

St. Mary's Gift: 150 Years of Hospitality

By Kathleen A. Milliken,
RSM

St. Patrick's Day has always been a special occasion at St. Mary's Church in downtown Rochester; each year Mass is offered there to inaugurate the parade sponsored by the St. Patrick's Day Committee for Greater Rochester.

This year's Mass has special significance, as St. Mary's, the oldest existing Catholic church in Rochester, celebrates its sesquicentennial year along with the city. Bishop Dennis W. Hickey will officiate at the Mass and deliver the homily; the public is invited. Mass will be at 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 17.

It was in 1833 that a group of Irish folk purchased land and a former Methodist meeting house on South St. Paul Street -- the first location of St. Mary's Church. Patrick Kearney, John Sheridan, William O'Neill, Nicholas Read, William Tone and Patrick O'Maley were among the pioneers who struggled to found the parish to serve the needs of the Irish immigrants of Rochester.

Officially dedicated on July 13, 1834, St. Mary's Irish roots have proven durable over the years, from the early founders to today's worshippers who number many descendants of other nationalities as well.

Immigrant families, the poor who needed food, jobs and education, the sick and the orphaned were always welcomed at St. Mary's from the very beginning. In 1857, the Irish Sisters of Mercy started a long and fruitful ministry when Mother Frances Warde and six sisters arrived from Providence, Rhode Island at the request of Bishop John Timon of Buffalo. Immediately they began visiting the sick, opened a "free school" for children, an academy for girls and a House of Mercy for unemployed women. A soup kitchen, an employment office, industrial school and day care center were all undertaken to serve the people suffering from hunger and economic depression.

Names like Sister M. Vincent Doyle who was a familiar figure over the turn of the century in the prisons and homes of the sick, Sister M. Colette Dunn who taught first grade for many years, Sister Pauline Mills who headed St. Mary's School of Business -- these were household words in many families. St. Mary's parish was blessed too with a number of vocations to the religious life over the years: Sisters M. Francesca and dePazzi Connor, Sister M. Antonia Hyde, Sister M. Joseph Tolan, to name a few. The oldest surviving Sister of Mercy today, Sister M. Ursula McQueeney, taught at St. Mary's in 1909.

Priests who served at St. Mary's included Father Bernard O'Reilly, the first pastor; Father Thomas McEvoy who built the present church (for the phenomenal cost of

ST. MARY'S 1834-1984
The heart of downtown Rochester NY

\$40,000) which was dedicated in 1858; Father Daniel Moore, the pastor who served as a chaplain during the Civil War; Archbishop Thomas F. Hickey, second bishop of Rochester who was a native son of St. Mary's.

More recently the names of Father George Kettell, spellbinding orator and builder of St. Mary's tower (pastor from 1935 to 1949) and Monsignor James C. McAniff, who retired in 1980, stand out. Msgr. McAniff served the longest term of any pastor -- 31 years; he died on Dec. 24, 1983 shortly after celebrating the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

Today, despite many changes in the downtown area, St. Mary's is alive and well and seeking new direction in its ministry to people. Gone are the days of several Masses when every seat would be filled; gone is the residential district once served by St. Mary's.

But a new and growing ministry is developing to meet the needs of today's people: the elderly, the young single folk, married couples and families, transients, and members of the business community who find their way to 15 St. Mary's Place. A significant trend is sharing responsibility with lay people, including the many business men and women who worship there on a daily basis.

Staff members Father James Lawlor, Mrs. Joan Young, Sister Sheila Walsh, SSJ, and Sister Joan Sobala, SSJ, extend a warm welcome to those who find themselves in the downtown area to stop, visit, worship and make themselves a part of St. Mary's for as long as they wish.

Whether it be a stimulating liturgical celebration, an evening social gathering with wine and cheese or a visit with a homebound parishioner, St. Mary's still focuses on people, still extends that Irish hospitality, 150 years after its founding.

Today the parish still includes many of Irish descent, but like the city of Rochester, it has become a melting pot enriched with the culture of a variety of peoples. As one member observed recently: "We have one of everybody here!"

Happy St. Patrick's Day and happy birthday to St. Mary's "Irish and beautiful for 150 years!"



Spring Elegance

Terry O'Laughlin, Kelli Radogna and Joan Segrué modeled at the recent Cardinal Mooney Women's Guild fashion show.

Vatican to Pay \$250 Million in Ambrosiano Case

Rome (NC) -- The Vatican plans to pay \$250 million as part of a settlement in the Banco Ambrosiano case, said Cardinal John Krol of Philadelphia, a member of the council of cardinals advising the Vatican on financial problems.

Cardinal Krol is the first church official to be quoted publicly about terms of the settlement. He was interviewed by NC News Service March 3 in Rome after attending a meeting of the financial advisory council.

Cardinal Krol said that negotiations involving Italian banking authorities, Vatican officials and officials of Ambrosiano's creditor banks would likely culminate in a meeting on March 8 to formalize a Vatican decision to pay \$250 million in three installments to the creditor banks.

Corollary of the payment would be a quit claim that no further action would be taken against the Vatican bank, said Cardinal Krol.

He added that the money was likely to be raised by loans and repaid by the Vatican bank out of its future earnings.

Previously, Vatican sources had said that a Vatican payment would be made for "goodwill" purposes although the Vatican considers itself to have no legal responsibility in the Ambrosiano case.

Cardinal Krol is the only U.S. cardinal on the 14-member Council of Cardinals for the Study of the Organizational and Economic problems of the Holy See. He said the council was "still pushing" for fuller disclosure of Vatican finances and had recommended an independent audit of the Vatican bank as a step in that process.

Banco Ambrosiano, Italy's largest private bank, collapsed in 1982 under bad debts totalling \$1.2 billion. Its president, Roberto Calvi,

was later found hanged under a London bridge. A British court was unable to determine whether his death was a suicide or a murder.

Later in 1982, Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Agostino Casaroli said that the Vatican, through an "abuse of trust," had become unwittingly involved by Calvi in the bad debts.

The council of cardinals met Feb. 27-March 2. A Vatican press release at the conclusion of the meeting said that participants had "an ample exchange of opinions" on the Vatican bank-Ambrosiano affair and that "in their own time the competent organisms will furnish adequate information."

The Vatican release estimated that the deficit from the Vatican's 1984 central administrative operations would be \$31 million.

Job Hotline For Disabled

To help remove some of the last remaining barriers to employment of the disabled, Assemblywoman Pinny Cooke (R-Rochester) announced hotline, 1-800-635-6333, providing job information, test announcements and affirmative action policies to state employees or those seeking state employment. Cooke indicated that the service would operate from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. weekdays.

According to a press release announcing the hotline, the hotline is a joint project undertaken by the state Department of Social Services Commission for the Blind and Visually Handicapped, the Department of Civil Service and the Education Department's Office of Vocational Rehabilitation. Each agency is contributing either the needed staff support or capital.

Fertility Awareness Conference Topic

"Fertility Awareness As a Means to Sexual Well-Being," a Natural Family Planning conference, will take place from 3:30 to 9:45 p.m., Thursday, March 29, at the Century Club on East Avenue. The conference will be open to all physicians, nurses, medical/nursing students, social workers and allied health professionals.

Feature speakers will include John McCarthy Jr., MD, OB/GYN, Magee Women's Hospital, Pittsburgh; David Markham, ACSW, Western Monroe Mental Health Center; Mary Sojourner, MA, counselor, educator and writer on

women's health issues; Michael Mirwald, MD, Greece OB/GYN, and Ann Wegman, associate director for Youth Ministry for Adolescent and Parent Sexuality Education, Diocese of Rochester.

Topics will include "An Overview of Fertility Awareness throughout the Life Cycle," "The Psycho-Social Impact of Fertility Awareness on the Individual and Family," "Fertility Awareness and the Adolescent," "Female Sexuality and the Menstrual Cycle," and "Working with the Infertile Couple."

Pre-registration deadline is March 20. Cost is \$25 and includes a full-course dinner and materials. Further in-

formation is available from NFP Education, 89 Genesee St., Rochester, N. Y. 14611, telephone 464-8705.

Art Brightens Downtown

McCurdy's Midtown store is hosting a three week promotion in conjunction with the Memorial Art Gallery. "The Art Connection," combining two creative fields - art and fashion - is using the resources of the Memorial Art Gallery to reflect the art connection in spring fashions.

Besides an exhibit entitled "Contemporary American Prints from the Memorial Art Gallery" on McCurdy's first floor there are art works displayed in the second floor Garden Room restaurant. Selected works from the Gallery Store are also on display and available for purchase.

The Memorial Art Gallery's Creative Workshop for Children, 6 to 10 years old, will be in McCurdy's Community Center from 1:30 - 2:30 p.m., Saturday, March 17. The cost of the workshop is \$1 and children attending will be eligible to win a free scholarship to the

memorial Art Gallery's Summer Creative Workshop Program.

According to promotional material, highlighting "The Art Connection" is a series of demonstrations by local artists including Sharon Locke, ceramic portrait sculpture; Eric Bellmann, drawing; Yvonne Cipollo, stained glass making; and Joyce Robards, weaving.

Transplant Program

"Kidney Transplant - Is It For You?" will be presented as part of Organ Donor Month from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday, March 19, 1101 Clover Road. The informal symposium, sponsored by the Kidney Foundation of Upstate New York, is free to all kidney patients, family members, and others interested in transplantation. For further information, call the Kidney Foundation office at 244-8893.

Pope Urges Religion Dialogue

Vatican City -- Pope John Paul II has called for dialogue among world religions as a means of preserving values in a changing society. Such dialogue is necessary and important, the pope said, so that people "can realize their authentic development and can help their culture save religious and spiritual values in the face of rapid social change." The pope spoke during a March 3 audience at the Vatican with participants in a plenary session of the Vatican Secretariat for Non-Christians.



Helping Artists

Catherine Ferris and Laretta Wandersee, members of the Catholic Women's Club, are among volunteers feted by Sibley's for their participation in the Scholastic Art Awards Exhibit which closed Saturday.