

Housing project

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Residents on welfare aren't left with many options if they want to stay in the neighborhood. They can pay the higher rent and sacrifice in other areas — like the food budget — or they can try to double up with other families, in which case their housing allotments will be cut. Or they can stay one step ahead of the renovations, moving from one substandard house to another.

Or they can sign up to live in Mount Carmel School, which Everitt calls "the lowest low-income housing" under construction.

Among those who have signed up for the apartments are people currently paying as much as eight-tenths of their monthly income for rent. One woman said she has less than \$60 left after rent to feed and clothe herself and three children.

"There's a tremendous demand for that kind of housing," Everitt said, explaining that because rents are so low, federal or state subsidies are needed. "The private sector can't do this kind of project alone," she added.

The renovation project is being funded mainly by a \$350,000 grant from the state through its Homeless Housing and Assistance Program, which in turn is funded by the state Department of Social Services. The Martin Luther King Foundation also provided a low-interest loan, and the City of Rochester contributed about \$40,000 through Housing Opportunities, Inc., a



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Looking over blueprints of the Mt. Carmel School renovations are (left to right): Jerry Klafehn, Ron Fleisch and Harry Rapp.

non-profit branch of the Housing Council.

The parish's contribution is the school building, which is essentially being donated to the Housing Council. The council will pay the mortgage and will lease the building to the parish for 15 years at a time.

"This really shows how government, city and church can best work together," Bartolotta said.

When he arrived at the parish three years ago, the school building had been closed for nearly seven years. With help from Everitt

and two others — Linda Berger of Housing Opportunities, and Lou Childs, an architect with I.M.S. Engineers — he wrote a proposal for the state grant and submitted it in 1984. The group wasn't notified of the grant approval until last November.

Organizers believe the parish's existing means of outreach to the neighborhood were one factor that favored the project. Since 1983, St. Martin's Place, a soup kitchen, has been operating on the school's first floor. Last year the building found a

new tenant in Sister Mary Regis Straughn's "clothes closet." Sister Mary Regis, a member of Mount Carmel's parish staff, currently operates her clothing giveaway program in one room of the building, but will gain a second room through the renovation.

Mutual housing is the term that describes how the building will be operated. "It's a combination of rental and ownership, hopefully including the best aspects of each," Bartolotta said. Tenants can opt for permanent residence, for instance, and will be charged rent based on the shelter allowance set by the Department of Social Services.

A tenants' organization will also be organized to help set policies for the building and "to give people a sense of control over what goes on," Bartolotta explained.

Next month, the Housing Council will screen applicants for the apartments and will offer training sessions later in the year to prepare the tenants for their responsibilities, Berger said. The council has also hired a management company to handle the day-to-day operation of the apartment complex.

"We wanted to make sure we could continue to do our other ministries ... but we consider housing a ministry too," Bartolotta said.

Some parishioners still harbored hopes that the school would reopen someday, but Bartolotta said the majority of parishioners seem pleased with the way the building is being used.

"We see it as part of our parish's mission, as a way to evangelize," he explained. "You can't evangelize people who don't have decent housing."

Dance troupe

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language of what is now an independent republic. The group's universal language, however, is West African dance, which originated long before the coastal region differentiated into separate sovereign nations.

How, the American students asked, does one learn to dance in Senegal? "You start dancing when you start walking," said Gjimo with a smile. "When the drum plays, you don't sit and watch. You just jump in there, and do what your body feels to do."

"The dance," company artistic director Bouly Sonko added in impeccable French, "is typically African — from Congo, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Ivory Coast, Senegal, Gambia. African culture basically doesn't have borders between ... You can identify dance forms through tribal names. Mandingo is a typical Senegalese dance. Break-dancing

comes from the tradition of the Fulani ethnic people, and tap dance began with the Balanta. The Malinke people, from what is now Guinea, dance to the 'doun-doumba' — billed in the program as "a drum as powerful as the dance itself."

"It's a multi-African unity of rhythm and culture," concluded Gjimo.

Watching one of the tall, beautiful Fulani women sculpting shapes out of the air as she performs the *lindien* — a rearward ballet of the arms that resembles nothing so much as a crane in flight — one can't help but agree with art collector Katherine White, who continues in her poetic note:

"The vitality that comes from the ground is an awakening. ... A sculptor glides with it as shadows and shining surfaces reveal themselves. When a tool bites, the light decides."



Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

Nicaraguan Ambassador Carlos Tunnermann spoke at a press conference at the Rochester/Monroe County Airport prior to a speaking engagement at St. John Fisher College Tuesday evening.

Sandinistas

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ministers in the Sandinista government and that many other Catholic leaders, religious and lay persons alike, support the reforms of the Sandinistas.

Although the Sandinistas have been criticized for silencing the country's Catholic press and suspending other civil rights, the ambassador pointed out that Nicaragua is fighting a civil war which justifies extreme measures.

"Because there are people being killed every day, we have to declare a state of emergency," Tunnermann said. "The U.S. has also established states of emergency when the U.S. has been involved in wars," he added, naming President Abraham Lincoln's actions during the Civil War as a specific example.

The ambassador called President Ronald Reagan's request for increased aid to the contras "a deliberate slap in the face" to eight Latin American ministers who on February 10 met with Secretary of State George Schultz. The Latin Americans termed continued aid to the contras an obstacle to any peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Stating that "the Nicaraguan revolution is

committed to peace," the ambassador urged that Latin American countries be allowed to find their own solution to the conflict through the contadora peace process.

"Nicaragua should not be included in the East-West political conflict," he said.

Tunnermann was named Nicaraguan ambassador to the U.S. in July, 1984. He was appointed after the Sandinistas' first choice, Deputy Foreign Minister Nora Astorga, was rejected because of the part she is said to have taken in the 1978 assassination of a top general in the National Guard of former Nicaraguan President Anastasio Somoza.

As the rector of Nicaragua's National University, where in 1957 he earned a doctorate in law, Tunnermann was influential in secularizing that formerly Church-backed institution. He reportedly accepted the ambassador's post at the urging of several founders of the Sandinista movement who were also his former students.

From the overthrow of Somoza in 1979 until he came to Washington, Tunnermann served the Nicaraguan government as education minister.

State Catholic conference sets legislative goals

Human needs, especially among the unborn, the young and their mothers, the aged and the homeless are top priorities identified by the New York State Catholic Conference for the coming state legislative session.

"The common thread which runs through all our objectives is the inherent worth and dignity of every human life," said J. Alan Davitt, executive director, in releasing the conference's 1986 Legislative Program.

"Effective public policy cannot be developed in a solely secular environment," he added. "The public and private sectors must cooperate in responding to those New Yorkers most in need."

Speaking on behalf of the eight New York state Roman Catholic dioceses, the Catholic Conference's Public Policy Committee annually lists in its program top legislative goals that would enhance life and living conditions in the state.

Leaders of the conference selected for attention six "targeted objectives" and a number of specific programs in areas of continuing concern.

Targeted objectives include:

- **Pro-life:** elimination of state funding for abortions; notification of parents of

underage children seeking abortion; continued opposition to the death penalty and opposition to fostering legalized euthanasia.

- **Homeless:** increased aid to feeding and housing homeless people; support for soup kitchens, food pantries, school food programs; continuing the Homeless Housing Assistance Program.

- **Education:** tax relief to parents of children in public and nonpublic schools.

- **Health:** increased Medicaid eligibility to anyone whose income falls below the poverty level.

- **Youth:** Omnibus Youth Services legislation including funds for mental health care, teen pregnancy programs, pre-school and after-school day care, increased funds for the STEP program targeted to minorities and foster home children and family counseling.

- **Employment:** creation of a state employment program for employable public assistance recipients.

Other proposals on the legislative agenda aim to help people in seven categories: elderly and disabled; women in the workplace; disadvantaged children; physically ill; victims and offenders; families; and oppressed people around the world.

Welsh Celebration

The St. David's Welsh Society of Rochester will have a Welsh celebration on Friday, Feb. 28 at 6:30 p.m. at West Webster First United Methodist Church, 570 Old Ridge Road. Members and friends are invited to bring a dish to pass. For more information and/or reservations, call (716)467-4148 or 482-1998.

Cardiac Nursing Course

The American Heart Association and Park Ridge Hospital will sponsor a 12-week basic cardiac nursing program on Tuesday evenings from 8 to 10 p.m. at the hospital, 1555 Long Pond Road. The course begins Tuesday, March 4, and runs through May 27.

Sanctuary Lecture

William Sloan Coffin, former Yale University chaplain, will speak at Asbury First Methodist Church, 1040 East Avenue, Thursday, March 6, at 8 p.m. A punch reception will follow at 5:30 p.m., and a Latin American dinner at 6:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. The dinner and lecture is \$12.50 per person; the lecture is \$5 per person.

Clown Ministry

Worship through the clown ministry of Ruth Turk will be offered Saturday, Feb. 22, from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Assisi House, 194 Lyell Ave. It is open to the public. Call (716)247-0729 for more information.