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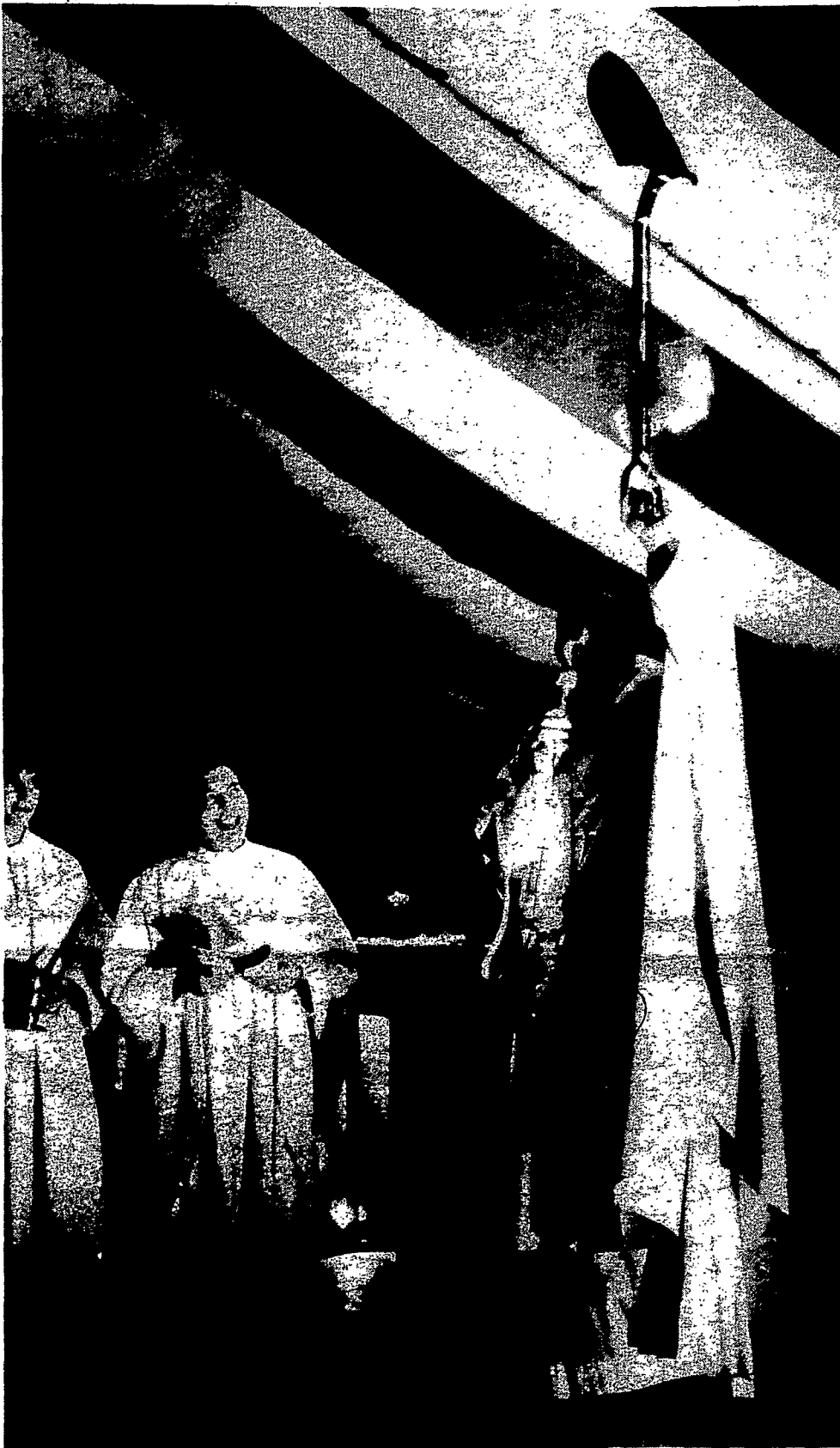


Photo by Terrance J. Brennan

Here's How

Bishop Matthew H. Clark holds the shovel high so all can see as he prepares to break ground for a new church during ceremonies last Saturday night at St. John of Rochester, Fairport. Standing by are, from left, acolyte Patrick Dormer, and associate pastor Father Frank Falletta. The Mass and groundbreaking were held in a large tent on the future site. The parish, founded in 1961, has never had a formal church structure; an area in the school has been used. Construction is scheduled to begin in Spring 1982, and the completion date, according to Father Bernard Dollen, pastor of St. John's, is hoped to be around next Christmas.

Canon Law Commission Reduces Offenses For Excommunication

Vatican City — The Vatican Commission for the Revision of the Code of Canon Law has approved a new code of Church law which reduces from 37 to 6 the number of offenses punishable by excommunication within the Church.

The 74-member plenary session of the commission completed eight days of deliberation of a draft of the new code and sent it to Pope John Paul II for promulgation.

The new version of the code also provides for annulment of Church marriages for psychological reasons, adopting one of the experimental norms granted to the American Church in 1970.

However, the mandatory review of each annulment will remain in the new code despite strenuous efforts by the American bishops to have it removed. The experimental norms had permitted marriage tribunals in the United States to dispense with the appeal with the permission of the

National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The code retains automatic excommunication for anyone obtaining an abortion. The other offenses punishable by excommunication are profaning the Eucharist, disclosure by a priest of what has been told him in a confession, when a priest forgives an accomplice in an offense, bishops who consecrate other bishops without proper Vatican authority and an attack on the life of the pope.

Father John Alessandro, former president of the Canon Law Society of America, said that there was never any question of abolishing automatic excommunication in cases of abortion.

"This was so because the Church must continue to emphasize the value it places on human life," Father Alessandro said.

The code drops excommunication as a penalty for Roman Catholics who join Masonic lodges. Father Alessandro said the previous code, published in 1917,

specifically mandated automatic excommunication for Roman Catholics joining the Masons. The new draft does not mention the Masons, according to Father Alessandro.

At a press conference here last week, Archbishop John L. Bernardin of Cincinnati, a member of the commission, stressed that the new annulment procedure "has been greatly simplified."

Father Alessandro, acting as legal expert to the archbishop, said that the review procedure did not require a new trial of the case, which the old code permitted and which before 1971 was customary.

The new code is the first of the worldwide Church to recognize psychological disabilities as grounds for dissolving a Church marriage.

Psychological incapacity of at least one party has been the cited cause of marriage breakdown in 90 percent of the annulments sought in American tribunals, Religious News Service reported.

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Mentally Handicapped Offered Opportunity For Alternative Living

By Joan M. Smith

There's a light at the end of the tunnel for the mentally retarded and developmentally disabled. In recent years they have been given more to look forward to than being confined in a state hospital.

According to Charles Craig, chief of Community Services at Newark Development Center (NDC), it was a case of "philosophy and bucks hitting together" that floodlighted the theory of de-institutionalism. Although supervised community homes are not a new idea, it took legal action in 1972 against Willowbrook State Hospital (now Staten Island Developmental Center) to make the state focus on viable and less expensive alternatives to institutionalization. The suit which was settled in 1975 charged, among other things, widespread physical abuse and involuntary servitude of inmates.

Since then, supervised community homes for the mentally retarded and developmentally disabled have grown in numbers nationwide. NDC alone operates nine such residences



Dorothy Redmond, seated, a resident, slices apples for a soon-to-be-baked pie as staff member Kathleen DeCoster watches.

with six more in the planning stage. The newest of these is in Palmyra and has been operating since April.

This residence, a huge Victorian home in a well-kept neighborhood, has a bright,

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Diocese of Rochester
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