

Arts and Crafts Sale To Benefit HC School

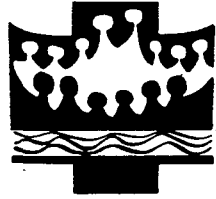
The School of the Holy Childhood, the non-denominational school and training program for mentally handicapped children and adults on the first floor of the Pastoral Office building, will hold its annual arts and crafts sale from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 24, and from noon to 4 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 25, at the school auditorium, 1150 Buffalo Road.

Art, crafts, Christmas decorations, and several new small appliances will be among the items for sale. Refreshments will also be available.

Last year, more than \$6,000 was raised to help support the school, a privately funded institution. Organizers of the event are planning to commemorate the school's 35th anniversary and the International Year of the Disabled Person during the sale.

Insights In Liturgy

By Pam Schaeffer



Ushers Are More Than Doorkeepers

Of all the changes since Vatican II, probably the most significant, and most elusive, is the way we envision the assembly that gathers. Since Vatican II we see people as the "most important symbol," their "full, active and conscious participation" as the essential ingredient in our liturgical celebrations, and the buildings in which people assemble for worship become "houses for the Church" by the very act of their gathering.

It is not too hard to grasp the significance of this vision of Church compared to the previous role that was given to the people, one where expectations of the people's role was relegated to not much more than bodily attendance. But why is a change that is so significant also so elusive? Why haven't we or can't we claim their rightful role?

The answer, or at least a major portion of it, rests with people feeling at ease, comfortable, welcomed — that they belong. What people hear and comprehend from recent Church documents on an intellectual level must be experienced, lived, as it were, on a personal level. Ushers and presiders, the most visible leaders of our common ministry of hospitality and presence to one another, shoulder the responsibility that will lead people to feel "at home" in their house. How well or how poorly they do their individual parts directly affects how well or how poorly the rest of us are able to pray, celebrate, grow in faith and are present to one another.

Because the attention of the presider must be directed to readying servers, lectors, eucharistic ministers, musicians and himself before Mass begins, his first act as "host" usually is included in his greeting at the beginning of Mass. The presider can also be found greeting individuals, as they leave church on their way home, at the doorway or on the front steps. This is a good sign of hospitality, but doesn't help assemble the people for the celebration. It is here, at the time of gathering, that the parish usher shares the responsibility with the presider for

the comfort and well-being of the people.

Parish ushers have the unique opportunity to help the whole community begin the celebration on the right wavelength, in the right spirit. For better or worse, ushers have become our Church's most visible sign of human warmth and hospitality. In most churches our first human exchange is with the parish usher.

Ushers have never had that good an image. For the most part this is not their fault. While other ministerial groups have been publicly commissioned, trained for their special roles, and updated through liturgical instruction, our ushers have been neglected, their self-image tarnished, and their ministry little esteemed. The very name "usher" conjures up some pictures of stern, old men who guard doors and collect money, making them seem to be more like "bouncers" than "hosts." The positive influence on the whole demeanor of the celebration that these ministers are fully capable of conveying has been overlooked far too long. It is time to recognize parish ushers as liturgical ministers who are called by the Church to be servants of the faith community in the highest moment of its self-realization — when it gathers to celebrate Sunday Eucharist.

It is time, too, to recognize that those called to this ministry of hospitality are not only men of the parish, but can include women. In fact, it is a natural ministry for couples to share. The prerequisites that are important to consider for those aspiring to the ministry of hospitality are qualities that show warmth, genuine concern and the ability to be outgoing and friendly. Ushers must be people-persons who recognize that a warm welcome and gentle courtesy can set the whole tone for anything that might happen within the hearts of those that gather. Ushers are more than doorkeepers; they are "doors" giving open access to the warmth of a caring, celebrating, Christian community. Ushers are men and women committed to Christ living in his Church, and they possess a deep sense of being instruments of the community appointed to serve its growth in the spirit of Jesus Christ.

Fr. John Reedy



Looking for the Lord.

More Ugly Reports from Chicago

The Chicago story becomes more and more bizarre.

And everyone connected with it seems to come out besmirched.

Rob Warden's article in the Chicago Lawyer has received wide publicity. It presents a weird series of quotations from tapes attributed to Father Andrew Greeley and dated through the period 1975-78.

At the very least, the quotations represent an obnoxious preoccupation with a desire to have Cardinal Cody removed by means of a journalistic expose. Then, the plan assumed that Archbishop Bernardin (Cincinnati) would move to Chicago. In Greeley's judgment, he (Bernardin) could be expected to organize a progressive voting bloc for the election of the pope who would succeed Paul VI.

Father Greeley has issued a statement saying: "Stripped of my context, style, intent, purpose and meaning, the words are no longer mine in any real sense. I therefore deny and repudiate them."

Somehow that sounds like Ron Ziegler's claim that an earlier Nixon statement was no longer operative. It just won't wash.

We have no way of being sure that he would or could become the Mayor Daley of a conclave.

But the article says that Greeley identifies Archbishop Bernardin as a major source of ecclesiastical information which the priest used in his books and columns. Considering the tone of these publications, such acknowledgment is a kiss of death.

And it's hard to see how any denials, by either Father Greeley or Archbishop Bernardin, can counter the damage that has been done.

Severely damaged, too, is Father Greeley's own reputation. Whatever justification might be offered regarding his concern for the Church in Chicago and in Rome, what comes through is a callous, grubby preoccupation with manipulation of people and events. This attitude seems particularly offensive when directed toward the life of the Church.

I'm not naive. I know that in the history of the Church there have been plenty of people who have tried to manipulate it for their own purposes. That realization, however, doesn't make the pattern any less offensive.

It's hard to see how, after this, Father Greeley can maintain much credibility in his often harsh judgments on persons and activities in the Church.

He claims that these quotations, which he

disowns, represent late night "fantasies." But even our fantasies — which none of us would like to have made public — can reveal a good deal about us. What these reveal about Father Greeley is not attractive.

And if they were fantasies, or a peculiar form of game-playing with his publisher, it was still irresponsible for Father Greeley to leave such potentially damaging material on permanent record. As this episode shows, we can never guarantee that such records will not emerge to harm the reputations of others.

So far, there is no clear evidence that Father Greeley had any significant influence in initiating the current investigation of Cardinal Cody. He denies that he did.

But no one who is concerned for the welfare of the Church can be happy about the ugly reports emanating from Chicago.

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