

## Richard H. Schleuter at 76; active in church, community affairs

Richard H. Schleuter, a retired insurance agent who was very active in both church and civic affairs in the Rochester area, died Saturday, July 1, 1989, of leukemia. He was 76 years old.

Born in Rochester on March 6, 1913, to the late Henry L. and Clara R. Schleuter, Mr. Schleuter attended St. Andrew's School and Aquinas Institute. He later attended the Aetna School of Insurance in Hartford, Conn.; and also took business and accounting classes at the University of Rochester and the Rochester Business Institute.

According to his sister, Sally Eberhardt of Pittsford, Mr. Schleuter operated a candy store, Schleuter's Confectionary, on Portland Avenue in the 1930s. He later served in the Air Force during World War II from 1942 to 1945. After returning from the service, he opened his own insurance agency, which in 1960 merged with Leslie Spanton to form the Schleuter Spanton Agency in Greece.

Like his father, who was a former city councilman, Mr. Schleuter was very active in civic affairs. In addition to serving on the Greece Chamber of Commerce, he was a former Republican committeeman and former commander of the Keith-Miller Post of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

### Deacon hopes

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In fact, Loewenguth reported that at the Rochester farmer's market he had recently run into one of the inmates he'd met while visiting a prison. The former prisoner came up to him and said, "I took that program with you. It's changed my life. I came out and fell flat on my face, and I remembered something you'd said, 'It's not gonna be easy at first.'" The man pulled himself together and has made it so far, Loewenguth said, adding with obvious satisfaction, "It's a real plus for the program. You don't often run into someone after they get out that way."

Deacon Zawacki noted that part of the program is also intended to show the prisoners that the Catholic Church has not forgotten them. "There's a lot of Protestants that go into prisons; there's a dearth of Catholics," he said. "We want to get more Catholics to go in and let prisoners and their families know the Catholic Church cares."

Pfeifer pointed out that the religious dimension of the program is emphasized during presentations to the knights. "We tell them that because of the virtue of baptism, they have accepted to carry Christ's cross," he said. "That means to carry the cross and to do Christ's work in the marketplace today."

Ultimately, Deacon Zawacki said, he hopes for the program to spread from New York to California, Texas and Florida. These four states, he noted, have the highest crime rates and prison populations. This program, the deacon believes, could have a major impact on the problem of crime — a greater impact than just arresting more people and building more prisons can have.

"Personally, I believe we underestimate the power that we have — just plain, ordinary people," Deacon Zawacki said, noting that he has seen prisoners break down when volunteers openly share their lives, their struggles, their successes and failures. "Just ordinary folks make a difference because they're not afraid to touch and to feel someone who's made a mistake," he said. "We all make mistakes."

Deacon Zawacki added that he's optimistic about the program's success, based on the success he's had in 14 years of prison ministry.

"Once you get it started, even if a council did it only three or four times a year, we could accomplish a lot," the deacon predicted, "because it doesn't exist now."

Mr. Schleuter also was deeply involved in church activities as a member of the Knights of Columbus, the Holy Name Society and the St. George Society of St. Andrew's Church, and the American Legion.

"They'll miss him at St. Andrew's," Eberhardt said. "He was involved with many parish functions there. He was always helping support something at St. Andrew's."

Mr. Schleuter also was a former member of the Monroe County and New York State insurance agent associations and of Lakeshore County Club.

"He was a very interested man; he could remember everything that happened," his sister said. "He remembered all the kids who bought candy from his store. His recall was remarkable, and it seems everybody knew him."

Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Andrew's Church on July 3 by Father Ronald W. Stacy, pastor.

In addition to Eberhardt, Mr. Schleuter is survived by his wife, Margaret Fearnley Schleuter; brother and sister-in-law, Henry and Lorraine Schleuter of Sun Lakes, Arizona; and several nieces and nephews.

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### Funding

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ding a 200-bed annex to Camp Butler, building a new 750-bed medium-security prison in Groveland, and constructing a new prison in Romulus for prisoners with chemical dependencies.

The diocese will have to provide chaplains for these facilities, but the state all too often does not include enough money for these positions when it opens new prisons, Sister Roland said. As a result, for example, the newly opened Cayuga Correctional Facility in Moravia has a deacon working 20 hours per week as part-time chaplain, and the newly opened Butler facility has a priest providing only 12 hours of chaplaincy each week.

"Does the state recognize its responsibility?" Sister Roland wondered.

For chaplains themselves, that responsibility lies with serving the inmates — which sometimes brings chaplains into conflict with prison administrators, Sister Conheady observed.

"Chaplains are in a strange position," Sister Conheady said. "We aren't working for the state — though we are paid by it — we are working for the inmates. That can be a source of tension."

Sister Conheady contended that chaplains are not highly regarded by the state. During the budget deliberations this spring, for example, the state considered phasing out a number of chaplaincy positions in order to help reduce a budget deficit. The positions weren't cut, but the discussion reveals "the attitude of the state that chaplains are not tolerated, and if it could be done any other way, we wouldn't be here," she said.

But, Sister Conheady continued, the

chaplains needed in prisons not only to meet the spiritual needs of the inmates, but also to provide a balancing influence for prison administrations. "We're sometimes the conscience of the administration," she said. "That's why I think we're needed."

In light of the the staffing shortage in prison chaplain offices, volunteers are especially important in prison ministry, Sister Conheady observed. "We wouldn't be able to do it without them," she said.

Sister Roland said that with new prisons being built, jail ministry will require even more volunteers in the future, and she applauded plans by the Knights of Columbus to become more involved with the effort.

"We are in a crunch," Sister Roland acknowledged. "We are dependent more and more on volunteers. If we didn't have the volunteers that we have, they would be very much missed."

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