

Feature

Man recalls newspaper's earlier days

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

In the second decade of this century, Bishop Thomas F. Hickey was head of the Diocese of Rochester.

Corpus Christi Parish was the outermost parish in the City of Rochester.

The Catholic Journal — forerunner of the *Catholic Courier* — published the news of the diocese, but was lay-owned and operated, and had not been recognized as the official diocesan newspaper.

Harold V. Deisenroth remembers those days well.

Born June 5, 1901, Deisenroth attended Corpus Christi School and, between 1912 and 1914, helped prepare the *Journal* for mailing to customers.

The paper's office was located on North Street, above the old Salvation Army offices, he recalled.

Deisenroth was a friend of Ed Ryan Jr., the son of Edward J. Ryan, one of the three men who started the *Journal* in 1889.

By 1912, co-founders Thomas H. Donovan and Willard A. Marakle had moved on, and the senior Ryan had assumed the duties of editor and publisher.

"Mr. Ryan was a kind and gentle man," Deisenroth said. "He was a moderate gentleman — well-liked in the neighborhood."

The same might be said about Deisenroth. Now 88, he appears much younger. He currently lives at the Town Gate East Home in Penfield, where he is in regular demand to play piano for church services and to entertain the other residents.

In his room, he also has a Singer sewing machine that he says is more than 100 years old. Deisenroth, who spent more than 45 years in the clothing industry, regu-



Babette G. Augustin-Staff photographer

Harold V. Deisenroth, now 88 years young, remembers the days between 1912 and 1914 when he helped prepare *The Catholic Journal* for mailing.

larly uses the machine to repair clothing for other residents. He also makes tote bags — more than 2,000 in the two years he's been a resident of the home.

But back in 1912, he was an 11-year-old student at Corpus Christi School along with Ed Ryan Jr. It was through his friend that Deisenroth became involved with the *Journal*.

"We used to go up there (the *Journal* office) to help mail the papers," Deisenroth said.

As the papers rolled off the press, Deisenroth and young Ryan would roll the

papers and glue on address labels. Then they put the addressed papers in two large mail sacks.

One of the paper's employees would rent a horse and cart from a nearby livery stable, and come drive back to the office. After the mail sacks were loaded on the cart, the driver would then take them to the post office on Central Avenue.

Deisenroth helped at the paper for two years. "(Ed) got paid for it," he noted. "I just went up for the fun of it."

In addition to helping at the paper, Deisenroth went over to the Ryan house regu-

larly to play, study and ride in the family's car.

In 1914, Deisenroth graduated from Corpus Christi School and entered the St. Joseph's Commercial School, part of St. Joseph's School on Franklin St. After finishing the year-long program, he began working in the clothing industry. First he was a bundler, then a cutter, and eventually a grader — using an original pattern to design patterns for suits of different sizes.

Deisenroth and young Ryan saw less of each other once they were finished with school. "I started to work, and I suppose we drifted into different channels," he said.

In 1923, Deisenroth married and moved to Penfield, where he and his wife, Dolores, were active members of St. Joseph's Parish. She passed away in 1987 after 64 years of marriage, and he moved into the home.

Although he lost contact with his friend, he has remained a regular reader of the paper. Even when helping to prepare the paper for mailing, Deisenroth always took a copy home and mailed copies to friends.

He is pleased by the direction the paper has taken in recent years. "Now I can see (the paper) is getting more news, things we never saw before," he said. "I like all the news, the page where they ask the teenagers what they think about things."

He is still a subscriber, and lends his copy of the paper to other Town Gate East residents when he is finished reading it.

"It goes from one to the other," he said. "I never see it again."



Babette G. Augustin-Staff photographer

Deisenroth demonstrates how he and Corpus Christi School classmate Ed Ryan Jr. — son of Edward J. Ryan, one of three men who founded the paper in 1889 — rolled and labeled copies of *The Catholic Journal* as they came off the presses.

Best Wishes
from

Canisius College
The Jesuit College
of Western New York

2001 Main Street
Buffalo, New York 14208
(716) 888-2210

**ILGIAUSIU
METU,
ILGIAUSIU!**

We, at St. George, thank you for a centenary of service to our Lithuanian community and wish you many, many long years of continuing success.

Justine Vaskys, O.F.M.
Pastor
Frank Mockevicius,
Parish Council President

Congratulations
from our
"family"
to yours

**CATHOLIC
FAMILY
CENTER**

50 CHESTNUT STREET
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK
14604-2359

546-7220

Congratulations
to the
Catholic Courier
from

Camp Stella Maris
3052 East Lake Rd.
Livonia, New York 14487

For information on our
summer camp program call:

716-346-2243