

Sister Rita Watkins Notes 50 Years as Nun

Sister Rita Watkins' golden jubilee of entry into the Congregation of Our Lady of the Retreat in the Cenacle was

celebrated last week in festivities highlighted by a Mass concelebrated by Fathers Joseph Trovato and

Thomas Mull and a reception hosted by the Cenacle Retreat League.

Sister Rita, 13 years in the Rochester Cenacle, was feted by friends from California; Canada, Massachusetts and New Jersey as well as those she has served in the diocese.

Born in Renfrew, Scotland, Sister Rita emigrated to the United States at the age of 19. Two years later she entered the Cenacle at Lake Ronkonkoma on Long Island.

She has served in Chicago, New York, Boston, and Lancaster, Mass., as well as here. She has primarily engaged in room management and acted as dining room hostess. She also frequently



SISTER RITA

serves as receptionist at the Rochester Cenacle.

Her fellow Religious of the Cenacle, Sister Helen Harber, has said of her, "She unfailingly radiated genuine solicitude for each one's comfort. Today she is very much alive to the present moment and... her cheery voice retains to this day some Scottish inflections."

Fr. John Reedy



Looking for the Lord

Handling The Cardinal Cody Story

As this is being written, I'm sure that Catholic journalists around the country are struggling with the question: How do we handle the Cardinal Cody story?

The Chicago Sun-Times has published more than six pages of an investigation it has been working on for over a year. The substance of its report has been repeated in newspapers and broadcasts across the country.

Stripping away a great deal of background and unsubstantiated suggestions, the substance of the story claimed that a federal grand jury is looking into the possibility that Cardinal Cody has illegally transferred tax-exempt money, which might or might not have been Church funds, to a woman who was regarded as a member of his family. (Though there seems to be no blood relationship, there was a close family association.)

In my 29 years in the Catholic press, I can't think of any comparable situation. We have seen reports of Church funds mishandled but not by a Cardinal still presiding over his archdiocese. We have seen high church officials involved in policy and personnel disputes, but that's a different kind of thing.

As embarrassing and as unpleasant as the report is, Catholic journalists cannot pretend it doesn't exist; they can't, that is, if they take seriously their responsibility as journalists.

What, then, can be said about the report in these first days after its appearance?

First, there is the legal issue. Though I suspect the federal prosecutor was not anxious to deal with an investigation of the Cardinal Archbishop of Chicago, the Sun-Times treatment of the story assures that he will have to see it through to its resolution.

ADORATION MASS

Father Raymond Booth, pastor of St. Christopher's in North Chili, will celebrate the annual Mass for the Nocturnal Adoration Society, at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 8, at the church. Following the Mass, Father James Schwartz, associate, will speak at a supper in the parish hall. Vincent Melito is chairman of the event.

Moreover, though we might find the proceedings distasteful, there is no reason why an ecclesiastical official should not be held accountable to the law.

Second, now that this story has broken it's likely that other news organizations, along with the Sun-Times reporters, will dig up every aspect of it they can find. The phenomenon of "pack journalism" is a reality.

Third, though Cardinal Cody is entitled to a legal presumption of innocence and to the assumption of good character and responsible administration, there is no doubt that the legal investigation and this story, with its inevitable follow-ups, will substantially hurt his ability to provide leadership for the Church in Chicago.

It's a decision which he will have to make, with serious consultation, but the question of his resignation will have to be considered. The primary consideration is the welfare of the Church, but that welfare includes the question of whether a prominent Church leader has been defamed by a major news organization.

Aside from the legal issue, which at this time seems to be basically the proper use of tax-exempt funds, there is also a question of the proper and appropriate action on the part of a Church leader.

The prosecutor and the grand jury cannot deal with this latter question. It will become an ugly, lingering wound if it is left entirely to the digging of investigative reporters.

As unpleasant as all this must be for Cardinal Cody, there is now no way in which he can simply refuse to recognize the public reality.

But neither should he have to face the indignity of trying to justify himself to a roomful of hungry reporters.

I would hope that he might ask some of his fellow members of the hierarchy — or the Apostolic Delegate — to set up quickly a group which would be given access to all the facts, which would promptly issue a public report on those issues which are of legitimate concern to the Catholics of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

It's an unpleasant, unfortunate situation, but the public reality must be death with.

Pilgrim Virgin Speaker Slated

Father Philip Bebie, a Passionist from the Word of the Cross Community in Chelsea, N.Y., will speak at Holy Rosary Church, Wednesday, Oct. 21.

Father Bebie will bring with him a statue of the Pilgrim Virgin which once belonged to Bishop Cuthbert O'Gara, the "dry martyr" of China who was imprisoned by Chinese communists.

Father Bebie is raising funds to carry the statue to China in May and June next year.

Father Bebie's appearance is being sponsored by Mrs. Mary Kelly, spokesperson for the Blue Army of our Lady of Fatima in the area.



FATHER BEBIE

Further information on the event is available by calling Mrs. Kelly (716) 586-1664.

Grantsmanship Course Scheduled Oct. 19-23

A five-day course in grantsmanship, a billion dollar business, has been scheduled for Oct. 19-23, at the Holiday Inn in downtown Rochester.

Sponsored by Trinity Council 4618 of the Knights of Columbus with the support of Xerox Corp., the course is limited to 25 people representing local social and cultural interests. Participants will learn program planning, researching government and private grant sources and how to write grant applications.

The course will be conducted by the Grantsmanship Center, with offices in Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.

"This will be the 13th time we've sponsored the program," said Stanley T. Zawacki, the chairman, "and each time we were delighted with the turnout. This reflects the growing need for guidance in this area since institutions,

MISS POLONIA

The Polish Army Veterans Post 27 is looking for single girls of Polish descent between the ages of 16 and 25 for the 1982 Miss Polonia Contest, slated for Saturday, Oct. 10, at St. Stanislaus Auditorium. Persons interested in entering the contest have been asked to call Teresa Sobolewski, 271-1147, or Gabriel Jascot, 467-0288.

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There are many ways to express your sympathy — and all have value. But your attendance at the funeral is perhaps the most important. The support of your presence, the words of comfort you offer, let the family know our concern and understanding of their loss. Take the time — and realize that although your attendance may not seem very important to you — it does to the family of the deceased.

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New memb Langie Fitz

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The Board Our Lady School has members. 1 alumnae Ju Simmons, Ouwleen, Sullivan, RS

Julie Fitz Sweetbriar C and, along Phillip and t belongs to Lourdes p work and volvement t is involved council in ti is director o Theater, an of the 70th St. Mary's volunteer include the and the Gallery.

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FOCUS OI

Father D celebrate ti part of the the Eucha 7:30 p.m., at the l Chapel, 15 events th recitation evening pri of the Bless