

# COURIER-JOURNAL

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## Chemung County board approves five-year plan

By Teresa A. Parsons

By an 8-1 vote, the Chemung County General Education Board last Thursday approved a five-year plan to reorganize Elmira-area Catholic schools on a more regional basis.

Our Lady of Lourdes' board representative was alone in opposing the plan, which designates St. Mary's as the primary building, which would house pre-kindergarten to grade three. Our Lady of Lourdes will serve intermediate students, grades four to six, and St. Casimir's will be the junior high building for grades seven and eight. St. Patrick's building would no longer be used as a school facility.

The plan will equalize the portions of the school system's budget supported by parish assessments and tuition/fund raising at a 50:50 split by the 1989/90 school year. Also projected is the development of outside funding sources for the system.

The board's Long-Range Planning Committee, which developed the five-year plan, also recommended the hiring of a full-time chaplain or religious educator for the system. At present, it appears that two staff positions will be eliminated by the plan — one principal and one custodian. Although the school board will handle the custodial position, the reassignment of principals is a decision made by the diocesan education office in conjunction with the principals themselves, according to Jim Mirando, school board president.

Diocesan education officials will review the school board's plan this month and present their recommendations to Bishop Matthew H. Clark. His decision is expected January 14. If approved, the plan will be implemented beginning next fall.

In voting no at Thursday's meeting, Curren Sekella, Lourdes' board representative, emphasized that it was the plan his parish opposes, not the consolidated system. The reasons he cited for his vote were a lack of parental input to the plan and the fact that

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## Lessons and Carols

Ted Harkness and Casey Haley of St. Mary's in downtown Rochester proceed down the aisle during the opening of Lessons and Carols, Sunday, December 15. This was the fifth year St. Mary's has offered the service, which is adapted from an Anglican ritual. Close to 400 people enjoyed the double celebration honoring choir director Thomas Donohue's 25 years of service and the world premiere of Boomgarden's "Ave Maria."

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**76** The husband of the W. family is disabled and unable to collect unemployment. There are three young children in the family. They have moved into an apartment that does not provide appliances or furniture. The family's parish has provided food directly to this family for the past nine months.

**77** John is on disability and can no longer work. He lives in an apartment and all of the income he receives through welfare goes for his rent and food. He has no furniture in the apartment, and sleeps on the floor at night. He is in need of a bed and some other furniture.

**78** Mary is an unwed mother and is in need of supplies for her baby. She has enough money to pay for her rent and her food, but is in need of clothing for the baby, and also for herself — especially such winter clothing as a coat.

**79** Mr. and Mrs. J., who have three preschool children at home, live in a run-down trailer on public assistance. Their furnace breaks down regularly, and needs

fuel, but the HEAP money to pay for it is not due until January. They are behind with utility payments because of the high costs of required repairs. They will appreciate anything to make their children's Christmas happier, especially warm winter clothing.

**80** Mr. and Mrs. E., a household of three adults and three children, have sustained several accidents. Mother has heart trouble, a cancerous leg and fainting spells. Father sustained whiplash from a recent car accident, has diabetes, sight in only one eye, and struggles to find work. The family needs immediate help with high medical bills. There is never enough money for food and clothing in this household.

**81** Ms. A., a middle-aged single parent with two teenage daughters, is trying to make a better life for her family by returning to school. She needs to replace broken-down furniture with a usable set. Both girls need school clothing, so that peer harassment will be discontinued.

**82** Mrs. B., a widow who has three daughters, ages 16, 14 and 10, and

nine-month-old twin granddaughters, live in a rural area. She supports the family by baking and selling birthday cakes and babysitting. She is a good neighbor — always available to others in time of need — even though the family has little in way of necessities themselves.

**83** The P. family recently returned to this rural area from Florida, because Mr. P. was promised a job as a tenant farmer. The family, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. P. and 10 children, ranging in age from two months to 18 years, sold all their belongings to come north, only to find upon arrival that the farm job had fallen through. They have nothing — only the clothing on their backs, and some furniture they have picked up since they got here. Mr. P. has applications in at several factories, but nothing has yet materialized.

**84** Mr. and Mrs. C. are both in their early 30s, and have seven children — the oldest is 12-years-old. This summer, they lost their dairy farm because of they were unable to keep up mortgage payments after a series of unfortunate occurrences that were beyond their control. The family is now living very simply on a leased farm, and hoping that by continuing to work together they will recover their recent losses.

**85** The J. family, consisting of parents and four sons, one of whom is suffering from muscular dystrophy, lives in a rural, isolated area. The father receives income from SSI, and the family has nothing extra beyond the barest living expenses. However, friends and neighbors often call on

Mr. and Mrs. J. for help with food or transportation, and these requests are never refused if they can possibly meet them.

**86** Mrs. H. is 33-years-old. Her husband, 10 years older than her, recently was admitted to the Veterans Administration Facility in Bath for tuberculosis treatment. Mrs. H. receives public assistance. She's awaiting a hip operation and is lonely because she is from out of state and has no close relatives or friends in this area.

**87** Mr. and Mrs. R. were recently married and were living in a trailer on which they had no insurance. Last summer it was totally destroyed in unusually high winds. Now, they live in a very old trailer with few essentials and no hot water. They are still paying on both trailers. He has been working on a farm, but of late has not received his pay. Mrs. R. works for minimum wage.

**88** Mrs. C. lives with her husband and children on their non-productive dairy farm. Because she has been in poor health all her life, she has never been able to get medical insurance. She now needs surgery for a tumor. Not knowing where she will get the money causes her great mental anguish.

**89** Mrs. S. lives with her four sons in a very dilapidated house. When the staff at Tioga County Rural Ministry first met her, there the house had 26 broken — not cracked — windows and a furnace that was not working. The roof leaks in many places, and the plumbing works sporadically.

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