



Learning through fantasy

The Upstairs Youth Agency, a joint effort of St. Monica's and St. Augustine's schools, uses the arts to provide learning experiences to students with various disabilities. Story on Page 6.



Catholic Schools Week

Our centerfold features an article on the potential of regional junior high schools, and letters from Bishop Matthew H. Clark and Sister M. Edwardine Weaver. Pages 8 and 9.

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World & Nation in Brief from NC News

World

World ordinations up

Vatican City (NC) — Ordinations to the diocesan clergy worldwide increased by more than 7 percent in 1984 over the previous year, the Vatican announced Jan. 31. The Vatican added that the number of diocesan major seminarians worldwide increased more than 4 percent during the same period. The announcement did not give any further figures regarding priests and seminarians, but said more information would be made public at a later date.

Filipino bishops issue letter

Manila, Philippines (NC) — The Philippine bishops have issued a pastoral letter urging voters to fight a "conspiracy of evil" threatening the Feb. 7 presidential election. The bishops urged Filipinos to "vote for persons who morally, intellectually and physically show themselves capable of inspiring the whole nation towards a hopeful future." In the Feb. 7 election, Corazon Aquino, wife of slain opposition leader Benigno Aquino, is challenging incumbent Ferdinand Marcos, who has been president for 20 years.

Nation

USCC supporting vouchers

Washington (NC) — The U.S. Catholic Conference pledged Jan. 31 to "vigorously support" the Reagan administration's voucher plan for remedial education aid to students in public and non-public schools. The voucher plan, called the Equity and Choice Act of 1985, or TEACH, was announced by the administration last fall after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that federal remedial education funds could not be used for programs taking place in parochial schools because of a potential for aiding religion.

Bishops postpone Haiti trip

Washington (NC) — A delegation of U.S. bishops has postponed an early February trip to Haiti as the government of the Caribbean nation invoked a 30-day state of siege to stave off collapse. The Haitian bishops asked for the delay because they "did not want to leave their dioceses" to meet with the U.S. prelates during the period of uncertainty. With political opposition outlawed, the Catholic Church has been almost the only organized voice in Haiti opposing injustice and rights violations by the Duvalier regime.

Pro-choice group plans ad

Washington (NC) — The Committee of Concerned Catholics said Feb. 3 that it will run a full-page advertisement in The New York Times March 2 protesting church "reprisals" against the 97 Catholics who signed an abortion ad published in 1984. The original ad on abortion, sponsored by Catholics for a Free Choice, ran in The Times Oct. 7, 1984. It drew sharp criticisms from Vatican and U.S. church officials because it asserted that there was more than one "legitimate Catholic position" on the morality of direct abortion.



Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

They're coming 'round the corner

The Cobb's Hill Winter Fest on Saturday, Feb. 1, included a variety of activities including a puppet show, ice skating, paper air plane making, and skating races for many age groups. These motorbike racers braved the ice, even in heavy snowfall.

Diocesan school plan 'just the beginning'

By Teresa A. Parsons

"We listened" was the response from the Urban School Study steering committee and Bishop Matthew H. Clark Monday night to requests for more time and greater parental and parish involvement in the Catholic Elementary School Plan.

In answer to those requests, the plan approved by Bishop Clark appoints a number of task forces and committees and proposes fewer immediate actions than were set forth in earlier drafts.

"This is a document that begins a process," said Bishop Clark to an audience of about 50 school representatives in Sacred Heart School hall. "It will work to the degree that we work with it."

Only two schools are specifically targeted for reorganization in the 1986-87 school year as opposed to six in the earlier draft. Beginning in the fall of 1986, seventh and eighth graders from St. Anthony's School will attend Our Lady of Good Counsel School and seventh and eighth graders from St. Philip Neri will attend Blessed Sacrament.

Seventh and eighth graders from a third school, Corpus Christi, are scheduled to move to Blessed Sacrament in September, 1987. Meanwhile, the two schools will work together to prepare for the transition.

Task forces are appointed by the plan to study:

- **Systemwide financial reforms** — to be formed by April 1, 1986, and report by February 1, 1987.
- **Diocesan-level fundraising** — to be formed by September 1, 1986, and report by May 1, 1987.
- **Hispanic education** — to explore ways of responding to Hispanic concerns.
- **Multi-cultural programming** — formed by November 1, 1986, to report by December 1, 1987.

Parents, teachers and parish representatives are invited to contact the diocesan education office if they wish to work on any of the task forces created by the plan.

A diocesan committee will also begin in the spring of 1986 to develop a new certification process for city and county elementary schools.

Other school reorganizations proposed in earlier drafts will receive further study. The plan calls together school leaders from Holy Apostles/Holy Family, Our Lady of Good Counsel, St. Anthony and St. Monica's schools to develop a plan for their students. Representatives of Annunciation, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, St. Andrew's and St. Stanislaus schools are directed to begin joint planning April 1, 1986, with the diocesan Department of General Education.

St. Boniface, meanwhile, is directed to submit transitional plans for its seventh and eighth grades by March 1, 1986.

The plan calls for a transition and placement committee to place students and staff from St. Augustine's School, which is scheduled to close at the end of this school year.

Although plans for two regional junior high schools and subsequent school reorganizations were scaled down from earlier drafts, Father John Mulligan, member of the steering committee, cautioned that: "We really do envision additional school-level changes in September of '87."

The specific interparish planning committees proposed in the draft released in January were dropped from this latest plan. Instead, urban and suburban schools are asked to form planning clusters among themselves to work on enrollment and programming issues.

In response to assertions from the audience that the steering committee had thus "taken the teeth out" of the inter-parish

planning committees, Sister Edwardine Weaver termed the naming of some of the schools in the draft "inappropriate in terms of geography, in terms of current programming and current needs."

"We deliberately did not name schools (in this plan) for that reason. We'd rather work with the cluster groups and bring people to a willingness to participate in a way that's realistic, practical and implementable," Sister Edwardine explained.

The possibility of a suburban junior high school less than five miles from Blessed Sacrament was a concern raised by representatives of both Blessed Sacrament and St. John the Evangelist schools. "I think it's a death knell to allow within a very short distance another junior high to be developed," Father Kevin Murphy, co-pastor at St. John's, said of Seton Junior High, a planned consolidation of our Brighton schools' seventh and eighth grades. "We're very much concerned with what happens at Our Lady of Lourdes in light of all the effort and energy that's been put into trying to make a junior high in the city and in a very short time we're able to put together a junior high out in the suburbs without any interfacing between those two," Father Murphy added.

Bishop Clark responded to that concern by stressing his commitment to make city and suburban areas work together.

"We fail miserably if we don't account for that," the bishop said. "We won't go anywhere. Not because the money won't be there or the students, but because the heart won't be there."

"I think that there's nothing closer to my heart as the bishop of the Diocese of Rochester than the unity of our family of faith," Bishop Clark said. "As disciples of the Lord, we are a part of the Body of Christ

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