

Junior highs

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Sister Clare Francis Mogenhan, principal of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, began to talk with parents about the possibility last January. As a former principal of the first diocesan regional junior high school in Elmira, Sister Mogenhan is a strong advocate of such specialized programs.

"Seventh- and eighth-graders need a school of their own," she said. "(They) are growing up and going through such turmoil in their lives. They need teachers who'll love them, understand them and have time for them."

Planning began even earlier at St. Andrew's. In 1983, the Portland Avenue school was among a pilot group that tested a revised diocesan-planning process known as "Shaping the Future." Through the process, school and parish leaders learned that enrollment among older students was likely to decrease, while primary-level enrollment proved to be increasing.

The planning process also pinpointed September, 1987, as a good target date for consolidating the junior high grades, according to Sister Mary Alice O'Brien, principal.

What delayed a decision at St. Andrew's this year was the hope of establishing a new northeast-area regional junior high. By March, it was clear that no such program would be forthcoming within the year. Consequently, the parish council and school board approved an initial two-year commitment to Blessed Sacrament.

Sister O'Brien estimated that perhaps four-fifths of St. Andrew's 35 sixth- and seventh-graders may attend Blessed Sacrament next year. They won't be the only ones to benefit from the change. Next fall, Sister O'Brien hopes to introduce a child-care program and a full-day kindergarten at St. Andrew's in addition to the current half-day program.

"I want to emphasize that we are not doing this out of crisis," she said. "We have presented this as a very positive process for the past two years, and we have not gotten one bit of criticism. Of course, some of the kids are sorry and sentimental, and so are the parents. But they realize it's a positive step."

Throughout the past four years, parents and administrators at St. Anne's have considered and rejected a variety of consolidation plans. As recently as last November, St. Anne's school board voted against another such proposal, responding to parents who still favored the K-8 format.

At that time, St. Anne's junior high enrollment appeared stable to principal Robert J. Edelman Jr. "We really thought we had the numbers to continue seventh- and eighth-grades next year," he said.

In March, however, registration figures revealed a significant drop in junior high enrollment for 1987/88.

Judy Shaw speculated that the loss of students might have been caused by several factors. "Some people have lost faith in the stability of the Catholic schools," she said. "A couple other families decided to go to Seton on their own."

Forced to reconsider the prospect of consolidation, parents met with school and parish administrators and visited several

schools with junior-high programs. Seton emerged as the favored choice among parents as well as students.

Since Edelman was notified of the bishop's approval only last Thursday, he was not yet certain how many of St. Anne's 32 sixth- and seventh-graders would actually register for next year at Seton. "Some (parents) were opposed to it. Some were very much in favor of it. I don't know where some others stand," he said.

Parents, students and administrators at all three elementary schools were quick to term the junior-high consolidations a positive step. But many still harbored emotional reservations about the coming change.

Paul Oliver, whose daughter will attend Seton next year, said he's "a little sad to see St. Anne's lose two grades."

"It's time we recognized that Catholic education is in a bind," he added. "We need to address that in some innovative ways."

Student Jonathan Hoffmann's first reaction to moving from seventh grade at St. Andrew's to eighth grade at Blessed Sacrament was both emotional and "purely negative," said his mother, Joanne Hoffman. "His first thought was that he wouldn't graduate from St. Andrew's," she said.

But a visit to Blessed Sacrament favorably impressed both mother and son. "Academically, I think it's going to be wonderful for the kids. There's a feeling of family over there — a wonderful, positive attitude," Joanne Hoffman said. "It's a big adjust-

ment, but I think Jonathan can adapt. He'll do OK."

Because the schools reached their final decisions so late in the academic year, some details remain unresolved. Principals at Seton and Blessed Sacrament plan to await a more accurate estimate on registration before deciding whether to hire additional teachers. Both will also face some last-minute budget shuffling and textbook ordering as a result of any increase in enrollment. But neither is complaining.

Seton principal Steven Schockow expects that the addition of students from St. Anne's will not strain the school. It will bring enrollment close to the maximum as Seton's facility is now organized. The junior high, which opened last year with students from St. Thomas More, St. Jerome, Our Lady of Lourdes and Queen of Peace parishes, shares a school building with grades three through six at Our Lady of Lourdes.

Blessed Sacrament's principal, Sister Elizabeth Snyder, also regards the presence of students from Perpetual Help and St. Andrew's as a boon to the existing program.

"The increasing numbers mean that we're able to meet student's needs more effectively," she said, citing advanced and remedial preparation for high school as examples.

"We are becoming kind of a melting pot, as more of us are coming from more different parishes and more different backgrounds," she added. "I see students learning the social graces of making new friends before going into high school, and I'm hearing them tell me they're not afraid of high school any more."

Anti-abortion group announces boycott against Genesee Hospital

By Teresa A. Parsons

Jim and Peggy Crowley have relied on the same physician to steer them safely through the births of five children over the past 15 years.

But last February, the Greece residents reluctantly wrote their doctor a letter, explaining that they would no longer seek his care. Peggy Crowley's gynecologist had assured her that he did not perform abortions. But his two partners do, along with an estimated dozen other physicians who work at Genesee Hospital.

"My wife was very happy with (her doctor). He was a friend and a father to her," Crowley said. "We wrote that if he changed locations and partnered with other people, we would stay. We had no response."

The Crowleys were among the first to participate in a "progressive boycott" against abortion at Genesee Hospital. The boycott formally began last week with an announcement by Project Life spokesman David Long.

"Today we call upon the Christian community in Rochester and the entire community of conscience to consider how we will begin to withdraw our support from Genesee Hospital," Long said at a press conference last Tuesday.

"Each of us must become doers and not just hearers of the word"

The progressive boycott encompasses a wide range of possible actions, according to Long. Some people, like the Crowleys, have already ceased to patronize any doctor or service at Genesee Hospital. Others are encouraged simply to ask their doctors whether they perform abortions, and to consider changing practices if the answer is yes.

"Many of us will try to persuade our trusted physicians to move their practices to other hospitals," Long said in his statement. "Others of us will begin to talk with our friends who work at Genesee Hospital."

Prompted by Tuesday's announcement, Rochester resident Lorrie Davcev plans to notify her children's pediatrician by letter that they will not continue as his patients.

"I was very happy with this doctor, but I believe the Lord will provide another," she said. "We need as Christians to make a stand instead of just thinking it's a terrible thing that's happening."

To spread word of the boycott among patients and employees at Genesee Hospital,

Davcev and other Project Life supporters are taking part in what Long terms a "siege program." On Tuesday, May 19, volunteers began passing out leaflets in front of the hospital during "peak hours." The leaflets contain details of the boycott, as well as general information about abortion and the names of specific physicians at Genesee who are believed to perform abortions.

The economic boycott is only one phase of a continuing campaign organized by Project Life to encourage Genesee Hospital to stop offering abortion services. Known as Project Jericho, the campaign began more than a year ago and incorporates prayer vigils, weekly demonstrations and sidewalk counseling.

Although the non-profit, ecumenically based group has also sponsored demonstrations at Highland Hospital, its main focus has been Genesee, where abortions are performed at two clinics in the adjacent Doctor's Office Building. "Their profile of abortion is higher than (that of) any other (local) hospital," Long explained.

Long declined to predict how many people

might participate in the boycott, but said its success would be measured by Genesee Hospital's reaction. "Our desired result would be that the medical staff would prohibit staff physicians from performing abortions, by not allowing space for abortionists within the hospital," he said.

To date, the hospital has responded by suing Project Life, in an attempt to stop the picketing and other activities in the hospital's immediate vicinity.

To date, Genesee Hospital has responded by obtaining an injunction to prevent Project Life's demonstrators from blocking access to the hospital. The injunction is still in effect, although negotiations between lawyers for both groups are "at a standstill," according to Jean Haskins-Dalmath, a hospital spokeswoman.

Dalmath said that the injunction should not affect Project Life's leafletting activities "as long as they respect our legal rights and remain on public property." She also said that the hospital had no response to the announcement of a progressive boycott.

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Motorcycle Fun Run to benefit American Cancer Society

The 1987 Motorcycle Fun Run to benefit the American Cancer Society is scheduled for Sunday, May 31, at Rochester Institute of Technology.

Participants will follow an 80-mile scenic route through Monroe County, stopping at checkpoints along the route to roll dice for points. Scores will be tallied at the end of the run, and individuals with the highest and lowest scores will be awarded trophies.

Registration will be taken between 10 a.m. and noon that morning at RIT, 1 Lomb Memorial Dr., Rochester, and a \$5 per person donation will be requested. Because the motorcycle run is a non-

competitive event, all participants will be eligible for the grand prize — a Yamaha Riva Scooter, valued at \$1,500 — donated by Robinson's Cycle Sales, Cycle Enterprises and Yamaha, Inc.

Last year, the event brought out 250 participants and raised more than \$3,000 for cancer research, education and public services provided by the American Cancer Society. Organizers this year are expecting more than 500 cyclists.

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