

Fr. Louis J. Hohman

The Open Window



Another Approach

(The following letter will be published in two parts because of its length.)

Dear Father Hohman,

As a single person who perhaps ten years ago discovered he had grown old without somehow having yet begun to live, I guess I wanted to take hold of God. I saw some people apparently doing this and wringing amazing results out of Him. I was envious.

I soon found plenty of them eager to tell me how to do it; but, alas, for me nothing "worked" like it did for them. And then I found that they were just as eager to tell me what was wrong with me.

I took the Life in the Spirit Seminar, twice. I went to prayer meetings, got disgusted and stopped, grew envious again and tried again.

Each time I was prayed over, it would seem to me that those praying were enlightened. They would tell me "God doesn't want your mind. He wants your heart."

I guess all I am trying to say is that I found this movement of love divisive and saddening. Their formulas were repeated over and over with no apparent wish to go deeper. But then why should they, it seemed implicit that they had "it." And while they made much of conversion, it did not seem to involve any profound change in life style or attitudes and even encouraged the game of the good guys and the bad guys. This is not a blanket accusation, but rather what I experienced as a tendency.

But worse. The above stance tends to obscure a whole other dimension of possible relationships with God, contemplation.

When one says "prayer," what generally comes to mind is the traditional memorized prayer, the Sacrifice of the Mass and the charismatic prayer group approach.

After attending a talk given by a Trappist on the subject of contemplative prayer, I approached my pastor saying we needed a support group where we could talk about the questions involved if he did not feel qualified to teach. His response was to send me back to the charismatic prayer group. I went and the diametric opposition of the two approaches became clear.

The one seeks quiet, physical relaxation, wordless openness and is an invitation to the Lord to penetrate the multitudinous and opaque layers of our psyche, as we look in His direction. The other seeks to whomp up a pitch of excitement and expectation through jazzy songs and accounts of dramatic interventions of the Lord in their lives.

I share these thoughts with you because I personally have found that it is this unmentioned kind of prayer which most directly

touches, most intimately touches the problem of the "we" and the "they."

In regard to my own experience, I have to say that I still have no guide, or anyone to talk to about this important dimension of life.

From what I have been shown through reading, isolation and my attempts to spend time looking at the Lord, I have come to a degree of "in-touch-ness" with myself and find myself surprised at subtle changes of value, feeling and attitude. These have come to the fore in times of special hurt. There is a long way to go. But there has been more change than I ever noticed in 50 years of the "word-rattling" kind of praying.

(Signed) JGC

Charismatics Schedule Weekend for Leaders

Seneca Falls — Bishop Matthew H. Clark will deliver the keynote address at this year's Charismatic Renewal Leadership Conference, August 7-9, at Eisenhower College here.

The conference is sponsored by several upstate dioceses.

Also on the agenda for speaking are Father Jim Brassil, an internationally known leader in parish renewal who will address spiritual growth among Christians, and Tony Cushing, co-author of the Living Christian Community Series, "Friendship with Jesus," who will talk on the question of mission in the Christian vocation.

The cost of the weekend, which includes lodging and two breakfasts, is \$50 per

person and \$95 per married couple.

Registration is made by contacting charismatic prayer group leaders or John Miller, 1630 Covell Rd., Brockport, N.Y. 14420; (716)637-9367, before July 10.

MS Board Elects Slate

The Rochester Area Multiple Sclerosis board of directors have elected Terry W. Dillman, chairman for the 1981-82 fiscal year. Dillman is manager of editorial and information services for the Business Systems Group of Xerox.

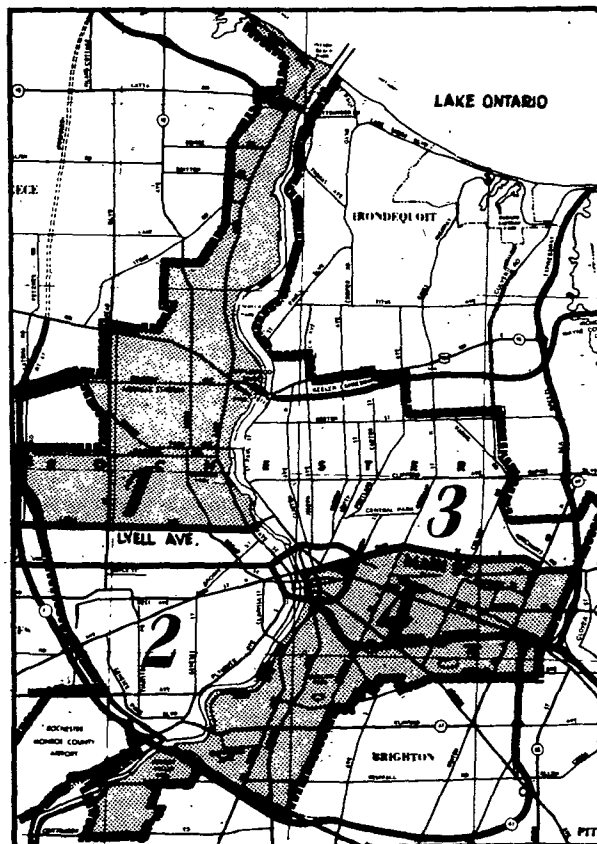
Other new officers are Becky Rhodes, vice chairman; Brian E. Hickey, vice chairman; Andrew C. Kelley, treasurer, John R. Weider, secretary.



Mercy Jubilarians

The Sisters of Mercy this year are feting one Golden Jubilarian and 12 Silver Jubilarians. The group spent a retreat-renewal weekend. From left to right (seated) are: Sister Mary Walter Hickey, Sister Marion Rappl, Sister Mary Irene Rappl (the golden jubilarian), Sister Diane Marie Erskine, Sister Mary Augustine Malley, Sister Mary Wintish; (standing) Sister Barbara Hamm, Sister Kathleen Ward, Sister Joanne Cullen, Sister Mary Edwardine Weaver, Sister Margaret Mary Wintish, Sister Carol Fox, and Sister Sheila Geraghty.

Attention  
City Residents  
In  
Area 2:



Look for  
the "Blue  
Bump"  
Hats!

For a portion of this summer RG&E service men and women will be in your area inspecting natural gas services.

Our people will be easily identified by the "Blue Bump" hats they'll be wearing. In addition, a service person will come to your door to identify himself or herself and let you know they are on your property.

This safety inspection normally will not require that an RG&E service person enter your home.

All RG&E employees carry an identification card. We urge you to ask for proof of identification from anyone wishing to enter your property.

Thank you for your cooperation.

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