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Photo by Terrance J. Brennan

Heavy Load

John Christa, a St. John Fisher College sophomore accounting major, has his arms full with texts and supplies needed for the upcoming semester. Classes began at most area colleges and universities last week.

SWEM Survey Yields Surprises

By John Dash

Data from an unusual ecumenical survey done earlier this year in the City's southwest sector was released last week revealing that nearly half of those who described themselves as "blind, deaf, mentally retarded, housebound or otherwise handicapped," are Catholic.

And 38 percent of the Catholics responding thought their best contribution to their Church would be through sports.

The data was made public recently by Father Robert J. Schrader, 1981 Outreach Coordinator for the United Mission for Ecumenical Evangelization, a joint project of South West Ecumenical Mission (SWEM) and United Church Ministry, Inc. (UCM).

The survey, taken during Pentecost Week, was the first such ecumenical venture in the area and involved workers from 24 churches in the 16,000-household district.

Although Catholics account for only 38 percent of the surveyed population, they account for 48 percent of the handicapped.

On the sports question, Father Schrader said, the response gave him "quite a surprise." He said that he later came to understand that parish sports programs are a major youth ministry for Catholics.

The three greatest needs Catholics see the Church providing are youth activities, Bible classes and social events.

Though he does not take credit for the unusual survey, Father Schrader does acknowledge that during a Paulist Fathers' seminar on evangelization last year, it occurred to him the correctness of Pope Paul VI's assertion that "the power of evangelization will find itself considerably diminished if those who proclaim the Gospel are divided among themselves in all sorts of ways. Is this not perhaps one of the great sicknesses of evangelism today?"

That led Father Schrader to press for an ecumenical effort in evangelization. He approached the pastors in the SWEM coalition with his idea and the then head of head of UCM, Rev. Charles Thurman.

Midway through the project, however, Father Schrader was given a new assignment to St. Theodore's Parish, outside the area served in the survey, and Rev. Thurman was replaced by Rev. Lewis Walter Stewart.

Despite the seeming snag, Father Schrader said, the evangelization program goes on. At this time all the churches involved are reviewing the survey data and then, "The first thing to do is to evangelize ourselves, and then through all our different ministries to evangelize others," Father Schrader said.

Already, several churches in the area have appointed either committees or individuals to contact disfavored persons in the region, he said.

Report: Moscow Involved In Assassination Attempt

According to a report by the Manchester Guardian, the Vatican has informed the United States that it believes the Soviet Union, through the KGB (secret police), was involved in the attempted assassination last May of Pope John Paul II.

The Vatican charge gains credibility from the continuing friction between Moscow and problems in Poland through the labor group Solidarity which John Paul II has publicly supported. The pope is Polish.

While Washington has not acted officially, it is generally felt in the U.S. capital that Vatican intelligence sources are highly capable.

In the meanwhile, TV Eye, a British current affairs program, has reported that the Vatican and the Italian security services suspect KGB involvement in the shooting in St. Peter's Square on May 13. The program also claimed that the Turkish would-be assassin, Mehmet Ali Agca, was not alone at the scene of the shooting.

The television show said that Agca acted as "part of an international conspiracy with its roots in the East Bloc countries."

The Vatican charge also sheds light on earlier reports from a Soviet journalist implicating the United States in the assassination attempt.

Vladimir Katin, a political journalist for the Soviet news feature agency Novosti, wrote in Soviet Union Today, a paper published by the Soviet Embassy in Rome, that Agca's action "was not a lonely fanatic's doing but a plot contrived by far-right, neo-Fascist organizations."

Then he went on to recite fundamental disagreements between the Vatican and Washington over such issues as disarmament, El Salvador, the Palestine



In his first general audience since the May 13 assassination attempt, Pope John Paul II appeared rested and in good health as he spoke from the balcony of his Summer residence at Castelgandolfo, south of Rome.

Liberation Organization and the status of Jerusalem.

"All these things together," Katin wrote, "represent the unmistakable political background against which the episode of the assassination on the head of the Catholic Church stands out."

William Wilson, the U.S. envoy to the Vatican, accused the Soviet Union of

slander and serious violation of diplomatic protocol by implying the U.S. involvement. He also asked the Italian government to take "appropriate action" regarding the article.

According to Religious News Service, analysts were puzzled over the Soviet motive in making such veiled charges. Father Robert A. Graham, the RNS Rome analyst, wrote:

"The observer can ask himself where this novel Moscow-originating story leads."

Father Graham suspected a new Soviet line trying to rupture the U.S.-Vatican relations may be an answer. Perhaps the latest developments reveal a different reason, that Moscow was practicing the best defense is a good offense tactic.

Churches Blast Springbok Game

By John Dash

The Office of Black Ministries and United Church Ministry late last week entered the fray surrounding the possible game between the Springboks of South Africa and the U.S. all-star rugby team in Rochester.

In a statement issued last Friday, the UCM pledged itself "to stop, not at verbal protest, but to actively educate, agitate and organize our communities to physically resist this plot to undermine the liberation struggle in South Africa against the terrorists of apartheid."

Rev. John Walker, executive secretary of the diocesan OBM, said that his office is "prepared to take to

the streets, from picketing to sit-down obstructions at the gates to protest this insult to human dignity."

In addition, Dr. Gayraud Wilmore of UCM noted that the swell of protest over the Springbok tour in the U.S. was an indication of the success of black labors for equality. "We both recognize and herald that," he said.

The UCM statement also condemned the Reagan Administration and its South African policy toward the apartheid regimes in Azania (the ancient name of South Africa) and Namibia. "We also denounce as hypocritical and cowardly the refusal of the United States to condemn the illegal trespass of the

South African army onto Angolan soil under the guise of destroying communist support of SWAPO, whom we African-Americans and all people of justice, recognize as the sole representatives of the will of the courageous people of Namibia in their struggle."

"If the racists controlling the Reagan administration wish to violate the principles of dignity, honor and truth by supporting cooperative mutualities with southern Africa and by so doing hasten the inevitable military intrusion into Africa by American forces, let them understand that our response can be nothing other than resistance on the part of the African-American people and

our total support of the revolutionary struggle of our kinsmen," the statement said.

In the question of the Springbok game in Rochester the union of more than 110 churches in the area called on Rochesterians "to make known that practitioners and supporters of apartheid shall never be welcome in the city that claimed the glorious Frederick Douglass, the nourished the gallant Martin Delany and Harriett Tubman that housed the defiant Sojourner Truth, and that for over 40 years shielded hundreds of black people escaping from slavery to freedom on the Underground Railroad."