

All Saints Academy marks revival for Corning schools

By Teresa A. Parsons

Three Corning parishes have chosen "All Saints Academy" as the name of their newly consolidated school.

Students from St. Vincent DePaul, St. Mary's and St. Patrick's parishes will attend All Saints Academy beginning this September.

Last year, two school buildings operated at Corning Catholic North (St. Vincent DePaul Parish) and Corning Catholic South (St. Mary's Parish). When the closing of one school was dictated by unexpectedly high costs for maintaining the two buildings, a new name seemed to be in order.

"We thought we should make a new beginning with something completely new," said Father Francis R. Davis, pastor at St. Patrick's. "At the same time, we wanted to satisfy all the people of the community."

St. Vincent DePaul's school building, which housed nearly 80 students in kindergarten through grade five, closed at the end of last school year. This year, those students will join nearly 200 K-8 students at St. Mary's building on the south side of the city.

Enrollment to date stands at 274 children, but principal Sandra Andra added that new registrations are still coming in daily.

"We are very excited about All Saints Academy. We feel it stands for a wonderful consolidation in Corning and that this new name will be a factor so that we really do become a consolidated school in mind and in speech," she said.

Parishioners at all three churches were asked to contribute their suggestions for the school's new name last month. Pastors, the school principal and several school board representatives formed a naming committee which first met July 21.

"A lot of people suggested Corning Catholic School," Father Davis said. "But the schools were already called that. People still referred to their schools as St. Mary's and St. Vincent's."



Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

St. Mary's School, now All Saints Academy, is home for students in kindergarten through grade eight.

Another front-runner was Blessed Trinity, which symbolized the unity of three parishes supporting one school building. But because school supporters hope to eventually include Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Painted Post in the system, that idea was rejected.

"We thought the name should be something very simple that even the young children would be able to spell and recognize," Father Davis said.

The committee considered the choices and decided on All Saints Academy. On July 28, the interim school board approved the choice and Andra submitted it to the Diocesan Division of Education, which approved the name several weeks ago.

Although it was not a conclusive factor in the choice of a new name, Corning Catholic's consolidated basketball team has long been known as "the Saints."

Catholic schools in Corning first consolidated in 1971, with the closing of St. Patrick's School. The remaining two schools were then renamed Corning North and South. The following year, junior high students from the north building moved to the south building.

Corning North's closing took many parents and parishioners by surprise. Al-

though a long-range planning committee recommended that the building be closed last February, St. Vincent's parish council and school board decided in March to delay that decision for a year and explore alternatives for financing and raising enrollment. They based their decision on a survey of St. Vincent's parishioners, the majority of whom said they wanted the school to remain open.

In May, it became apparent that all three parishes would operate in the red due to diocesan-mandated raises for teachers, a drop in enrollment and higher-than-expected parish costs.

After consulting with Bishop Matthew H. Clark and diocesan education officials, the pastors agreed to close one building. Their

decision was announced to parents Wednesday, May 28. Parents' initial reaction was one of shock and anger.

Since then, the consolidation has garnered widespread support, according to Andra. "We are ready for school to begin ... and that's mainly due to the tremendous support and help of parents," she said.

Throughout the summer, an interim school board composed of representatives from each parish has been meeting every other week. To date, they have written and approved a constitution.

At its next meeting, the board will begin organizing committees to establish policies for the new school. Meanwhile, a committee met this week to develop an assessment formula for parish subsidies.

"We figured that All Saints Academy would take care of the whole school, kindergarten through junior high school. Academy has a good ring to it and a history in the area with Corning Free Academy," Father Davis said. "We will look forward to establishing a good history and a new support and unity with all the parishes."

On Wednesday, August 27, parents, parishioners and students are invited to an open house at All Saints Academy from 9 to 11 a.m. Children will be able to visit their rooms and meet their teachers, who will also be available for parents' questions.

For more information about the open house or registration at All Saints Academy, contact Sandra Andra at (607)936-9234.

Perceptions, legalities differ on sexually explicit material

By Liz Schevtchuk

Washington (NC) — Supreme Court Justice Potter Stewart once wrote that he couldn't define obscenity but "I know it when I see it."

Angry Americans increasingly see what they regard as pornography invading their communities — and they want it removed.

But what citizens see as pornography and what the courts can constitutionally prohibit as obscenity aren't always the same thing.

"Obscenity is a legal term, pornography is not," and not all materials seen as pornographic can be found to be obscene, according to Evelyn Dukovic, executive director of Morality in Media, an anti-pornography organization.

Obscenity holds no First Amendment protection and can be controlled without violating the Constitution.

Child pornography — whether or not it is obscene — also has been declared illegal by Congress.

The Supreme Court, in its important 1973 Miller vs. California decision, defined obscenity by using three strict criteria, all of which must be met before an item can be rejected.

According to the court, for a work to be judged obscene: "(1) The average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that the work taken as a whole, appeals to the prurient interest; and (2) the work depicts or describes in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct specifically defined by the applicable state law; and (3) the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political or scientific value."

Depending on who is using the term, "pornography" could be seen as anything from Playboy magazine to hard-core, violent and otherwise objectionable publications or films that would meet the obscenity standard.

As the attorney general's Commission on Pornography itself wrote, trying to be precise about pornography is not easy.

If the commission tried to define "pornography" by giving a description, its members stated in their final report, "we will wind up having condemned a wide range of material that may not deserve condemnation."

Nonetheless, the commission proposed that "pornography" means material that "is predominantly sexually explicit and intended primarily for the purpose of sexual arousal."

Even so, it added, "whether some or all of

what qualifies as pornographic under this definition should be prohibited, or even condemned, is not a question that should be answered" by people attempting to set definitions.

The commission also warned of trying to equate all so-called "men's" publications with pornography. "The true pornography industry is quite simply different from and separate from the industry that publishes 'men's' magazines, the industry that offers some degree of sexually oriented material on broadcast and cable television, and the mainstream motion picture industry," it said.

In fact, the commission itself got in trouble when it sent a letter to stores warning them that they were alleged to be purveyors of pornography because they sold such magazines as Playboy and Penthouse. A federal court said the letter constituted a threat to the First Amendment and ordered the letter rescinded.

Following the release of the commission's report, the Pentagon also refused to ban Playboy and Penthouse from military-base stores, noting it permits the sale of commonly available commercial magazines and "does not permit the sale of pornography on military installations."

In another example of the pitfalls of trying to ban "pornography," Indianapolis failed when it tried to outlaw pornography as a civil rights violation in the form of sex discrimination. A court said that ploy was unconstitutional.

The attorney general's commission added that it had heard testimony from citizens who "employed definitions of pornography or have expressed views about what ought to be restricted that are far beyond what any of us would conceivably tolerate."

As it emphasized, "the only constitutionally permissible approach" is to attack "material containing sexually violent or sexually degrading material when it is legally obscene, and that in effect is what we have strongly urged here."

Meanwhile, for those who see pornography and know it as objectionable even if it is not obscene, perhaps another commission suggestion is in order. For dealing with "non-obscene but offensive pornographic material," the panel recommended boycotts and other "grass-roots" citizen efforts, suggesting that "private actions initiated by groups or individuals are often as effective as a government-initiated action."

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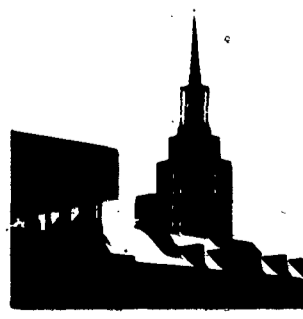
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