

Lutheran minister becomes a Catholic

By Tracy Early
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — The Rev. Richard John Neuhaus, a nationally prominent Lutheran minister and writer on issues of church and society, converted to Catholicism Sept. 8 at ceremonies in New York.

He was received into the church by Cardinal John J. O'Connor of New York in the chapel at the cardinal's residence behind St. Patrick's Cathedral.

Bishop William H. Lazareth of the Metropolitan New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America told Catholic News Service Sept. 9 that Neuhaus had submitted his resignation as a Lutheran pastor and that Bishop Lazareth would accept it the following day.

Bishop Lazareth said he did not think individual conversions helped bring church unity. But he said that he did not think bishops acted improperly in receiving individuals who wished to convert out of a "personal pilgrimage of faith."

"Cardinal O'Connor and I conferred about this personally, and it was with our full common understanding that it took place," he said.

Through a statement Bishop Lazareth said, "Lutherans and Roman Catholics have not yet arrived at their common goal of official agreement in the doctrine of the Gospel. Ecumenical gridlock results whenever this church consensus is replaced by personal conversions in either direc-

tion." However, he said, Neuhaus has been "a trustworthy pastor" for three decades "despite his ongoing personal polemics and ideological strife." He also said he wished Neuhaus "God's richest blessing in his pilgrimage of faith."

Originally a member of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Neuhaus became associated with a small "moderate" group, the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches that split from the Missouri Synod in 1976. In 1987 this group participated in the merger with two larger Lutheran bodies forming the present Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

In the 1960s, Neuhaus served a predominantly black parish in Brooklyn, and from there became nationally known as a leader in the anti-war group Clergy and Laity Concerned about Vietnam.

Subsequently, he became one of the more prominent neo-conservative voices of the religious community, and in his addresses and writings took a sharply polemical stance toward the liberalism of the mainline Protestant churches and bodies such as the National Council of Churches.

As a Lutheran clergyman, Neuhaus was a leader of the wing emphasizing "high church" and liturgical themes, and he has been closely associated with Catholics and the Catholic community in all his work addressing public issues.

In 1981 he gave the annual lecture sponsored by the *Jesuits of America* magazine in honor of the late Jesuit Father John Courtney Murray.

There, Neuhaus suggested that Catholics could take the lead in providing "moral definition of American life." The "abdication" of mainline Protestantism, he said, left the way open for others to lead in "reconstructing the public philosophy of post-secular America."

However, while suggesting the oppor-

tunity for Catholics, he also raised the question of "whether the intellectual and episcopal leadership of American Catholicism has not been weakened by its excessive zeal in 'Americanizing' itself in the image of mainline Protestantism."

In a 1987 book entitled *The Catholic Movement*, Neuhaus argued that the Catholic Church was uniquely equipped by its tradition, size and resources to provide the moral philosophy needed by American society.

When Neuhaus established an annual lecture under the auspices of his center, he named it for Erasmus, who worked to reform the church of the 16th century but refused to join Martin Luther in breaking with Rome. He later said he chose the name both because of his personal admiration and because Erasmus sought to bring polarized groups together, which was the aim of the center.

In 1988, Neuhaus enjoyed a sort of personal triumph in getting Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, prefect of the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, to give the Erasmus lecture and then participate in a two-day theological conference with Protestant, Orthodox and Catholic scholars.

Neuhaus called it "a smashing personal triumph for Cardinal Ratzinger," and scholars who participated in the conference confirmed the cardinal had wiped away the widespread public image of him as rigid and authoritarian.



AP/Wide World Photos
MOURNING VICTIM — Miami attorney Gary Marks embraced an unidentified man outside a Coral Gables funeral chapel Aug. 31, during a visitation for Gainesville murder victim Tracy Paules. Paules worked at Marks' law firm before enrolling in pre-law courses at the University of Florida.

Decline in donations has forced program cuts at Covenant House

By Tracy Early
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — The new president of Covenant House, the ministry to runaway youths founded by Franciscan Father Bruce Ritter, said a decline in donations has forced program cutbacks at the same time youngsters coming in need more services.

"Fewer kids are coming from stable situations," said Sister Mary Rose McGeady, a Daughter of Charity. "We get more and more kids with fewer pieces of a former life to connect with."

Interviewed Sept. 6 at her office, during her first week on the job, Sister McGeady said she was getting acquainted with the agency's various programs as well as the staff and the youths.

Covenant Houses accepts any young person seeking shelter who is willing to follow house rules. Then, Sister McGeady said,

the staff tries to re-establish family ties or place the youth in some long-term situation.

In the past, she said, young people who could not or would not return to their homes were often placed with a grandmother or uncle. But larger numbers today have no such alternative, she said, and those over 18 may not be accepted in any foster care or agency program.

"There seems to be less and less available out there," she said. "Even in our own Catholic sector, fewer agencies are able to work with the kind of kids we have, especially those 18 or 19."

Sister McGeady said she did not yet have final figures on income for the last fiscal year, ending June 30. But Covenant House officials earlier had announced the preliminary figure was \$88 million, similar to the previous year.

Continued on page 6

To subscribe to the
Catholic Courier
Call 328-4340

Solid

The best preparation for a solid career is a solid education. Delivering a solid education has been the mission of Canisius College since 1870.

Canisius, a solid investment, has been cited as one of the "Best Buys" academically and financially in the United States. As such, Canisius is featured in *Barrons 300 Best Buys In College Education* and *The Best Buys In College Education* by *New York Times* Editor Edward B. Fiske.

If you're looking for a solid liberal arts program that can launch your future, call us today.

Dial toll-free:
1-800-843-1517
In Western New York:
716/888-2200

Canisius College

2001 Main Street
Buffalo, New York 14208

The Jesuit College of Western New York

Leewards

Your Store For Crafts

Now that the kids are back in school ... it's time for you to get started on those fall and Christmas craft projects.

We're more excited about the 1990 Fall Crafting Season than ever before. The new craft items, new techniques, and exciting new ideas are showing up in our store daily.

To celebrate the start of the new fall season, we're offering a very special savings for you and a friend — NOW THRU SEPT. 22nd.

For You!

33% Off
the regular price of
Any 1 Item
in the Store!

One Coupon per customer. Not effective with sale items or any other discount offer. Coupon good Sept. 13 thru Sept. 22, 1990.

CLIP OUT THESE COUPONS TODAY AND HURRY IN TO SAVE!

For a Friend!

33% Off
the regular price of
Any 1 Item
in the Store!

One Coupon per customer. Not effective with sale items or any other discount offer. Coupon good Sept. 13 thru Sept. 22, 1990.

ROCHESTER Henrietta Plaza, 1100 Jefferson Rd. 272-9310