

# All Handicapped Entrusted to Mary's Protection

Following is an excerpt from Pope John Paul's peace message of Jan. 1 which deals with the problems of the handicapped in the world.

As is known, 1981 has been proclaimed by the United Nations "The International Year of Handicapped Persons." There are millions of persons suffering from congenital infirmities, chronic illnesses, or affected by various forms of mental deficiency or physical disabilities, who, in the course of this year, will appeal more intensely to our human and Christian conscience.

According to recent statistics, their number amounts to over 400 million. They, too, are our brothers and sisters. Their human dignity and their inalienable rights must receive full and effective recognition throughout the whole span of their existence.

Last November, during the meeting of a working group, the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, in its constant work in service of mankind through scientific research, made a thorough study of a particular category of handicapped persons, the mentally handicapped. Mental disability, which strikes about three percent of the world's population, must be taken into

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special consideration, because it is the most serious obstacle to man's fulfillment. The report of the above-mentioned working group stressed the possibility of preventive treatment of the causes of mental debility by means of suitable therapies. So science and medicine offer a message of hope and at the same time of commitment for all of mankind. If only a minimum part of the budget for the arms race were assigned for this purpose, important successes could be achieved and the fate of many suffering persons alleviated.

At the beginning of this year, I wish to entrust all handicapped persons to Mary's motherly protection. At Easter of 1971, 4,000 mentally handicapped persons, divided into little groups accompanied by relatives and educators, were pilgrims in Lourdes and lived days of peace and serenity together with all the other pilgrims. I hope and trust that, under Mary's motherly gaze, experiences of human and Christian solidarity will be multiplied, in a renewed brotherhood that will unite the weak and the strong in the common path of the divine vocation of the human person.



# MS... A Different Way of Doing Things

By Joan M. Smith

A mother is tied in a chair to prepare Christmas dinner. Sound like parent abuse? Not at all. It's dedicated family love at work.

Afraid their mother, Mrs. Rose Quadrini, would overdo during the holiday excitement, her children took preventative measures. Mrs. Quadrini laughed when relating the incident but knows only too well the problems the measure avoided. She has multiple sclerosis, and one of the disabling effects of the disease is excessive fatigue. "In just walking out to the backyard clothesline—I'm exhausted," Mrs. Quadrini said, and added that climbing stairs is a herculean task.

MS, a disease that attacks the central nervous system, also causes deteriorating vision, hand tremors, lack of coordination, loss of balance. The disease can take several years to diagnose because its symptoms follow a come-and-go pattern. Such was Mrs. Quadrini's case.

She pinpointed 1959 as the year her symptoms began. She, along with husband Louis, has raised seven children, and it was shortly after the birth of Michele, the fifth, that the muscle spasms began. There were times, she said, when she couldn't move at all. Bouts of exhaustion, numbness and weakness came in the 60s. She told of always going to a doctor but with no specific ailment. Then in the early 70s she began to fall. It was decided she should see a neurologist.

She spent eight days in St. Mary's Hospital for a brain scan and spinal tap. During this time she met people who had been diagnosed MS, and in talking with them, she formed a suspicion. What happened when doctors confirmed that suspicion? "I cried," she said, "and it was a long time before I would

# MS

What is the disease called Multiple Sclerosis? It is a disease of the central nervous system, and it strikes out at men and women between the ages of 15 and 40. It involves "sclerosis" or hardened tissue in damaged areas of the brain and spinal chord. This interferes with the brain's ability to control such functions as seeing, talking and walking. As Rose Quadrini put it, "The brain is telling the legs they should walk but the legs aren't receiving the message."

The cause of MS remains a mystery and currently there is no cure. Much can be done, however, to help people who have it remain independent, comfortable and productive.

As to the cause, there are three scientific theories: MS could be caused by some slow acting viruses, or might be a delayed reaction to a common virus; immune reaction — the disease might involve an auto-immune reaction in which the body attacks its own tissues by mistake; or the disease could be a combination of these factors.

General danger signals include numbness, pricking, defective vision, weakness and excessive fatigue, lack or loss of coordination, hand tremors, foot dragging, speech difficulties, loss of balance, partial or complete body paralysis. Symptoms vary in people and also vary from time to time in the same person. It is a difficult disease to diagnose and doctors look for two basic signs before confirming a MS prognosis: nervous system damage and the come-and-go pattern with the symptoms.

In the field of research there are studies being done of the myelin which insulates the nerve fibers, creation of tissue banks for lab experiments, diagnostic tests for early detection of MS, study of drug effects, and expanded services available to help MS people and their families, like the National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Servicing this area is the Rochester Area Multiple Sclerosis (RAMS) Chapter at the Al Sigel Center, 1000 Elmwood Ave. It offers a medical clinic, occupational therapy, recreation, and counseling.

admit that I had MS. I kept asking, "Why me? Then somewhere I read, "Why not you?" With that thought in mind, her faith in God, and the love and support of her family, Rose Quadrini came to grips with MS.

The disease has recharted her life but it has not stopped it. Dreams and goals, like pursuing further education at a local college, have had to be put aside. Domestic chores like washing a window or ironing a tablecloth can cause

complete physical exhaustion. Her easy-going manner and determination, however, keep her active in other ways.

Although her husband does the grocery shopping and many items are ordered from catalogues, Mrs. Quadrini does run errands, and visits the shopping centers. When going somewhere unfamiliar she will use a cane, while at home she relies on the walls, counters, and chairs to help her around. She rides an exercise bike and at the local Y takes water aerobics. She's an avid reader and keeps her congressmen on their toes by writing them about causes that concern her, like abortion and tuition aid to private



Rose with one of her eight righthand men, son John. Among the many activities that keep her busy is being a telephone volunteer for Birthright. The Quadrini family belong to St. Leo's parish in Hilton.

schools. For 26 years she has belonged to a discussion group and enjoys entertaining. Her favorite gatherings are the family get-togethers. "We had seven staying here over the holidays," she said and explained the secret in managing such events is "keeping things simple."

The Quadrini clan includes five sons, Thomas, Philip, Mark, Paul, and John; and two daughters, Sheila and Michele. All are graduates of Cardinal Mooney High School except for John, the youngest. He is an eighth grader at St. John's in Spencerport but will attend Cardinal Mooney in the September.

When meeting the Quadrinis, one feels immediately a part of their family circle.

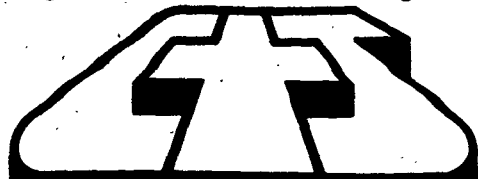
"Our motto," she continued, "is count our blessings. It's easy to be depressed but you have to keep going." And that's exactly what she would tell those who have been diagnosed MS — "Don't give up; you have to fight," — but then in the characteristic way she downplays her own disability she added, "But isn't that true for everything."



## Portrait Available

In conjunction with the International Year of the Disabled Person the Courier-Journal has available a limited number of portraits of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The portraits are available to handicapped individuals or their families free of charge.

To order a portrait write to the Courier-Journal, Dept. 19, 114 S. Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607.



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