

## Alcohol-Awareness Program:

# Another Step in Education For Diocesan School System

By Joan M. Smith

Two years ago the Courier-Journal ran a series about teenage drinking.

It was featured during a time when government, community, and educational professionals were beginning to spearhead an awareness about alcohol abuse.

Since then, the drinking age in New York State was raised to 19, stronger DWI laws were instituted along with measures against DWI, such as police roadblocks, and comprehensive educational programs like the Automobile Club's junior high program "ALCOHOL" were introduced.

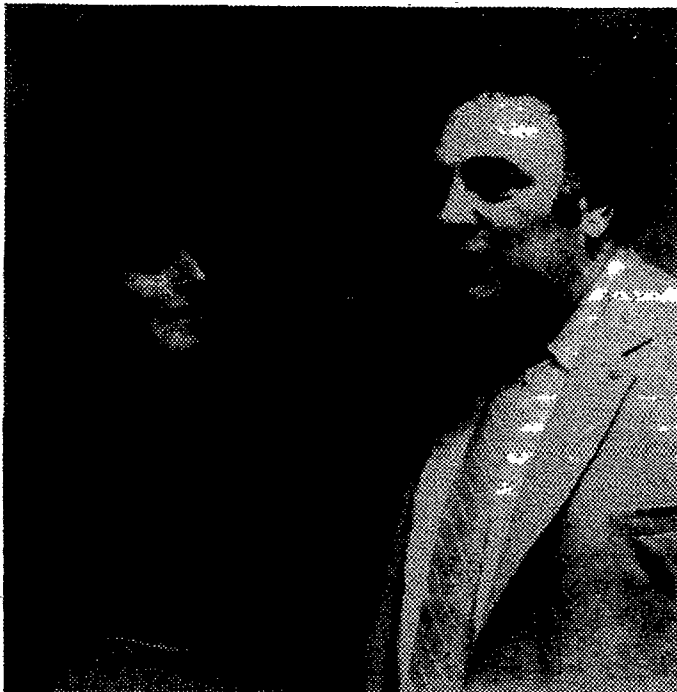
Last week with the introduction in Monroe County of the "Starting Early" alcohol education and traffic safety program geared for children from kindergarten through sixth grade, the push for alcohol-abuse awareness has reached the elementary schools.

Charles Gertner, Jr. president and general manager of the Automobile Club of Rochester, at a press conference May 15, announced the program which is co-sponsored by the Automobile Club of Rochester, the Real Estate Board of Rochester and the STOP-DWI program.

"Starting Early," now available to all Monroe County public, private and parochial schools, was developed for the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety at Teachers College, Columbia University under the direction of Dr. James L. Malfetti.

The curriculum, aimed at preparing pupils to make responsible choices and decisions regarding alcohol and safety, includes teachers' guides, lesson plans, projects, films, and tests.

The lesson formats consist of objectives. For example, the kindergarten lesson plan objective is to have pupils able to identify commonly used beverages as alcoholic or nonalcoholic; first grade module goals are for pupils to identify alcohol as a drug and the noticeable effects of alcohol behavior. The lesson books include picture selections, discussion questions, and word puzzles where



Sister Janice Morgan and Michael Petromallo, coordinator for the new alcohol education program, at recent press conference.

pupils search for words like alcohol, party, beer, drunk, and judgment.

According to an AAA press release the program has been successfully field-tested by 290 elementary school teachers in nine cities in eight states, reaching more than 5,600 pupils in 51 public and private schools.

The program's aim is to "make children aware that alcohol does have an effect on the mind and body," stated Michael Petromallo of the Automobile Club of Rochester. "We are hoping" he added, "that in the future we will have an effect on DWI accidents."

Sister Janice Morgan, SSJ, assistant superintendent of curriculum for the Rochester diocesan schools and who is

initiating the "Starting Early" program in the parochial elementary schools, is optimistic about the long-range effects of the program.

She had served on the committee for the "Chemical People" program which involved TV programming and local forums regarding alcohol-abuse among school-age youth. She said that "Starting Early" was a great follow-up to that program.

"We have to do something" she said and added "We (Catholic schools) feel we should be involved in any program dealing with this problem."

According to AAA officials, monies used for the "Starting Early" project come from DWI fines.

## CDA Plans Education Program

Catholic Daughters of America (CDA) will hold its education awards program 7 p.m., May 29 at St. Philip Neri School hall.

Father Paul Cuddy, chaplain, will present awards to 19 winners from area parishes. In addition, the CDA will honor two state winners.

In other CDA events, Father Cuddy will celebrate a Mass 9:45 a.m., June 3 at Holy Trinity Church, which organization members will attend. Following the Mass, Father Cuddy will be feted at

a breakfast at the 2 Ms Restuarant as part of Priest's Appreciation Day.

The CDA is also planning a family picnic, 5 p.m., June 19 at Holt Lodge in Webster Park. Participants are asked to bring a dish to pass.

### Open House

St. Ann's Home/The Heritage will hold an open house 2-3 p.m., and 7-8 p.m., Wednesday, May 23, at 1500 Portland Ave. The event is part of the Older Americans Month celebration.



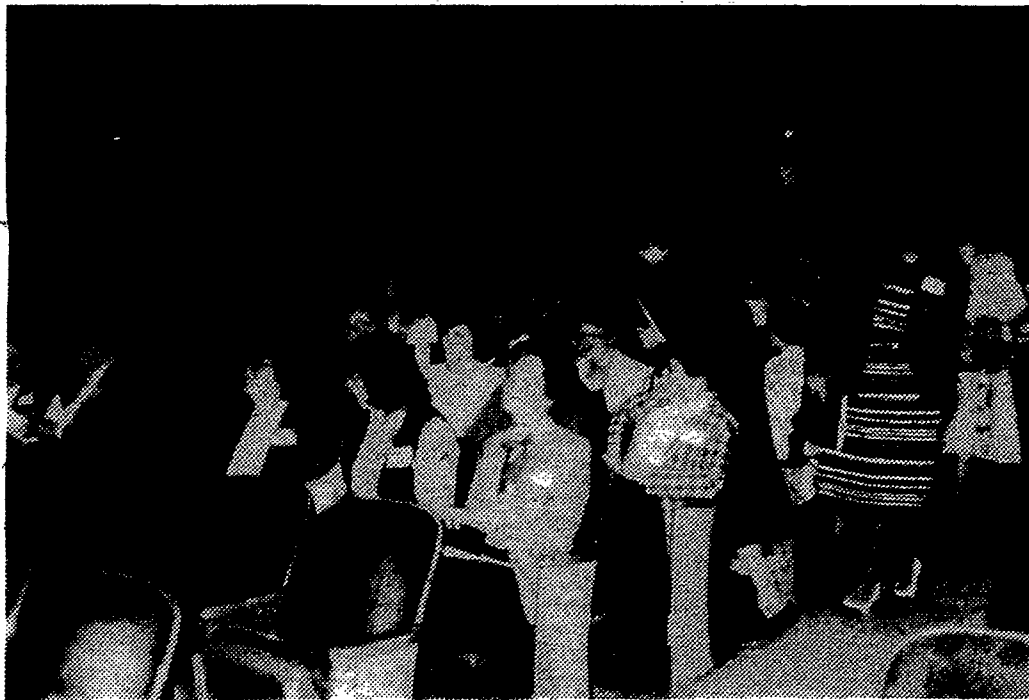
Father McBrien and Bishop Matthew H. Clark.

## Father McBrien Addresses Area Ministry Conference

Professional ministers from around the diocese met last week for a special program featuring Father Richard McBrien, chairperson of the theology department at Notre Dame University, and author of the best selling book, "Catholicism."

The conferences are held twice a year and are an opportunity for professional ministers to meet each other and discuss topics of mutual interest. Last week's conference was held in the former St. Agnes High School.

Father McBrien gave two lectures which focused on ministry in the local Church: "Towards a Definition of Ministry," and "Principle and Criteria for Ministry."



The crowd assembles for the ministry conference.

Percentage of Students Below the Statewide Reference Point			
Tests	*Diocese of Rochester	Average of All Non-Public School Students	Average of All Public School Students
*Grade 3 Reading (lowest in the State)	7	17	27
*Grade 6 Reading (lowest in the State)	9	16	27
*Grade 3 Math (lowest in the State)	7	18	24
*Grade 6 Math (tied for second lowest)	12	19	27
*Grade 5 Writing (tied for lowest in the State)	9	15	21

## Educational Test Results

Recent summary reports for the Preliminary State Competency Tests taken in the Spring of 1983, released by the diocesan Department of Education, gives insight into the strength of the Catholic school academic program. The chart shows that in areas of reading, math, and writing the Catholic Schools have either the lowest or the second lowest percentage of students below the statewide reference point of public and non-pulic districts in New York State. According to diocesan sources the success of diocesan Catholic schools is due to the stress on basics through Project Upgrade which is used in the schools and emphasizes strong classroom testing, homework, English and writing skills.

## Summer Math Program

Aquinas Institute is offering two math courses July 2 to Aug. 24. A computer I course will be in session from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., July 2 through Aug. 3. The course will cover basic language, standard, key words, print and cost \$185 per person.

From 9-11:30 a.m., from Aug. 6 to Aug. 24 a basic math skills course is scheduled. Fee for this course is \$80. For further information and applications call 254-2020.

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## THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER



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FUNERAL DIRECTOR

### My friend's baby died. How can I help?

Infants are very important to their parents. The hopes that are built during pregnancy, the excitement at birth and the thrill of getting to know the infant are dashed when the baby's life ends. Parents ought to be allowed to grieve and express their feelings. If possible, an opportunity to talk with other parents who have also lost young children can be most helpful. It is usually not helpful to suggest that now there is another angel in heaven or that the parents grief will be eased by simply having another child. Visit the family often and allow them to tell you of their loss and what the infant meant to them.

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