



A day of love
A spiritual celebration of St. Valentine's Day at Assisi House-Casa Del Amigo on Lyell Avenue focused on the beauty of simple, unselfish love. See Page 4.



Demythologizing
Father Melvin Walczak, the diocese's first married priest, reflects on the first six months of service since his conversion to Roman Catholicism. See Page 6.

COURIER-JOURNAL

Catholic Diocese of Rochester

35 Cents

Thursday, February 13, 1986

16 Pages

World & Nation in Brief from NC News

World

Cardinal condemns fraud

Manila, Philippines (NC) — In the unsettled aftermath of the Feb. 7 Philippine presidential election, the country's Catholic Church has been a rallying point for dismayed government vote counters and for supporters of the opposition. Cardinal Jaime Sin of Manila has condemned what appears to be widespread electoral fraud. The Church has also been criticized by President Ferdinand Marcos, who said the real problem with the election was that voters were being "held back by priests, nuns and Namfrel representatives." Namfrel is the popular term for the National Movement for Free Elections, a private election-monitoring organization.

Pope visits Kerala

Trichur, India (NC) — Pope John Paul II came to the cradle of Indian Christianity Feb. 7, and urged 300 newlyweds to preserve and defend their family devotional traditions. At the start of a two-day swing through the southern Kerala state, whose 4 million Catholics trace their roots to St. Thomas the apostle, the "Doubting Thomas" of the Gospel, the pope concluded a community marriage ceremony begun a few hours earlier. In the Kerala tradition, marriages are usually arranged by the parents of young men and women, a practice the local church believes helps protect against separation of couples.

African Catholics jailed

Bujumbura, Burundi (NC) — A Catholic priest and eight lay people received sentences of one week to five years in early February for writing and distributing a document criticizing Burundi's ban on religious activities during weekdays. All Africa Press reported. Father Barakana Gabriel, convicted of inspiring the document, was given a five-year sentence. Joseph Gacukuzi, a lay man who wrote the document, was also sentenced to five years. The government accuses the Church of planning weekday services which conflict with people's working hours.

Nation

No to Gay Rights Bill

New York (NC) — A proposed homosexual rights bill for New York City has drawn the united opposition of Cardinal John J. O'Connor of New York and Bishop Francis J. Mugavero of Brooklyn. In a joint statement Feb. 6, they said the bill carried a "potential for grave harm to all society." Unsuccessful attempts have been made regularly since 1971 to pass the legislation in City Council.

Hispanic adults surveyed

New York (NC) — A national survey of Hispanic Catholics has found that their traditional religious commitment remains strong but less so among those born in the United States, and among those who are younger, better-educated and more affluent. Based on telephone interviews of 1,010 randomly selected individuals in the 40 U.S. metropolitan areas with more than 50,000 Hispanics, the survey also indicated that Hispanic Catholics have a very low level of involvement in parish activities and little knowledge of modern church developments. More than half said they had never heard of the Second Vatican Council.



Students from St. Lawrence School, Rochester, donned bright red hats for the Catholic Schools rally. Their enthusiasm infected everyone around them.

Schools display rainbow of pride at rally

By Teresa A. Parsons

Thanks to clear weather and cooperation from parents, teachers and principals, last week's Catholic School Rally has been deemed a success by diocesan school officials.

Celebrating this year's theme for Catholic Schools' Week, "A Rainbow of Excellence," the rally was a sensory feast of sights and sounds from all over the diocese. Nearly 10,000 students of all ages were bused from 46 schools throughout the diocese to the Rochester War Memorial on Thursday, February, 6, for two hours of music, dancing, marching and cheering.

"When you're small, it's hard to imagine so many other schools," said Rosemary Gentile, a parent who accompanied her son, a third grader at St. Anthony of Padua School. "I think it's wonderful. Part of being a Catholic is being part of something bigger than yourself. This gives them a sense of identity."

For the first time, more than half of the Catholic school students in the Diocese of Rochester were gathered under one roof, observed Sister M. Edwardine Weaver, superintendent of schools.

"You know, a rainbow is a beautiful thing

because of the many colors that come together to form it," she said to the crowd. "All of you, from Elmira, Corning, Dansville, Penn Yan, Auburn, Canandaigua, Rochester, like the colors of a rainbow, have come together today to form the larger Catholic school family."

The rainbow theme of unity in diversity was echoed visually in the patchwork of colored squares created by each school's uniforms and banners.

St. Lawrence students were a bright red patch in the upper tier of the War Memorial. Children from kindergarten to eighth grade dressed in red and wore red caps printed with "I love St. Lawrence."

"I think it rejuvenates the children to see that they belong to a Catholic school community," said Kathy Ewanow, a kindergarten teacher at the school. "They're going to go home saying it was a celebration of youth and of belonging to something important ... It's something positive that says up with life, up with Catholic teaching."

Students from Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary School in Brockport were hard to miss in matching T-shirts and painter's caps donated by the Home-School Association.

A green patch near the stage turned out to be 85 seventh- and eighth-grade students from Blessed Trinity School in Auburn wearing matching sweaters.

"We've been praying for a sunny day and good weather," said the principal, Sister Walter Anne O'Malley. "And when we got here this morning, we prayed in thanksgiving."

More than anything, Mike Roberts, a seventh grader from Blessed Trinity, was grateful to get out of class. "Never before, he said he's glad to be in a Catholic school. "I don't think they care for you as much in other schools," he noted.

Richard Rund and Daniel Clennett, sixth graders from St. Thomas More School, echoed Roberts' sentiments. "Teachers here come to teach kids, not to make money," Rund said.

Bishop Matthew H. Clark led the assembly in an opening prayer. "Loving God and Creator, you have made us all, large and small," the bishop said. "You have made us able to learn and grow. You have given us the ability to come to know you ... All that we do today tell the world that we strive for excellence and give God the glory."

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Merger proposed between Corning schools

By Teresa A. Parsons

A long-range planning committee has recommended that Corning's two Catholic schools and school boards merge next fall.

Cost savings and better educational quality are two of the reasons cited by the committee for their proposal to close the Corning Catholic School North building in September, 1986. The 89 kindergarten through fifth graders who now attend Corning North at St. Vincent DePaul Parish, would join 200 Corning South students at St. Mary's School building.

Corning South currently serves kindergarten through grade 8 students from St. Mary's and St. Patrick's parishes and junior high students from St. Vincent DePaul.

Since several students from Immaculate Heart of Mary in Painted Post also attend Corning Catholic schools, the plan recommends inviting the parish to join the system.

By consolidating the boards of both schools into a single governing body, the plan proposes to simplify administration. A single board would consist of the three pastors and three representatives from each

parish, including at least one parish council member. The principal, Sandra Andra, would serve as an ex-officio board member.

The plan also aims for a better balance between tuition and parish assessment and calls for new efforts at fund raising and promotion of the schools, according to Richard J. McDonald, who heads the committee.

"We've got to get out there and do some evangelization and promotion, especially to encourage the parents of pre-schoolers," McDonald said.

The plan has already been presented to both school boards, parents and representatives of all three parish councils. Both McDonald and Andra termed the response "encouraging."

"The people from St. Vincent's were remarkably restrained although they obviously had very strong feelings," McDonald said. "I think they recognized that we earnestly and honestly tried to do our best."

"One of the best things about the whole process was that parents spoke highly of Catholic education in Corning," Andra

added. "Everyone has been cooperating and respecting everyone else's positions and beliefs."

In September, 1971, Corning's two southside schools, St. Mary's and St. Patrick's, joined forces at St. Mary's building to reduce costs.

At that time, all three city parishes nominally joined in a single school system — the Central Catholic Schools for the City of Corning. The system was renamed Corning Catholic North and were administered by a single principal. Corning Catholic North, however, continued to maintain a separate school board.

In 1972-73, junior high students from Corning North moved to the southside building because of small class sizes.

The long-range planning committee was appointed last May by both school boards and includes all three pastors and two representatives from each parish, except St. Mary's, which has only one. Andra is also a member of the committee.

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