

Arms Spending to Be Target Of '1984 Rice Bowl' Drive

New York (NC) — This year's Operation Rice Bowl campaign, sponsored by Catholic Relief Services, will focus on the adverse effect that increased arms spending has on spending for human needs, one of the themes of the U.S. bishops' 1983-pastoral letter on peace.

In a Feb. 24 announcement, CRS said the campaign will emphasize the bishops' statement that increasing militarization of the world not only takes resources away from the needy but also leads to greater repression of the poor and those working on their behalf.

The rice bowl campaign begins on Ash Wednesday, March 7.

CRS, the overseas aid and development agency of American Catholics, estimated that more than 16,000 parishes, schools, colleges and seminaries in dioceses throughout the United States will participate in the 1984 program.

Campaign participants are asked to fast or to eat a reduced meal once a week during the six weeks of Lent and to contribute the money saved to their parish rice bowl fund.

Twenty-five percent of the contributions may be kept by each diocese to fund local anti-hunger and poverty programs, CRS said. The remaining 75 percent goes to CRS to fund community

self-help projects among the needy in Third World countries.

In its ninth year, Operation Rice Bowl has raised more than \$20 million for anti-hunger projects.

Donation

Vincent B. Campbell and his wife Geraldine have contributed \$600 to the John M. Miceli Memorial Fund at Nazareth College which provides scholarship aid for students of Italian descent. Mrs. Campbell is Mr. Miceli's daughter, a former Rochester accountant who died in 1978.

Brother Benjamin Celebrates 50th

By Arthur Farren

Canandaigua — "Gem of the Finger Lakes," has many other boasts — among them an ecclesiastical "one of a kind."

He is 76-year-old Brother Benjamin, CSSR, who last week marked his 50th year in the Redemptorist order.

Among his distinctive characteristics are a smiling, benign countenance over a collar-and-cassock garb which have been a familiar sight along the city's main street during the last six years.

"Brother Benji," sacristan at nearby Notre Dame Retreat House, goes about "my Father's business" in the daily chore of visits to the post office, market, drug store and bakery on behalf of the retreat house.

His clerical clothing is indeed a "habit" — he never is without it; his height ("nearly five feet — I stopped growing when I was about 12") and his cherubic appearance attract many second looks; his greetings and conversation abound in use of the word "heavenly."

Testifying to his satisfaction with life, he declares, "I have been happily 'married' to God and His Church for five decades... I truly love the Canandaigua hills, woods and lake views, and I see my creator both in them and in the good people of the community."

Celebration of Brother Benjamin's 50th anniversary date, March 15, was limited to a luncheon at which he was feted by the three priests and staff at Notre Dame. Relatives and friends plan public commemoration of his jubilee June 30-July 1 at the retreat house.

Brother Benjamin (Raymond) Beh was born Sept. 29, 1907 in Webster. He was the second of 12 children of Webster natives Joseph Beh and Wilhelmina Huttemann — seven boys (one adopted, two deceased) and five girls, all married; one sister resides in Florida; the others in Monroe and Wayne counties.

As was typical of large families in the century's third decade, Raymond's formal education ended in grammar school; he was "needed on the farm," often accompanying his dad to the Rochester public market. During limited leisure he learned to play the violin and banjo, and with two brothers formed an orchestra which performed at dances and over WHEC radio.

Long walks brought Raymond a love for nature which nurtured meditation — and a consideration of religious life. His pastor, Msgr. Frank Hoefen of Holy Trinity Church, suggested the Redemptorist congregation.

It was on March 15, 1934 that Raymond assumed the name of Benjamin and took temporary vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. Three years later came final profession, perpetual vows and an oath of perseverance. After serving at several Redemptorist institutions in Pennsylvania, Maryland and New York, he was assigned to Canandaigua on July 1, 1977. His duties are varied — greeting and accommodating hundreds of retreatants, preparing for liturgies, and helping with other operation phases, including trips to town — "everything except the care of babies."

Poverty doesn't disturb him; he has long practiced detachment. Referring to the Sermon on the Mount, Brother Benjamin muses, "Blessed are the poor in spirit... Riches at times can bring distractions, removing persons from serving God and His creatures — although, I may add, I have known some rich persons who have indeed been poor in spirit."

Other than a journey to the Holy Land a few years ago, he claims no desire for travel — "My Holy Land is right here along Canandaigua Lake, where I continually find the Lord's presence... I thank God and the discipline



BR. BENJAMIN

of religious life for granting me good health. The Lord has held me in the palm of His hand."

(Farren is a former staffer of the Courier-Journal.)



PERFORMANCE — Of Carl Orff's "Carmina Burana", featuring Theodore Hollenbach conducting the Rochester Oratorio Society chorus and soloists Kathleen Miller Jones, soprano; John Denison, tenor; and William Sharp, baritone, 8 p.m., Saturday, March 24, the Pittsford-Mendon High School. General admission \$8; senior citizen and student tickets, \$5. Tickets available at Midtown Record Theatre and Music Lovers Shoppe.

CONCERT — Sponsored by the Rochester Area Hillel Foundation "in conjunction with the University of Rochester and the Phillip S. Bernstein Chair of Jewish Studies and featuring "Sing a New Song Unto the Lord — A Concert of Jewish Liturgical Music" with The Rochester Singers, Samuel Adler, conductor, Barbara Herbeck, organ/piano, Hazzan Samuel Rosenbaum, narrator, 8 p.m., Sunday, March 25, Interfaith Chapel, University of Rochester. Free.

ALL AT NAZARETH — "Plexus Mime," three mimes perform combination of circus, vaudeville and contemporary theater, 8 p.m., Friday, March 23, main auditorium, and work with props, costumes, masks and words for Children's Theater Program, 1 and 3 p.m., Saturday, March 24, main auditorium; "Richard Kiley — Verse Person Singular," featuring the poetry of Kipling, Carroll, Poe, Eliot and Browning, 8 p.m., Saturday, March 24, main auditorium, tickets \$10; students, \$8; "Astronomy in Your Classroom," workshop for elementary and secondary school teachers, by Dr. John R. Percy, professor of astronomy, University of Toronto, 3:30-5:30 p.m., Tuesday, March 27 and "The Cosmic Perspectives: What Modern Astronomy is Telling Us About the Universe and About Ourselves," lecture, 8 p.m., Tuesday, March 27, Otto A. Shults Community Center, free.

LECTURE SERIES — "Face to Face" presents "Change and Transformation in the Art



THE LOG SUGARHOUSE — Iroquois legends, state-of-the-art demonstrations and hearty pancake breakfasts welcome spring with the traditions of maple sugaring 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays, March 24-25 and March 31-April 1, Rochester Museum and Science Center Cumming Nature Center. Along the Pioneer Trail, staff displays and demonstrations will focus on the history and processes of maple sugaring. Topics covered include the Iroquois' discovery of maple sap, how and why trees produce sap and pioneer sugaring methods. Breakfast will cost \$2.50 for small serving and \$3 for large stack of pancakes. Maple sugaring programs are free with the general Nature Center admission of \$2 for adults and 50 cents for students through high school.

of traditional Cultures" by Peter Furst, professor of Anthropology, SUNY at Albany, 2 p.m., Saturday, March 24, Rochester Museum auditorium.

VISUAL ARTS — "Images of Dance — Paintings, Movement, Ideas," presented by Pamela Wilkins White and dance troupe for RMSC's 1983-84 Theatre for Children series, 2 p.m., Saturday, Marcy 24, Rochester Museum and Science Center Eisenhart Auditorium. Admission \$4, \$3 for RMSC members.

FILMS AND FUN — "Below Zero" starring Laurel and Hardy and "What on Earth!" (a cartoon), 3:45 p.m., Monday, March 26, Pulaski Community Library, 1151 Hudson Avenue. Free. **CAR SHOW** — March 27 — April 1, Long Ridge Mall.

ANTIQUA SHOW — Featuring furniture, china, collectibles, hardware, Wednesday March 21 through Sunday, March 25, Long Ridge Mall.

AUDITIONS — For "Spoon River Anthology" 7 to 10 p.m., Sunday, March 25 and Monday, March 26, Rochester Community Players.

NFP — Information Sessions sponsored by the Natural Family Planning Education of Rochester, 7:15 p.m. to 8:45 p.m., Thursday, March 22, St. John the Evangelist Church, Clyde, N.Y. **SENIOR MATINEE** — "The Big Circus" starring Victor Mature, Rhonda Fleming, 1:30 p.m., Thursday, March 22, George Eastman House.

ARCHITECTURE — "The Art We Live in Lecture Series, featuring David Schuyler, American Studies Program Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pa, 10 a.m. (coffee), Friday, March 23. Tickets are \$3 for members, \$3.50 for non-members, \$1 for students.

FAMILIES AND FRIENDS — of the Mentally Ill and Emotionally Disturbed presents "Monroe/Livingston Mental Health Demonstration Project" with Scott Kluess, acting director, 7:30 p.m., Monday, March 26, Reformation Church, 111 N. Chestnut St. Free and open to the public.

STAMP EXHIBIT — 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Friday, March 23, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Saturday, March 24, 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Sunday, March 25, Holiday Inn, Rochester-Genesee Plaza, downtown. Free admission.

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

Coping — With Kindness

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Jn. 4/4-42. (R1) Ex. 17/3-7. (R2) Rom. 5/1-2, 5-8.

"Mankind I love. It is people I hate." Such was Peanuts' reflection on life.

Dostoyevsky in his "The Brothers Karamazov" has a woman character express the same feeling: "The more I love humanity in general, the less I love man in particular. In my dreams I have often come to make enthusiastic schemes for the service of humanity... yet I am incapable of living in the same room with anyone for two days together."

A plethora of books have been appearing lately on "coping." there are books on how to cope with your marriage; how to cope with your divorce; how to cope with your children; how to cope with parents; how to cope with age; how to cope with your boss, and so on. What's the conclusion one must draw from all this "copology?" One would have to assume people must have a dickens of a time getting along. Interpersonal relationships are a big problem today.

If ever there were people difficult to get along with, it was the people Moses had led out of Egypt. Another name for the Book of Numbers, which tells of the wanderings of this people, is the Book of Murmurings. They murmured again and again against Moses and God. They grumbled, found fault; they were on the verge of murdering Moses. Maybe he wrote such a book. For it is instructive to note how wonderfully well Moses handled difficult people.

Never did he use harshness, nor impatience. Rather he was gentle and understanding. Sirach explains that was why God chose Moses: "For his... meekness God selected him from all mankind" (45/4). And repeatedly, Moses de-

scribes God as "merciful and gracious, slow to anger and rich in kindness and fidelity" (Ex. 34/6).

How to cope with difficult people? St. Francis de Sales, the gentleman saint, wrote, "A drop of honey gets more flies than a barrel of vinegar."

One of De Sales great admirers, founder of the Salesian order, Don Bosco, built the first boys' town in the world and reclaimed thousands of youths by one rule: kindness. At the age of nine, in a dream, Don Bosco found himself fighting with a large crowd of rowdy lads who were cursing and swearing. Suddenly, Our Lord appeared, and said to Bosco, "Not with blows will you help these boys, but with goodness and kindness."

Our Lord taught the same lesson with the Samaritan woman. People were more important than rules and regulations. Jews did not speak to Samaritans. Rabbis did not address women in public. When Jesus asks for a drink, she upbraids him for not acting like a Jewish rabbi. She gets difficult. But Jesus remains kind and in the end, the rocky heart, hard and inflexible, becomes liquid; and God's love is poured out (a water image) and new life is born again (as in baptism).

True, we are all difficult at times. "But a mild answer breaketh wrath," just as cotton bales break the force of cannon balls.

A Western song goes like this: "I never was so happy as when you got on... Thank God and Greyhound you're gone!" Maybe the singer could thank Greyhound, but not God. God doesn't operate that way. We get rid of problems; but God solves them by His love, patience and kindness.

Moses maybe would have liked to bus the Israelis back to Egypt on a Greyhound, but God gave them instead what they needed — a drink! People need people — kind people, loving people, merciful people — God's people, a people who can cope with difficult people by understanding and kindness.