



Spectacle of growth



The life-altering power of the Gospels was on display last week as diocesan candidates and catechumens ritually celebrated their intent to be initiated at Easter.

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CATHOLIC COURIER

Celebrating Our 100th Year

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West-side schools plan to close

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Citing declining enrollments and increased costs, the school boards of Our Lady of Good Counsel and Genesis Catholic Junior High have decided to close both schools in June of this year.

The Good Counsel/Genesis school boards made their decision at a combined meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 7. The school boards also decided to merge Good Counsel with Holy Family School at 899 Jay St. Students from Good Counsel will be encouraged to enroll at Holy Family, a regional elementary school which also draws students from St. Francis of Assisi, St. Anthony and Holy Apostles parishes.

The boards did not designate a specific junior high program to which Genesis students might transfer, but Blessed Sacrament Junior High is being considered as a possible site, according to Carol Zdatny, president of the Genesis Catholic Junior High School Board.

Currently, 147 students are enrolled in grades K-6 at Our Lady of Good Counsel School, and 65 students are enrolled in grades 7-8 at Genesis. Both schools are housed in the same building at 630 Brooks Ave., on the city's southwest side.

School officials said that declining enrollment and the resultant loss of revenue would force the schools to operate at deficit levels of spending if they were to stay open next year.

Based on a survey of school parents, projected 1989-90 enrollment at Good Counsel/Genesis would have declined by more than 30 percent. Coupled with increased operating costs, the schools would have incurred a combined deficit of \$56,000 for next year. School officials noted that the schools already posted a deficit of \$12,000 for 1988-89.

In January, the administrative, teaching and office staff of Good Counsel/Genesis voted to freeze their salaries for the 1988-90 school year in an effort to reduce costs, according to Zdatny. Our Lady of Good Counsel's pastor, Father Louis Sirianni, also noted that the diocese had offered "substantial" financial assistance to the schools, although he declined to give a specific figure. These combined measures might have saved the schools had the projected enrollment figures for 1989-90 equaled those of 1988-89, Father Sirianni said.

Elementary schools throughout Monroe County have been directed by Brother

Brian Walsh, diocesan superintendent of schools, to refuse registration of K-5 students from Good Counsel/Genesis for the 1989-90 school year. Zdatny said the reasoning behind the directive was to keep Good Counsel students with their peers by sending them as a group to Holy Family. "While they'll be changing buildings, they'll be with their friends," she commented.

What will happen to the building those students leave behind is another question. Father Sirianni noted that the building has potential for reuse, but said that the boards had not decided on any specific plan during their Feb. 7 meeting. He noted that the boards had originally wanted to keep both schools open until the diocese announces its plans for reconfiguring the entire diocesan Catholic school system, but said that the prospect of a \$56,000 deficit had forced a change in plans.

Monroe County's Catholic school system is divided into four quadrants, and Good Counsel/Genesis lies in the southwest quadrant. Quadrant planning boards have been working on plans to consolidate Catholic schools throughout Monroe County, but so far only the Northeast Quadrant Planning Board has announced its



The school boards of Our Lady of Good Counsel/Genesis Junior High have decided to close their common doors at the end of this school year.

plan, which entails the closing of six schools in its region and the establishment of a junior high program on the premises of Bishop Kearney High School.

Once a quadrant planning board has announced its plan, it will be reviewed by the nine-member Commission on Reorganization of Catholic Schools, chaired by William Pickett, president of St. John Fisher College. From there, the plan, along with the commission's recommendations, will go to Bishop Matthew H. Clark, who must give final approval of all plans before they are implemented.

Bush budget denounced

By Liz Schevtchuk
NC News Service

WASHINGTON — Addressing Congress Feb. 9, President George Bush described his fiscal 1990 \$1.16 trillion budget as a plan for "building a better America."

"Our first obligation is to the most vulnerable — infants, poor mothers, children living in poverty — and my proposed budget recognizes this," he told Congress.

Yet as details of his 193-page document became available, budget watchers at the U.S. Catholic Conference and a non-profit research group, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, used terms such as "mean-spirited" and "misleading" to characterize it.

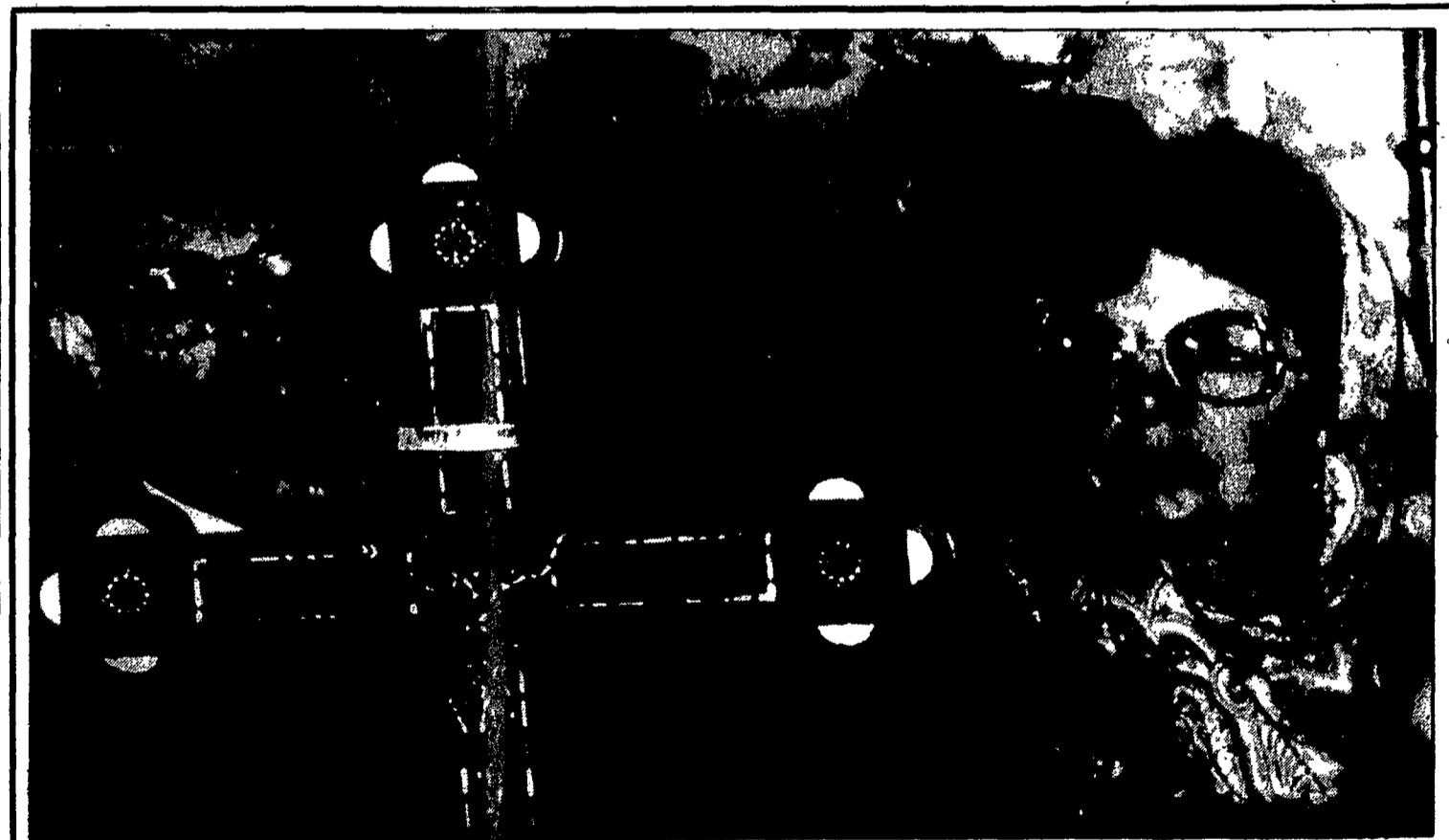
In general, in domestic spending, "he's cutting several billion dollars from programs that have already been devastated under the Reagan budgets," said Thomas Shellabarger, staff specialist for urban and economic issues in the USCC Office of Domestic Social Development. "This is not a kinder, gentler budget. It is a mean-spirited budget."

Shellabarger and other budget watchers claimed that the budget fails to calculate a defense spending "freeze" the same way it does a "freeze" for domestic social spending.

Bush, in the budget, recommended "a one-year freeze on the real growth of the defense budget."

Yet, he sought not a freeze on growth in entitlements but a "trimming" of growth — in such programs as the senior citizens' health program, Medicare, or federal employee health benefits.

At the same time, the budget also said that "returning to fiscal balance requires freezing aggregate spending ... at their 1989 levels" for expenses in the "discretionary spending category," which in-



HOSTAGE BRACELET — Batavia's Peggy Say, sister of American hostage Terry Anderson, places a bracelet bearing Anderson's name on a cross while praying for his release at St. Sergius Church in Maalovia, Syria, one of the oldest churches in the world. At left is the Rev. Ray Barnet of Vancouver, Canada.

cludes such diverse items as the Women, Infant and Children nutrition program for the poor, or WIC; mass transit; child welfare; infant mortality prevention; environmental protection; and national parks.

Bush suggested that WIC and other human resource programs "are natural examples" of programs that "might be in line for funding increases." To facilitate that while still "applying the freeze" on spending, he wants to eliminate funds for various mass transit and transportation needs.

Bush's plan "means cutting deeply into domestic spending programs. What we end up talking about is a 10-15 percent decrease," Shellabarger said.

Nevertheless, "from what we're seeing, Mr. Bush has again been overly-generous with defense," the USCC staff member added.

The Center on Budget and Policy Priorities reported in a budget analysis that "the claim that funds would be frozen for both the Pentagon and the domestic programs" in Bush's plan "is misleading."

It noted that defense spending would get a "full inflation adjustment" while education, for example, would not. "As in many of the Reagan (administration) budgets, a 'double standard' is thereby applied when it comes to measuring changes in defense and domestic spending," the center added.

Bush's budget proposes \$141 million, up from \$124 million, for adoption-related programs, including the Adolescent Family Life Act, which deals with teenage pregnancy problems.

The budget noted that "for pregnant teenagers who might consider abortion, the administration firmly believes that adoption, not abortion, is the course to pursue."

Under another budget category of "meeting special obligations" — a kinder, gentler America," Bush proposes increasing outlays for the McKinney Act, which funds programs for the homeless, from the \$408 million expected in 1989 to \$496 mil-

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