

Et cetera

Schools

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Catholic school to have them close it down in two years.

The timing with which the plan was announced — coming only weeks before the schools' annual February registration period — also disappointed Sharon Cerame, president of the home/school association at St. James' School.

"I didn't think the timing was very good, especially since (the proposal) won't be approved until March," she said, expressing concern that registration numbers would drop off for the three schools scheduled to close in June, 1990.

Elizabeth Meagher, Perpetual Help's representative to the board, said she was "totally unaware of the final result" of the board's study. "The closing of the school is a total shock to us," she said.

Sister Clare Francis Mogenhan, school principal, urged those attending the Monday-night meeting to mobilize their collective efforts to avert the closing. "I have given my life to Catholic education, and I hopefully don't have to stop now," she said.

Parents and school officials from the five other targeted schools likewise reacted to the announcement with a mixture of anger, disappointment, resignation and hope. Peter Pecor, an Irondequoit town councilman whose son attends Christ the King, criticized the proposal to close the school. "I can't for the life of me figure out why anyone would want to close a facility with the expansion capabilities we have," he said. Pecor added that in August of 1988, the parish opened a center — with diocesan approval — containing additional classrooms and gym facilities.

"Obviously, we feel betrayed," he said, noting that his fellow parishioners were "shocked" by the announcement.

On the other hand, some of those affected by the proposal had expected its coming. Sister Theresa Rutty, principal of St. James, admitted that she was not surprised to learn that her school was among those targeted to close. "Most of our classes are undersized," she said. "We have no gym and no large playground area." Sister Rutty was, however, relieved that the plan did not schedule St. James for closing this year. "It gives each child one more year to grow in the same family situation," she remarked.

Looking on the bright side was the attitude of Annunciation's principal, Sister Diane Marie Erskine. "I don't think it's the end of anybody's world," she said. "I think it's time to build and move on."

Ninetta Dibella, mother of an Annunciation student and a member of the northeast planning board, said she was "quite pleased" with the proposal. "Being on the committee, Annunciation turned up on the closed list several times. On this draft, we gained another year," she said. But another year is not enough for Alice Childs, whose six children — including one current student — have attended St. Philip Neri. A member of the home/school association, she expressed hope that the planning board might reconsider its proposal to close the school. "I hope that we can have some kind of influence in directing them away from that," she said.

Sister Angela Fortunato, principal at St. Salome, refused to comment on the proposal. The school also declined to give out the names of any school parents. Many parents at Our Lady

of Perpetual Help's meeting said they were pleased with the quality of education their children were receiving at the school and that they felt disappointed by the proposed closing. Villarubia said that the school's closing would force most of its black and Hispanic students to transfer to public schools, from which they would be more likely to drop out. Our Lady of Perpetual Help's student body is 50 percent black and 35 percent Hispanic, according to school officials.

One black parent, Mary Lawrence, called the proposal "ethnocentric" and said that non-Catholic blacks would suffer because they have no official voice in the diocese.

"I have a problem that they are closing so many of the smaller schools that are serving urban children," she later remarked. "It sends a subtle message that because you're in a particular location you can't do as good as at another location," she said, noting that the proposed closings signaled that the diocese is more concerned with suburban white Catholics than it is with urban minorities.

Carmen Cimino, a member of the parish school board, offered similar comments. "Our Lady of Perpetual Help serves the needs of a community that is multi-racial. Let's keep the program that we've worked so hard for going," she said, suggesting that the parish make a counter-proposal for a school housing grades kindergarten through three. Father Neil R. Miller, pastor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, told audience members that each parish whose school is targeted to close has until Jan. 20 to form a response to the proposal. After that deadline has passed, the planning board's proposal, along with each parish's response, will go to the nine-member Commission on Reor-

ganization of Catholic schools, headed by William Pickett, president of St. John Fisher College.

Based on this information, the commission will then make recommendations to Bishop Matthew H. Clark who will issue a final decision by March 1, Sister Tierney said.

According to Father John Mulligan, vicar general and moderator of the pastoral office, the junior-high school proposed in the report would be administered by the diocese, not Bishop Kearney. Sister Tierney said the school would serve 400 students from throughout the northeast quadrant.

Currently, some junior-high students from the quadrant attend a regional junior high at Blessed Sacrament School. The planning board's report called for continuing the junior-high program at Blessed Sacrament until June, 1990, after which the quadrant would transfer its students to the Bishop Kearney location.

The proposal stated that "the future use of Blessed Sacrament School should be factored into the study of the southeast quadrant for 1990 and beyond." Sister Tierney noted that if the proposed plan is approved, Blessed Sacrament would most likely become an elementary school serving the southeast quadrant only. Susan Schaefer, chairwoman of the Northeast Quadrant Planning Board, said the proposed changes were "inevitable."

"Now we'll have to deal with a positive approach to the parishes," she said. Four sub-committees dealing with finance, governance, transportation and use and reuse of the closed buildings will refine the proposal over the next two weeks before it goes to the reorganization commission.

Lost now found

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was involved in a serious car accident which was alcohol-related. He lost his driver's license as well as his eligibility to participate in athletics.

An outstanding student, his grades began to fall. He was arrested for public intoxication, was involved in fights, was hostile to school and police authorities as well as to all members of his family.

Several years have gone by since Jim hit the road. His grieving family has continued to look for him through private investigators and personal searches, with thousands of dollars spent in the effort. He has been spotted several times, but always eludes the searchers in the end.

Jim's family continues to hope that their beloved son and brother, so talented and bright, will recover from his disease. They know he is in the hands of the Lord, and that is their only solace.

The family prays daily for Jim, for his safety and for his return to sobriety. Although they realize they must detach from his illness, that they must "let go and let God," they never give up hope that he will come back to them.

The story of the Prodigal Son gives them courage for their hope: "This brother of yours was dead and has come back to life. He was lost, and is found."

Sentence

Continued from page 1

"He indicated to our attorneys that he learned a lot during the trials... Then he gives us a scathing lecture rebuking our actions," Long said. "He knows (his sentence) is going to result in more incarcerations."

Long and Crawford could face stiffer jail sentences if they refuse to perform 15 Saturday work-release stints and fail to comply with the terms of their probation — which bar them from taking part in demonstrations in Brighton during the next three years.

In a related matter, Ark sentenced Father Anthony P. Mugavero, parochial vicar of St. Theodore's Parish in Gates, to four weekends in jail in connection with the second demonstration at Wortman's Brighton office.

Father Mugavero said he believes Ark will permit him to serve the jail term on Mondays and Tuesdays, "so I can attend to my responsibilities here at St. Theodore's."

The diocesan priest pleaded guilty to disorderly conduct violations stemming from the Oct. 29 demonstration at the Brighton physician's office.

Father Mugavero called the judge's sentence "a sad example of justice."

"I do think that it is sad that people who are trying to defend life are the ones that are being put in jail," the priest said. "I'm just one of many people that this is happening to."

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