

Catechumens Initiated

St. James Parish of Rochester initiated nine candidates to the rank of catechumen at Easter vigil services on Saturday, April 2. From left, Catechumens Mickie Maddock, Dennis Rutledge, Sharon Cerame, Bo Kretschman, Father Robert C. Bradler, pastor, Father Matthew A. Kawiak, associate pastor, Lillian Miller, Janine Kiefer, Wesley Grieve, Eric Maltzan and Gary Conrow.

U.S. Failing the Poor, Bishop Tells Senate

Washington (NC) — Federal budget cuts made the plight of the poor worse and the government is not fulfilling its responsibility to help them, Auxiliary Bishop Joseph M. Sullivan told a Senate subcommittee April 6.

Testifying as a member of the Board of the National Conference of Catholic Charities before the Senate subcommittee on nutrition, Bishop Sullivan emphasized that "from the point of view of poor people, things are getting worse out there, not better. What is making it worse, in part, is a federal government shrinking from its responsibility to protect the poor, to assure them shelter, nutrition, health care."

He stressed "that people are entitled to this assistance by the very nature of their personhood, their very human dignity and right" and that assistance "is a federal

responsibility, not solely a responsibility of the voluntary sector or the states."

Bishop Sullivan, former executive director of Catholic Charities in Brooklyn and Queens, New York City, said he was testifying to "growing hunger lines resulting both from our recent recession and from federal policies of the last two years."

Recent studies of federal policy in the last two years "demonstrate strikingly that in the midst of economic difficulties striking hardest at the poor, the changes in our laws have favored the rich and greatly harmed the poor." He said, "Our own view is that the current use of the 'safety net' concept is a shibboleth." The programs "having the most impact on the poorest in society 'are the programs which have received the largest cuts," he said. "The phrase 'the deserving poor' is divisive and demeaning."

The terms "safety net" and "deserving poor" have been used by the Reagan administration to refer to the system of aid and the people were to be served after cuts in federal programs.

He provided the following examples:

• "In New York City, there were more than 36,000 homeless in 1982... the food and hunger hot line in New York City reports an 82 percent increase in the past year in requests for food assistance in New York City. In 1982, 175,000 people lost food stamp eligibility.

• "Catholic Charities in Denver reports 800 emergency beds in shelters, 512 new in 1982, a 150 percent increase over the previous year. That agency estimates an additional 500 beds are needed.

Reagan Tells Educators: 'I'll Charge Uphill' For Tuition Credits

Washington (NC) — Rejecting criticism that he is strong on rhetoric supporting tuition tax credit legislation on Capitol Hill but weak on action, President Reagan told Catholic educators that "like Teddy Roosevelt, I'm going to charge up that hill" to work for passage.

He introduced no new proposals but outlined the education package now in Congress. The current proposal includes tax credits up to half of the tuition parents pay to send their children to nonpublic schools.

Reagan spoke in the final minutes of the 80th annual National Catholic Educational Association convention in Washington April 7. NCEA officials estimated that more than 10,000 Catholic educators attended the April 4-7 convention.

In his address, Reagan said he would "get to the heart of what I know the National Catholic Education is interested in — we need tuition tax credits.

The president also mentioned education savings accounts that would give tax breaks to parents who save for their children's college education and a proposal to allow local school districts to establish an educational voucher system using federal school aid for the poor.

He said that although some education lobbies have protested tuition tax credit legislation, calling it an attack on public schools and destined to help private academies and finishing schools, "the majority of private schools are Church-run" and paid for by parents who "pay taxes to fund public schools as well."

He told the educators that he was disappointed that the tax credit proposal didn't get further in the last Congress

and "I want the legislation to move as quickly as possible through Congress" this year.

Last year, the proposal made it through the Senate Finance Committee.

Reagan said he has heard talk that "I'm strong on rhetoric but not physically pushing the bill." He then compared his efforts to former President Theodore Roosevelt who, as a horseman in the Spanish American War, led his volunteer Rough Riders up San Juan Hill.

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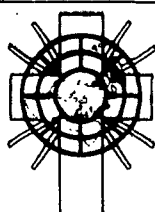
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Mercy Music

A concert, "The Music of Mercy," featuring, left to right, Sisters Mary Ann Kosakoski, Mary Clare Bollow, Jacquelyn Reichart, Mary Frances Wegman, Jeanne Marie Collins, Susan Weaver, Patricia Beirsto, Mary Marvin and Sheila Stevenson, will be performed in conjunction with the Mercy Spring sale and roast beef dinner, 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Saturday, April 16, in the Mercy motherhouse chapel. Suggested donation for the concert is \$2. Proceeds from the event will benefit Melita House, a home for pregnant teens and women.

Caras to Speak

Roger Caras, internationally known author and environmentalist, will address the Humane Society's annual awards banquet Thursday, May 5, at the Mapledale Party House. Tickets for the event are \$15 and are reserved by calling the Humane Society shelter 223 1330

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