

Sarah Child



All in the Family

### How 1 Gift Became 2 After 40 Years

This is a Christmas story. It is about two gifts, one received nearly 40 years after the other.

My grandfather had a drinking problem. Because of it he lost his life in a car accident some 35 years ago on slippery, rain-drenched mountain roads in Potter County.

I thought for a long time before writing the above, trying to find a good way to say it. And, eventually, decided, as anyone does who is dealing with the subject of drinking, that there is no good way.

It may be one of life's ultimate ironies that alcohol, which causes so much heartbreak and so much misery to so many good people's lives, is, often referred to as "cheer."

After my grandfather died — I was seven that spring — none of our lives were ever the same again. I remembered him, the grandparent for whom I had been named, as only generous and loving.

A year or so before while staying with my mother's people at their home in the most wild and beautiful part of the county I suffered an attack of croup — the debilitating kind that disorients and leaves one gasping for breath.

It is family lore now how I awakened in the middle of the night, frightened and pleading, "Don't let me die!" and how my grandfather wrapped his sheepskin coat around me and carried me out into the crisp, moisture-filled darkness until I could take in air easily.

During summers when

my sister Thom and I were staying with them he would always leave the dessert my Gram had packed — unfrosted yellow cake or small dish of custard — untouched in his dinner bucket (lunchpail) so that we might find some surprise in it when he came home.

Over the years the scars from his death never completely faded. We dealt with not only the loss, but the manner, the needlessness of it. Unfortunately, it seemed to me, the drinking and the accident tended to obscure the rest of his life as those kinds of things tend to do.

Then two years ago, my mother received a Christmas card from a friend of hers who had lived in the same tiny hamlet as my grandparents. She and her new husband worked there, far from their home. On her card she penned a story we had never heard, something that had happened in 1940 or '41. She wrote:

"Dear Margaret: Harold and I were looking forward to going home for Christmas that year, but our paycheck never came, probably lost in the mail. Somehow your father heard about it.

"He came to see us and when he left, the money for our train fares was on the kitchen table, stuck under the sugar bowl.

"Just a loan," he said, refusing to take no for an answer.

"What a dear, kind, good man he was! I think of him and your lovely mother so often — particularly this time of year."

Love, Miriam

For me, his namesake, the words written on that card were a most special Christmas gift indeed.

## Chaplains' Services Re-Ordered

The Pastoral Office last week announced a restructuring of chaplaincy services in Ontario County. Auxiliary Bishop Dennis W. Hickey, chief of diocesan personnel, at the same time asked parishioners in the area to understand the need of the greater Church. He expressed his hope that parishioners "will be supportive when their pastors are called upon for ministry in another hurting parish."

The Pastoral Office said the restructuring was occasioned by the staff reduction at St. Mary's, Canandaigua, one of the largest parishes in the diocese, to two priests.

Formerly the priests cared for not only the 2,000-family parish but one acute care hospital, three nursing homes, Ontario County Jail and Community College of the Finger Lakes.

Some of the chaplaincy services have now been assumed by pastors of neighboring parishes: Father Robert Donovan, St. Dominic's in Shortsville, and Father Norbert Nolan, St. Theresa's in Stanley and St. Mary's in Rushville, will respond to emergency calls at Thompson Memorial Hospital two days each week; Father Elmer McNamara, St. Bridget's in East Bloomfield

and St. Joseph's in West Bloomfield, will care for the nursing home at Thompson Memorial Hospital; Father Paul Murley, St. Patrick's in Victor, will care for Elm Manor; Father Charles McCarthy, St. Januarius in Naples, will care for Ontario County Home.

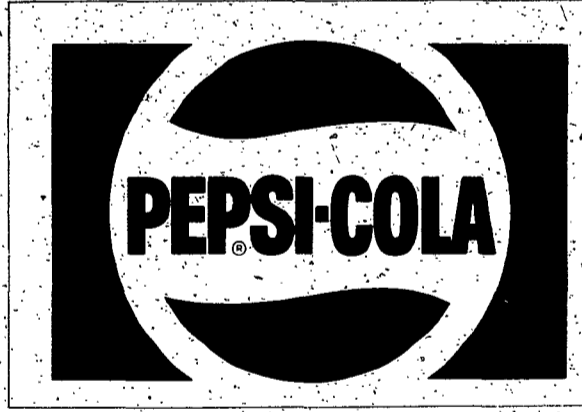
St. Mary's staff will continue to be responsible for emergency calls at Thompson Memorial five days a week, and for the Community College of the Finger Lakes. Msgr. William Roche of St. Mary's and Father Edwin Metzger of St. Francis in Geneva will both care for Ontario County Jail.

In calling for parishioner understanding of the situation, Bishop Hickey stated, "It may well be that some of the services traditionally rendered by a pastor may have to be curtailed in view of this new effort."

### Needy Deadline

Time is getting short for our annual Christmas collection. Please don't forget the Courier-Journal Christmas Fund which helps needy people in our diocese.

# Catch that Pepsi Spirit. Drink it in!



### YES TO CATHOLIC SCHOOLS!

You've heard about the financial problems of Catholic schools. And, you've certainly heard all sorts of stories about the end of Catholic schools in our nation's cities.

Most Catholic schools have financial problems these days. Here at Saint Augustine's and Saint Monica's, our problems are great, the solutions tough.

Today, we are struggling to provide Catholic education to children in our central city area — children who really need this kind of education! We serve families who are often poor, sometimes lonely, and always in need of Christ's gentle comfort.

We believe the Lord has given us an important mission: It is not an easy one. But, we are deeply and firmly committed to it.

Today, may we ask you to help us in two ways? If you can possibly spare a few dollars to assist us in our work, we would be deeply grateful. We depend on the goodness and generosity of our friends to continue and strengthen our work.

We'd like to ask you for your prayers, too. Prayer is the most powerful force available to us; your prayers — and the prayers of thousands of committed people like you — will surely be noticed by the Lord!

And, we promise you that we will use your financial gifts carefully and wisely. We promise you, too, that we'll be praying along with you, each day and every day.

Fr. Bill Barrett, Fr. Bill Trott

Father Bill Barrett, Father Bill Trott  
Saint Augustine's School-Saint Monica's School  
841 Genesee Street, Rochester, N.Y. 14611

Yes! I'd like to help. Enclosed is my gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to Saint Augustine's St. Monica's CATHOLIC EDUCATION FUND. And, I promise that my prayers will be with you each day.

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City and zip address above. Your financial gift is tax deductible.

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