

# Schools again exceed state, local test results

By Mary E. McCrank

This past April, elementary school children in the Diocese of Rochester were once again put to the test — the Stanford Achievement Test, that is.

The results, which practically mirrored high scores from the previous year, were quite pleasing to diocesan education officials, according to Evelyn J. Kirst, assistant superintendent for curriculum.

Overall scores in reading, math and language were all above average, with the exception of first-grade math results, which placed in the high-average category.

Diocesan elementary students also exceeded last year's New York state Pupil Evaluation Program test results, which are administered each spring to third-, fifth- and sixth-graders in public and non-public schools.

Rochester's diocesan schools scored higher in every PEP test category than the average for New York state's non-public schools. The Rochester City School District will not make public this spring's results until the beginning of September, according to David Hunt, a city school district official. However, last year, diocesan schools' average scores were higher than those of the city district in every category.

Kirst disputed the argument that Catholic schools typically score higher on achievement tests than do public schools because the former attract cream-of-the-crop students. She noted that whereas diocesan elementary-school scores in recent years have remained consistently high — particularly in reading and math — Catholic schools are attracting an increasingly diverse student population.

Kirst also credited the diocese's test performance to a training program established three years ago to help teachers prepare their students for achievement tests.

The Stanford test is graded on a scale of one to nine, with nine representing the high end of the scale. In the total reading category, first-graders received an average score of seven; eighth-graders, nine; and second- through seventh-graders, eight.

In total math, first-graders received an average score of six; fifth-graders, eight; and second- through fourth- and sixth- through eighth-graders, nine.

In total language, first- and second-graders do not test. Third-, fourth-, sixth- and eighth-graders received nine; fifth- and seventh-graders, eight.

On state PEP tests, grade three reading results for the diocese averaged 91 percent, which equaled last year's result. Non-public schools throughout the state averaged 86 percent in 1987, compared to the city district's 81 percent.

Grade-three math scores for diocesan



**EAGER GRADUATES** — Three-year-old Janella Leach poses for class portraits with her classmates at the first graduation of the preschool class at St. Peter and Paul's in Rochester.

Bonnie Trafelet/Courier-Journal

schools were 96 percent, up 2 percent from last year. In 1987, New York state non-public schools scored 90 percent, compared to the city district's 89 percent.

Fifth-grade students scored 93 percent in writing, which also equaled the 1987 diocesan score. Non-public state schools and the Rochester school district each had an average of 89 percent in 1987.

Grade-six reading for the diocese was 92 percent, over last year's 90 percent. The state's non-public schools had 82 percent last year, slightly above Rochester schools' 79 percent.

Grade-six math results were 96 percent for the diocese, up 2 percent since last year. New York's non-public schools had 88 percent last year, while the city schools had 82 percent.

## Scholarship created

A scholarship fund, named for Father James Lawlor's mother, Constance Lawlor, has been created at St. Bernard's Institute in recognition of his 25th anniversary of ordination.

Initial gifts to the fund of nearly \$4,000, received from St. Mary's parishioners and friends, were presented to Father Lawlor at his anniversary Mass and picnic celebration on Sunday, June 19.

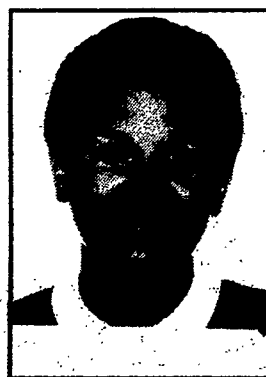
Additional contributions to the fund, which is part of the scholarship endowment for women St. Bernard's Institute students. Checks for the Constance Lawlor Fund should be sent to Jura Litchfield, development director at St. Bernard's, 1100 S. Goodman St., Rochester, N.Y. 14620.

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Crisis Intervention in Ministry	Oct. 19
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