

ST Reports, Vicar Occupy DSC

By Martin Toombs

Elmira — Convening for the first time in the Southern Tier, the Diocesan Sisters Council heard descriptions of the various ministries involving sisters in the area at their meeting Saturday at St. Joseph's Hospital.

The council also discussed communications with Bishop Matthew H. Clark concerning the process being used to hire a Vicar for Religious.

Concerns over the Vicar for Religious opened and ended the meeting. Sister Rita Kaufman, who is heading the DSC's Search Committee to recommend persons for the office staff, reported that Bishop Clark had communicated to her his wish that some changes be made in the search process. His concerns, she said, included the proposed national advertising effort, the process for contacting the orders of religious men, and the office title. The DSC had proposed that it be called the Vicar for Religious Services; the bishop suggested dropping their final word.

A few members expressed disappointment at the changes at this time; while some offered the possibility of withdrawing the proposal, most speakers favored continuing the process.

The council dropped the discussion at that point, picking it up as the final item of the day. The council then agreed that Sister Rita would accept the bishop's invitation to call him for further clarification, and for the

process to proceed. The schedule sets interviews for May, with a recommendation to Bishop Clark by May 31 so he can begin his own interviews. Bishop Clark has told the council that he will not limit his selection to those persons they recommend.

The view that the DSC's understanding of the office varies from that held by the bishop was expressed during the discussion.

The reports of several sisters gave the DSC a view of the ministries and problems facing the sisters working in the Southern Tier.

Sister Mary Walter Hickey, Notre Dame High School principal, and Sister Marilyn Reeves, St. Mary's, Elmira, principal, spoke of the schools in the area. Sister Agnes Catherine Battersby of St. Patrick's, Corning, told of the work of the four Pastoral Assistants in the Southern Tier. Sister Florence of St. Joseph's Hospital, and Sister Margaret Ann, St. James Mercy Hospital, Hornell, described the hospital ministry. Sister Mary Kruckow and Sister Sheila Geraghty told of their work in the Tioga County Rural Ministry project, and Sister Lucille Lenhard, Our Lady of Lourdes, spoke of the work in religious education.

Those sisters in pastoral ministry noted that more parishes would hire a pastoral assistant or religious education coordinator if they could afford additional staff members. They suggested sisters be willing to accept

positions combining both roles in a rural parish, or to work for more than one parish.

Following a continuing concern expressed by DSC members over their responsibilities to those they represent, Sister Jean Rodman, who does parish council training through the diocesan Education Division, led a discussion of the representative's role.

She offered six points to follow, which after discussion, were accepted as ideals. Sister Barbara Moore, president, suggested that the first of the six points, the need for members to find out what their constituents believe on an issue, be accepted as a challenge for the DSC Executive Committee to design a method to increase the communication between members and the diocese's Sisters.

The other points are:

Fr. Paul J. Cuddy

members should study objectively the issue; formulate their opinion and state it before the council; listen to the statements of others, and then vote their own judgment. A final point is the need for members to explain to their constituents why they voted the way they did.

Representatives should vote their own judgment, Sister Jean said, otherwise the council becomes a "tape recorder," simply relaying the views of others. Their council membership gives them the opportunity to hear additional information and discussion, and the duty to vote based on their understanding of the issue, Sister Jean explained.

In response to a question, Sister Jean said that the amount of time taken to meet with constituents before voting is at the council's discretion, and would vary according to the issue and the time available.

On the Right Side



Witnessing Confirmation

You've been to several confirmations recently?

Yes. In one week, to three: Mother of Sorrows, 167 youngsters with Bishop Hickey; Holy Trinity, Webster, 101 with Bishop Clark; Holy Family, Auburn, 34, with Bishop Hogan. It was interesting to observe the emphasis of each Bishop. Bishop Hickey and Bishop Hogan were strong in homily and swift in conferring the Sacrament. Bishop Clark was feeling punk from a mean cold, but he gave a few moments to each confirmand, and even sometimes to the sponsor, with a personal touch. (e.g., "Catherine. Do you know much about your patron, St. Catherine of Siena? Read up on her. A great woman and a great saint. Important in history too.")

Didn't Bishop Clark's personal touch drag the ceremony out?

No. The actual conferring of the Sacrament takes only three to four seconds. (I timed it to be accurate.) The brief encounter would average between 10 and 20 seconds, so it wasn't dragged out, but it was warm. I was especially pleased because he was arousing an interest in the saints on the part of the confirmands, and even within their families. It seems to me that for models, they might better be presented with our wonderful saints.

Any special thoughts about these confirmations?

Yes. 1) All three classes wore confirmation robes, bright red with the symbol of the Holy Spirit, which gave a dignity and decorum which the youngsters obviously enjoyed. 2) Many of the girls wore high heels, which to 14-15-year-olds were probably symbolic of adulthood. 3) Two girls took

male names for confirmation. One was Joseph, the other John. Smiling pleasantly, Bishop Clark asked: "How did you happen to choose the name Joseph?" The girl replied: "It was my grandfather's name." "You must be fond of him," the bishop said. "Yes. He's dead now, but I loved him very much."

4) The music at all churches was very good; both from the choirs and the congregations. It rejoices my soul that quality music is returning to many Catholic churches after several years of pop music. Even some of the better Latin motets and Mass pieces are returning. 5) It is heartwarming to look out from the sanctuary at the confirmation class and sponsors, and sense the prideful bond between the confirmands and their sponsors. It has always seemed touching to hear people say with possessive affection: "He is my godfather from baptism," or "She was my sponsor at my confirmation." It's a spiritual tie which is part of our Catholic heritage.

How did you horn in on so many confirmations?

Oh, come off it! I didn't horn in. I got invited. To Trinity because I live there. To St. Joseph's, Penfield, the previous week because I was en route to St. Vincent's, Corning, and happened in at the time of Confirmation, so I was invited by Msgr. Sullivan, the pastor. It is my home parish, and the church of my Baptism and First Mass, and the church from which my family has been buried. It is a joy and privilege to assist at these Confirmations because it brings me close to my bishops, my fellow priests, and to so many co-religionists of the diocese. And also it is an occasion to remind people to read On the Right Side each week, to keep them informed. St. Paul wrote: "Do good to all men but especially to those of the household of faith."

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HAPPY EASTER? HERE'S HOW!

THE HOLY FATHER'S MISSION AID TO THE ORIENTAL CHURCH

GIVE SOME HAPPINESS TO A CHILD

When are you happiest? Happiness lies in giving. You're happiest when you give yourself to the people who need you most. . . . A mother, for instance, hums with happiness when she bathes and dresses her baby. A good nurse always has time for a smile. Good fathers whistle at their work. . . . The best sort of giving involves more than writing checks — still, how better can you help the children now who need you overseas? Boys and girls who are blind, lepers, deaf-mutes, orphans — your money gifts, large and small, will feed them, teach, cure them, give them a chance in life. . . . Want to be happier this Easter? Give some happiness to a child, you'll be happy, too!

HAPPINESS IS SPONSORING A SISTER

In Erumathala, south India, a young Indian girl in training to be a Sister of the Destitute will learn, among other things, how to care for orphans. Her training costs \$300 all told (\$12.50 a month, \$150.00 a year), a small investment for Sister's lifetime of service. Like to be her sponsor? We'll send you her name and she will write to you!

HAPPINESS IS A HOME OF THEIR OWN

For only \$300 in Ernakulam you can build a decent house for a family that now sleeps on the sidewalks. Simply send your check to us. Cardinal Parecattil will write to thank you also.

HAPPINESS IS CLOTHING

Brighten the heart of a blind child in the Gaza Strip (where Samson lived). \$5 gives shoes, \$10 a set of braille readers, \$25 clothes!

HAPPINESS IS TO BE EDUCATED

Where there is none in south India, you can build a six-room permanent school for only \$4,000. Archbishop Mar Gregorios will select the village, supervise construction and write to thank you. The children will pray for you, and you may name the school for your favorite saint in your loved ones' memory!

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Pro-Lifers Travel to Capital

Eighty-one pro-lifers traveled to Albany on Tuesday, March 31, to buttonhole their local legislators, voicing their loudest objections to \$12.5 million budgeted for the coming year's expenditures for abortion.

The Rochester Area Right to Life Committee provided two buses for the excursion.

Upon arrival, the travelers broke into small groups and visited local legislators and 22 newly elected legislators from areas across the state.

The group was well received and able to have

positive dialogue with a majority of the local legislators. Among disappointments were the comments of members of the assembly, Dale Rath and Pinny Cooke, and Senator Jack Perry.

Cooke stated that her commitment to "freedom of choice" was based on her years of social work and involvement with handicapped children and their families. Rath told the group, "I've always been pro-choice." Senator Perry's office staff simply reiterated his voting record, giving no inclination that the Senator might change his pro-abortion stand.



Judge Honored

Joe Judge accepts the Father Joseph T. Maloney Award for his work, since 1958, with the Catholic Youth Organization, from Bishop Matthew H. Clark. The presentation was made during a CYO board meeting April 8. The award is named after Father Maloney who died in 1965 and whose name is widely associated with CYO activities.