



Surprising Saints

DeSales' baseball season rolled this spring as the young Saints reached the Section 5 Class C semifinals. Mooney routed Mercy in the Class AA softball quarterfinals. Pages 8-9.



Dunn's domain

The towers that loom behind St. Theodore's Church attest that with luck and a lot of help from friends, one person can have a powerful impact on seemingly intractable problems. Page 16.

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Bingo continues as Corpus fund drive falls short



Bonnie Trafelet/Courier-Journal

Father James Callan remains optimistic that his plan to end bingo games at Corpus Christi will succeed.

By Lee Strong

Corpus Christi Parish has failed in its efforts to meet a June 5 deadline for ending bingo as a means of supporting Corpus Christi School. As a result, the parish has indefinitely extended the deadline for collecting pledges.

By June 5, the parish had received only \$14,530 of the \$100,000 goal established last month by a plan to replace bingo proceeds in the school's \$250,000 annual budget.

Father James Callan, administrator of the parish, set the June 5 deadline as part of a proposal he made to a joint parish-school bingo committee on April 23. The proposal called for the parish to find 1,000 people willing to donate \$100 to the school each year.

Despite the failure to raise the money by the deadline, Father Callan remains optimistic that the plan will eventually succeed, ending the school's financial reliance on bingo. "I think it's just slow coming in. I don't think we gave people enough notice," Father Callan said. "I expect the rest to come in the next few days."

"We were hoping to do it by June 5, but the agreement was bingo would end when the money comes in," Father Callan noted.

Although bingo has not officially ended, Phil Malone, chairman of the bingo committee and a bingo worker, noted that bingo revenue has already declined as a result of publicity about the proposal and misleading media reports that bingo had been eliminated.

"People came in last night (Sunday, June 5) saying they saw on television that there was no more bingo, but they stopped by to see anyway," Malone reported. Turnout for the June 5 game was down, causing a decline in the amount of money raised, he said.

"It'll get worse after this morning's paper," Malone said, referring to an article in the June 6 edition of the *Democrat and Chronicle*. The article reported that Father Callan had said bingo had ended.

"I said (bingo) would end if the \$100,000 was raised," Father Callan said in an effort to clarify the matter. "Our commitment is to end bingo when we get the \$100,000, not before."

Nevertheless, Malone was pessimistic about the success of upcoming games. "We're going to lose half our customers," he predicted.

Meanwhile, Father Callan is endeavoring to draw more attention to the fund drive. He speculated that the plan had failed because the original deadline was too soon after the announcement of the proposal. June 5 had been chosen as the deadline because it was the Feast of Corpus Christi and the date on which the parish celebrated its centennial.

The priest anticipated that more money would be coming in as a result of letters sent last week to parish supporters, urging them to contribute to the fund. On Monday, June 6,

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Veterans offer \$40,000 for Redeemer parcel

By Richard A. Kiley

Diocesan officials are lukewarm about a \$40,000 offer by the Rochester Chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America to purchase the 1.6 acre parcel that encompasses Holy Redeemer Church.

The chapter's board voted unanimously last Tuesday night, May 31, to purchase the landmark church and related buildings at the corner of Rochester's Hudson and Clifford avenues.

The purchase offer — which is free of contingencies — came a week before the June 10 deadline the diocese set for the Landmark Society of Western New York to place an earlier verbal offer in writing. The society had publicly stated that it is working on a plan to develop part of the church complex, but it has yet to formalize that offer.

Father John M. Mulligan, director of the Diocesan Division of Urban Services, said that although he and other diocesan and parish officials believe that the land is worth more than what the Vietnam veterans have offered, the purchase offer will be given consideration.

"We all believe that \$40,000 is inadequate, but that does not mean we will not respond to them," said Father Mulligan, who noted that the school building alone was valued at more than \$40,000.

Officials of the Rochester City School District have expressed an interest in using the former Holy Redeemer School building for a 300-pupil early-childhood center.

"The Landmark Society has until June 10th to respond to the letter, so the whole thing won't come together until then," said Father Mulligan, who added that several Rochester-area religious congregations have continued to show interest in the church building.

"We have heard nothing from (the Landmark Society) since we issued the letter," he noted.

The priest said the increasing interest in the parcel may influence how diocesan and parish officials view the veterans' proposal.

"We may ask them to maybe reconsider their offer," the priest said.

Father William B. Leone, pastor of Holy Redeemer/St. Francis Xavier Parish, is away on retreat and could not be reached for comment on the purchase offer.

The veterans plan to use the parcel — which includes the church, rectory, school building and heating plant — for a neighborhood trauma center, according to Harry Caulfield, a Rochester-area developer and chairman of long-range planning for the Rochester chapter of the Vietnam Veterans of America.

Caulfield said the church would house professionals — trained to deal with the after-effects of battle in Vietnam — who would use their skills to help community residents suffering from other traumas.

The veterans group also announced a plan to use the church rectory for a thrift store and the school for recreational and educational facilities for Rochester-area young people.

Caulfield said the veterans' group has outgrown their current headquarters at 459 South Ave. in Rochester, and needs the additional room for expansion. The group would keep its South Avenue facility.

He added that the veterans are looking to move into the church "as soon as possible" and that they will work with the Group 14621 neighborhood organization as they do so.

"If we are granted title of the whole property, we'll take the ball where the diocese leaves it," Caulfield said. "We want to start the healing process as soon as possible."

The local Vietnam Veterans' chapter wrote to Bishop Matthew H. Clark last April, asking to meet with him to discuss the parcel. Caulfield said the diocese misunderstood the organization's intention to purchase the property, as evidenced by a letter in which Bishop Clark stated that the diocese would not donate the property to the veterans.

The church has been vacant since 1985 when the parish was merged with nearby St. Francis Xavier Parish.

The combined parish announced last fall that it planned to demolish the church because it could not afford the \$10,000 a year in insurance and other charges involved in maintaining the structure. Demolition plans were stalled May 9, however, when the church was designated a city landmark. As a result of that designation, no changes can be made to the church without approval of the city's Preservation Board.

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