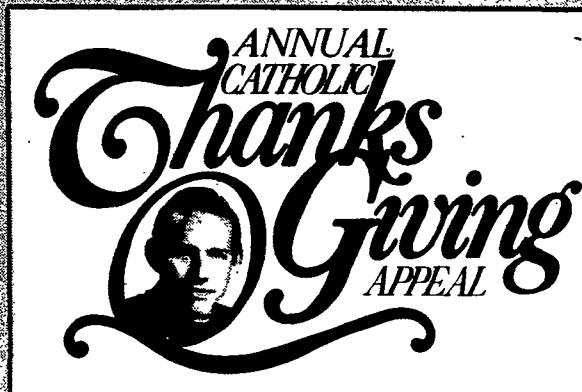


*"Young adults are seeking meaning in life. They want a sense of inner direction; they want to belong to communities of caring persons." — Task Force Report on Young Adult Ministry.*

Young adult ministry — ministry with those aged approximately 18 to 35 — is a relatively new undertaking in the Catholic Church. Although young adulthood has traditionally been the most common time for persons to "take a leave from the Church," the large numbers of young adults in today's baby boom generation, coupled with cultural changes which have alienated many from institutions such as the Church, have brought the issue of the relationship between young adults and the Church to the fore.

Some young adults who have been nurtured through their association with youth groups or campus ministry suddenly find themselves on the periphery of Church life, seemingly ignored until they get married and start a family. Others dismiss the Church as irrelevant and outdated. Parents of young adults often express concern that their children have left the Church and may never return.

Recognizing the importance of addressing



the needs of young adults within the Church, Bishop Matthew H. Clark two years ago formed a Commission on Young Adult Ministry, a volunteer group of 20 to 25 young adults placed in the Division of Special Pastoral Ministries. This past February, through the generosity of those who contributed to the diocesan Thanks Giving Appeal, Karen Rinefierd was hired as part-time coordinator of Young Adult Ministry to support the work of the commission.

The commission's outreach to young adults includes helping parishes begin their own young adult ministry as well as supporting

## Division of Special Pastoral Ministries Young Adult Ministry 1983-84

existing young adult groups. According to Ms. Rinefierd, "We aim to approach each parish as unique with its own style. Then, in discussion with parish staffs and parish councils, we try mutually to find ways to integrate young adults better into parish life. Most often, young adults themselves can take responsibility for any special activities designed for them."

The commission also gathers young adults on a regional basis for various educational, social and spiritual programs. A newsletter, "Focus," including informative articles and publicity for young adult events sponsored by various groups, is published quarterly.

On Oct. 20 at St. Patrick's School of Religion in Victor, the commission will be sponsoring a special gathering for those presently involved in young adult ministry and those who would like to begin activities in their own parish. Concrete tools for beginning or extending such ministry will be offered. There will also be opportunities for young adults from around the diocese to share their successes and their concerns. Both young adults and parish staff are invited.

Ms. Rinefierd highlights the importance of young adult ministry. "We, as Church, need to offer an alternative vision to young adults of what God intends for them and how the world should be. As John Cusick, director of young adult ministry in Chicago puts it, 'Young adults are a faith-filled group of people looking for an outlet.' We, in the Church, are seeking to provide that outlet, to serve and challenge young adults as well as be challenged by them."



Karen Rinefierd, left, diocesan coordinator of Young Adult Ministry.



Father Thomas J. Harvey, NCCC executive director, receives the first installment of the Golden Age grant from Margaret Mealey, president of Catholic Golden Age, and Thomas D. Hinton, vice president.

## Catholic Golden Age Gives \$250,000 for NCCC Study

Scranton, Pa. — The Catholic Golden Age Foundation has awarded a five-year grant of \$250,000 to the National Conference of Catholic Charities to identify and respond to the housing needs of the elderly.

According to a Catholic Golden Age release, "Housing experts predict that shelter needs for the nation's elderly, whose numbers are increasing rapidly, may reach crisis proportions within the next decade."

The grant will be administered by the NCCC's Commission on Aging, whose members include the Catholic Health Association, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, diocesan housing organizations and representatives of the academic community.

Catholic Golden Age is a national non-profit organization of Catholics over 50. It claims an enrolled membership of more than 900,000. It established the foundation in 1982 to support programs which enhance the lives of senior Catholics and which further understanding of the special needs of the elderly.

With the grant, the NCCC has been charged to:

- Identify all forms of Church involvement in housing programs for the elderly throughout the country;
- Establish a data base of Church activity in the housing area;
- Determine current and future shelter needs of the elderly;
- Form a national network linking all Church-

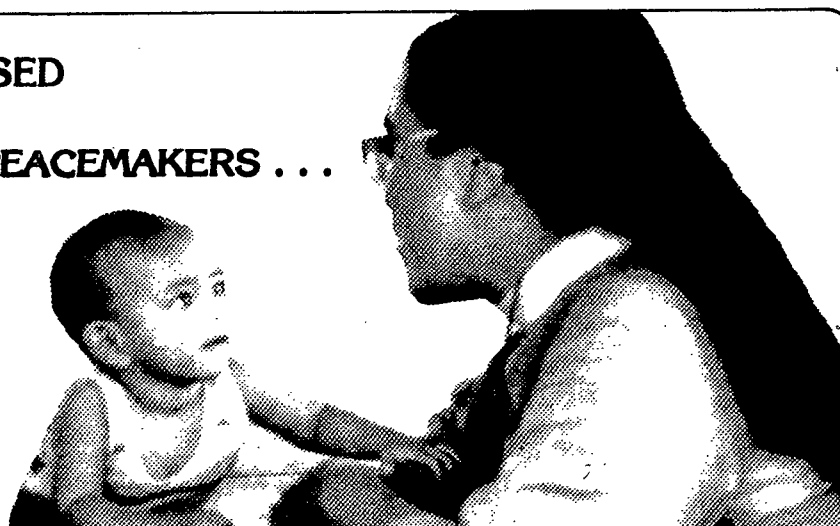
related agencies and institutions involved in providing housing and shelter for the elderly;

- Identify and publicize innovative housing services for the elderly;
- And influence public policies that affect the shelter needs of the elderly.

### Oktoberfest Mass

Father Frederick Eisemann, pastor of Holy Family Church, will preach, and Father Winfried Kellner will be main celebrant of the annual Oktoberfest Mass, 3 p.m., Sunday, Sept. 16 at Old St. Mary's Church. The event is sponsored by the area's German American societies; and is the religious opener for the city's celebration of Oktoberfest.

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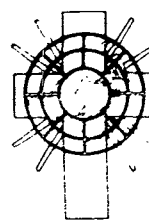
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