Project 600," a \$23 million renovation and construction program designed to update facilities and prepare St. Joseph's Hospital for the years ahead, was unveiled Dec. 11.

The project, which includes some expansion of existing facilities, would not increase the number of beds in the hospital. The proposal would add one now-unavailable service, a 25-bed psychiatric unit.

The 100-page application for state approval of the project has been submitted to health planning and state agencies. The timetable calls for the bids to be let in January 1983, with occupancy scheduled for 1984.

While the project provides

a new surgical suite, and improved storage and updating according to current codes governing hospitals, it also includes improvements affecting public usage. Admissions and the visitor's entrance, now one story above ground level, will be placed in new locations at ground level. The business office will be placed on the sixth floor, providing easy access to the public to services now scattered through the hospital.

To pay for the work, \$2 million from funds previously donated for hospital construction will be used, and a fund drive will take place, with a conservative goal of \$2 million. The remaining amount will be raised through bonding, according to Roger Burns, hospital fiscal officer. That money will be repaid over a 25-year period, and

would result in a 15 to 20 percent increase in hospital room rates, Burns estimated. Stanley Douglas, hospital community relations director, explained that the project has been planned after consideration of community needs, the goals of health planning agencies, and the hospital's financial capabilities.

The expansion, designed by Cassetti-Klein Architects of Elmira, will take place in three specific locations. The first will be visible from Church Street, and will involve the construction of a new surgical suite above the emergency room receiving area and the adjoining wing. Provision will be made for day surgery, intensive care-coronary care, central sterile supply and medical records.

The second location will be

along Market Street, adjoining the elevators added in 1970. The three-floor addition will include a new admissions area, a 25-bed psychiatric unit, and two 35-bed medical-surgical units. The beds will replace others in the hospital taken out of service.

The third location is at the current main entrance. Built on the ground level will be a visitor's entrance, gift shop and visitor snack bar. On the first floor will be a new cafeteria, replacing the one currently in the basement.

The units placed in the new construction will allow expansion of occupational therapy, physical therapy, EEG, EKG, and the laboratory.

The psychiatric unit is needed, Douglas explained, because local psychiatrists are unable to place patients in the state-operated Elmira Psychiatric Center, and often have to send patients to hospitals in other cities.

Sister Martha Gersbach, hospital administrator, and Douglas expressed their confidence that the project will receive the necessary health planning approval. By filing before the end of the year, Douglas said, the project will be reviewed during the first six months of 1981.

Douglas also stated that the plan is subject to further changes as its evaluation proceeds.

Retreat

A 24-hour retreat for widows and widowers is slated for Jan. 2 and 3 at the Cenacle Renewal Center, 693 East Ave. A team of priests and sisters will conduct the program. Further information is available by calling Sister Shirley Kitagawa or the Cenacle ministry office (716) 271-8755.

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Centering on Service



The Missions Office

The diocesan Missions Office coordinates all mission activity in the diocese and works as the missionary hand of the bishop, as he makes the mission spirit and zeal of the People of God present and as it were visible, so that the whole diocese becomes missionary.

The goal of the office is to awaken worldwide interest in worldwide evangelization. The local office at 123 East Ave. represents the Pontifical Mission Aid Societies: the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, the Society of St. Peter the Apostle and the Holy Childhood Association. The office also serves as the bishop's contact with the Rochester missionaries in South America and Selma, Alabama.

The Rochester office, headed by Father Joseph Reinhart, is often called the bridge which unites the various members of the Universal Church, giving an authentic vision of the new missionary age in the Church today which is the inevitable consequence of Vatican II.

The theology of the Council stressed the missionary as well as the collegial nature of the Church. In the post-Conciliar Church, the Pontifical Mission Aid Societies have a unique role in witnessing to, and fostering awareness of, both the missionary nature of the Church and the collegiality and interdependence of the local churches.

We no longer think in terms of sending Churches and receiving Churches; rather we speak of older and younger Churches. As, in a human family, both older and younger members contribute to enriching the life of each individual member of the entire family, so too, in the Body of Christ, each of the members both receives and contributes to the building up of the Body.

We see vivid testimony of this duality of receiving and giving among the younger Churches of the developing world. While still dependent on help from the older Churches for personnel and for material assistance, these younger Churches are increasingly developing their own outreach programs to proclaim Christ and his healing grace to those who do not yet know him, not only among their own people, but also among the nations.

The following are a few examples: The church in Lesotho, though short of priests itself, is sending out missionaries to surrounding countries. "This is sure to bring us blessings and growth. A great flow of generosity will spring out from our local Church," Father Reinhart said.

Burundi — small, suffering, desperately poor — sends missionaries too. "If we do not give, we shall not receive," he said.

The church of the

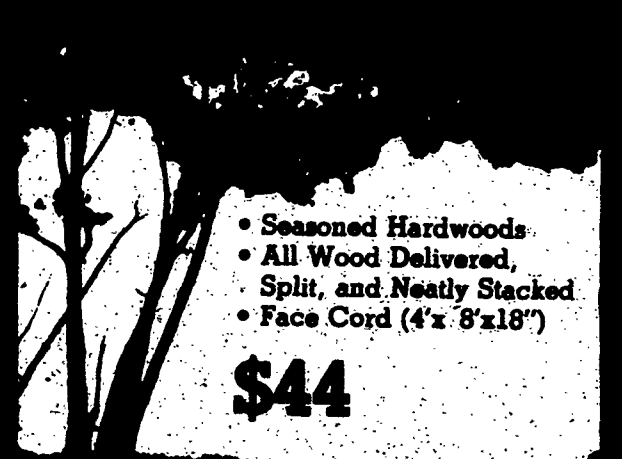
Philippines, urged by Pope John Paul I to be a "light to the Far East," has already sent missionaries to Indonesia and Thailand.

India's Missionaries of Charity have founded houses all over the world. One is reminded of the words of St. Paul, "Their overflowing joy and their very deep poverty have resulted in rich generosity." (II Cor. 8:2)

The continued importance of the Church's missionary activity is probably best summarized in these words of Pope John Paul II delivered at a special World Mission Sunday Mass in St. Peter's:

"The purpose of this Mission Sunday can be summed up with a verb: to sensitize, that is, to interest, educate and involve all the children of the Church in the missionary cause prayer for the Missions, then knowledge of an illustration of the problems involved and the collection of the necessary aid. Yes, brothers and sisters, even if we do not go to mission territories, we have all, we have always, we have everywhere the possibility and the obligation to collaborate in this evangelizing activity, which is presented as the fundamental duty of the People of God."

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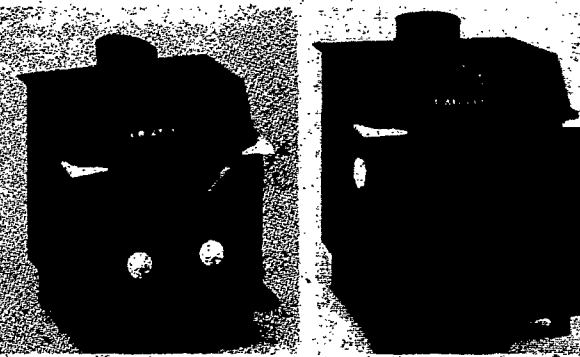


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