

Father Charles J. Lavery dies at 70; former Fisher president, chancellor

Father Charles J. Lavery, CSB, chancellor and president of St. John Fisher college for most of the college's 34 years of existence, died Tuesday morning, Dec. 3, 1985, in Highland hospital, following complications from pneumonia.

Father Lavery's death culminated a life-long commitment to the Church and higher education. He was heralded as an educational leader, driven by selflessness and a true love for the Church.

Last June, at a testimonial dinner in his honor, Father Lavery was described as a person who lives for the community. "To me, this community (Rochester) has been my life. Everyone here is a close friend," Father Lavery responded.

As priest, college president and chancellor, spokesman for higher education on the state and national levels, and a member of over 40 civic organizations, Father Lavery made many friends, and built a reputation as one of the most influential citizens of Rochester.

"We are all grieving over Father Lavery's death," said St. John Fisher College President, Father Patrick O. Braden, CSB. "Father Lavery's enormous accomplishments here at Fisher and in the community at large set him apart from most men. That he was a man of God and a fellow Basilian is another chapter in his extraordinary life of service and achievement. Of course, we will miss him greatly."

During Father Lavery's 22-year tenure as president of Fisher (1958-1980), the college grew from one building with 29 faculty members to a 12-building campus with more than 3,000 full- and part-time students and 200 full-time and part-time faculty. From 1980 until his retirement in 1985, Father Lavery served as the college's second chancellor.

Father Lavery also served on many governmental boards, including Governor Hugh Carey's Task Force on Higher Education, the Advisory Committee for New York state financial aid study, the White House Conference on Education in 1965, and the executive committee of the Commission of Independent Colleges and Universities of New York.

Locally, he was the first chairman of the



Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

At his testimonial dinner last June, Father Charles J. Lavery, CSB, reflected upon the many praises bestowed upon him by speakers.

Rochester Area Colleges Consortium (now called Rochester Area Colleges, Inc.)

At Father Lavery's testimonial, former New York State Governor Malcolm Wilson said there was no person who was a more effective or eloquent speaker for private higher education than Father Lavery during the years of Rockefeller and Wilson, 1958-1974. Wilson praised Father Lavery's activism in Albany, where he fought for aid to private colleges, and noted that Father Lavery has played a major role in the development or expansion of such programs as tuition credits, Regents scholarships, establishment of the New York Higher Education Assistance Corporation (which

Continued on Page 16



Along the Way

Bishop Matthew H. Clark

I have been commenting on prayer and activity lately. I do that because: a) I know that ongoing integration of the two is an important and unfinished project in my own life, and b) many of you tell me the same about yourselves.

I have told you a number of ways I try to work on that. Among them are a commitment to daily prayer, physical exercise, reading and study, learning to say "no," attention to friendships and good counsel. They are all important enough to me that I try to keep them consistent parts of my life. But because I so often fail to be faithful to one or another of them, I have lately come to add two other components: a willingness to accept the less-than-perfect and a readiness to try again when things don't go as planned.

If there has been some effort involved in all of this, it has been a pleasing and fruitful effort. And in a recent experience, the Lord reminded me that it's all his work anyway by placing me in the company of some people, one of whom gave me an example of a person in whom prayer and work met in a wonderful integrity.

The three of them sat in the first pew at Sacred Heart for the 9:30 a.m. Mass on Thanksgiving Day. They were not directly in front of me but slightly to my left and no more than 20 feet from the presider's chair. There were two children, aged three and five (?) and their young mother.

The children were restless in some of the ways children can be restless in church or anywhere else. They explored

the area they could stretch to at the end of their mother's arm. They peeked over the pew, a-la Kilroy, at the people behind them. They tested one another with an occasional nonverbal round of "You hit me first." They hummed, chirped, laughed, slid, pounded, banged and giggled. At one time or another and between them they produced the full range of sounds and motion two children their age would normally produce under such circumstances. In short, they were healthy, lovable children.

It was in their mother that I found such encouragement. I sensed while watching her that what I think of as an interruption of prayer, she regarded as inseparably a part of it; that what I think of as routine, she easily enjoyed as part of a larger mystery; that while I am concerned with what I will carefully choose, she is more absorbed in what she will lovingly accept.

I still wonder ... did she have any idea of how beautifully she was expressing what I have been searching for? Was she aware at all of how loudly her quiet care for her children spoke to all of us?

My suspicion is she may not think a lot about such matters, at least in those terms, but I am quite sure that she knows the truth of them as the fruit of what must be to her a wonderful friendship with the Lord. It was, I am convinced, his very love and care that the young mother was offering her children on Thanksgiving Day.

Peace to all!

Aquinas Retreat

Seniors at Aquinas Institute are invited to experience a weekend retreat, Saturday through Monday, Dec. 14-16. Concentrating on communication, trust and affirmation

with peers and parents, the retreat aims to bring students to a deeper understanding of Jesus. For more information, call (716)647-2990 (days) or 254-1190 (evenings).

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