



Years of grace

A recent reunion of priests and sisters at St. Boniface Church brought back fond recollections of 125 years of music, grace and inspiration. See page 5.



Beautiful soup

Catch Anthony Zerbe's encore at GeVa Theatre May 27, when he stages a dramatic rendering of e.e. cummings' poetry for the benefit of St. Martin's Place. See Page 6.

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World & Nation in Brief from NC News

World

Gunman kills priest in Brazil

Sao Paulo, Brazil — A 33-year-old priest, active in a Church land reform program, was killed by a gunman in northern Brazil on May 10. Father Josimo Moraes Tovaes was shot in the back as he walked up the stairs to a church office in Imperatriz, a town in Brazil's eastern Amazon region. The Brazilian bishops said the priest was killed for defending "the life of his suffering flock." Authorities said the gunman was identified and was being sought. Father Moraes Tovaes was due to become regional coordinator of the local pastoral land commission.

Dialogue for peace in Italy

Assisi, Italy — Representatives of the U.S. and Soviet embassies to Italy met May 17 at a "dialogue for peace" in Assisi. John W. Holmes, standing in for U.S. Ambassador Maxwell Rabb, and Soviet Ambassador Nikolai Lunkov came together at a meeting sponsored by Assisi's International Peace Center. The Franciscan-sponsored center invited the diplomats "to meditate on the riches of peace."

Encyclical on the Holy Spirit

Vatican City — Pope John Paul II marked his 66th birthday on the feast of Pentecost by announcing a forthcoming encyclical on the Holy Spirit. Speaking to some 30,000 people from his apartment window during a May 18 noon blessing, the pope said the new encyclical, titled "Dominum et Vivificantem" (Lord and Giver of Life), will complete a "trinitarian trilogy." The new encyclical will be published May 30 and will focus on the meaning of Pentecost, the pope said.

Nation

Health care must include poor

New York — Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin of Chicago told Catholic health professionals May 18 that a "consistent ethic of life" means that Catholic health care institutions must find ways to serve the poor directly and work for improved government health programs. "We must defend the right to life of the weakest among us; we must also be supportive of the quality of life of the powerless among us: the old and the young, the hungry and the homeless, working mothers and single parents, the sick, the disabled and the dying," Cardinal Bernardin said.

Priest skeptical of Castro

New York — Fidel Castro, with other leaders of the Cuban government, is moving to establish better relations with the Catholic Church, according to the general secretary of the Cuban bishops' conference. "He's a political man; his reasons are political, not pastoral, not philosophical," said Monsignor Carlos Manuel de Cespedes in an interview May 16 in New York. "He wants to have better relations with Latin American countries, and because the Catholic Church is very important in Latin America, it is important to have better relations with the Catholic Church in Cuba," the monsignor said.



Jeff Goulding/Courier Journal

Somewhere over the rainbow

The double cast of Holy Trinity School's production of "The Wizard of Oz" leads a parade of schoolchildren to the Downtown Festival Site, where 720 lavender balloons were released to kick off the annual Lilac Festival. Earlier, nearly 700 students from 11 Rochester-area schools—eight of them parochial—attended an ecumenical prayer service at St. Mary's Church, downtown.

Palmyra/Marion

Chemistry credited for amicable partnership

By Teresa A. Parsons

When Mary Ellen Hickey came to Marion as a young teacher back in 1944, St. Gregory's was a mission church of St. Anne's in Palmyra. Over the years, she saw the mission passed to Ontario and Sodus and back, and watched its evolution as an independent community, culminating in the appointment of a resident pastor in 1951.

Now it's being clustered with St. Anne's, but as far as Hickey is concerned, the difference lies in more than the name. "I like clustering better. It doesn't denote a subordinate status," she said.

Her reaction was apparently shared by other parish council and committee members from both parishes who met last week to continue planning the latest diocesan parish cluster.

Beginning at the end of June, a single pastor, Father Louis Vasile, will serve both St. Gregory's and St. Anne's, 7.2 miles away in Palmyra. At that time, Father John Morgan, who has served St. Gregory's for five years, will retire and Father Eugene Weis, pastor of St. Anne's will transfer to another appointment.

Each parish will remain a separate civil and canonical entity, but will be served by a joint staff. At present, in addition to Father Vasile, the staff will include as pastoral assistant, Sister Mary Marvin, RSM, currently principal of St. Thomas the Apostle School, and Sister Lucy Walawender, RSM, who will move from pastoral assistant at Holy Name of Jesus Parish to parish secretary at Marion. Both sisters will live in Marion.

Father Vasile also expects to name a director of religious education soon. That person will coordinate both parishes' existing programs and initiate new ones, such as the Rite

of Christian Initiation of Adults.

Last week's meeting was surprisingly cordial considering the topic, which was reducing the Mass schedule from six weekend Masses to four and alternating daily Masses between parishes. The cordial atmosphere is typical of how the clustering process has been received by the two communities. "It's a very rare that you get two communities that are even willing to talk to each other about this," Father Vasile said. "I think it's chemistry — just two very open and hospitable groups of people."

Parishioners began meeting with diocesan representatives of the Process for Institutional and Ministerial Consultation (PIMC) in January, 1986. From the first, both groups appeared open to the possibility of clustering, according to Bishop Dennis W. Hickey, one of the diocesan facilitators.

"The people from Marion wanted to be reassured that they could keep their own identity and parish council and liturgy, and that some staff member would be present for them in Marion," Bishop Hickey said. "But they were extremely open, cooperative and understanding." Among the reasons he offered for their attitude were an awareness of the serious clergy shortage, St. Gregory's relatively brief history as an independent parish, the prior relationship between the parishes, and the cooperation of the two current pastors.

Father Weis, who had been pastor of two Newark Valley parishes in a similar configuration, reassured parishioners that he had seen it work well there. Father Morgan, who is retiring, noted that he and parishioners realized that with so few priests and such a small parish population, the diocese had no choice in

regard to St. Gregory's.

Although the formal process was relatively brief, ending in March, informal discussion of the possibilities has been going on in both parishes for more than a year.

"We're not stupid — we know there's a priest shortage," said Mary Kay McGrath, a parishioner at St. Anne's. "We are fortunate to be getting a priest, and we know we've got to work together."

For all their goodwill, there are still sacrifices to be made. Cutting a Mass from St. Gregory's weekend schedule will compound an existing shortage of parking spaces. Members of St. Anne's parish council estimate that as many as 30 percent of their parishioners may opt to attend Masses in Macedon, at least initially.

In clustering Palmyra with Marion, one parish council member noted, the diocese is overriding a natural affinity between Palmyra and Macedon. Because many Palmyra residents work in Rochester, they drive through Macedon daily, and so may already shop and seek entertainment there.

On the other hand, as Marian Gardner pointed out, neither Marion nor Palmyra have preconceptions about one another. "Maybe it's better that way," she said.

"Both communities were aghast at first," recalled Gardner, a parishioner at St. Gregory's. "But after the first meeting, I found myself saying 'You know, they're just like us.'"

With each successive meeting, parishioners seemed to find more advantages on which to focus. Planning bodies, such as liturgy committees and parish councils, can maintain their own identities, but can work together when it's

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