



Alexander Chaparro



### Clinic closed, but abortions performed at other site

Members of the Catholic Pro-life Planning Committee, including three priests, protested at and performed an anti-abortion "rescue" in Rochester's Highland Hospital on Saturday morning, Oct. 13. Nineteen rescuers sat silently in clinic space leased to a doctors' group that performs abortions, but hospital officials later said the doctors had performed all of their scheduled abortions at another site in the city that day. A handful of pro-choice counter-protesters showed up outside the hospital (right). No arrests were made.

## Merton conference scheduled for November

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Thomas Merton, the famed Trappist monk of Kentucky's Abbey of Gethsemani, will be the subject of an all-day conference at Nazareth College Saturday, Nov. 3.

Sponsored by the Thomas Merton Society of Rochester, the conference will feature four speakers, including Sister Mary Luke Tobin, SL. A resident of Colorado, Sister Tobin was a personal friend of Merton and one of the few women invited to be an observer at the sessions of the Second Vatican Council.

Also on the list of speakers is Monsignor William H. Shannon, Nazareth College professor emeritus of religious studies and chaplain at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse. A renowned Merton scholar who is currently editing a series of the monk's letters, Monsignor Shannon will speak on the topic "Merton and Racism."

Monsignor Shannon noted that the conference is intended to stimulate interest in the second meeting of the International Thomas Merton Society, which is scheduled for June of 1991 at Nazareth College. The worldwide Merton group currently has 7,000 to 8,000 members, Monsignor Shannon said, and wants to double its

membership by next June.

The Merton society's first meeting took place in Kentucky last year, and Monsignor Shannon commented that at least a dozen or more groups belong to the international body. In addition, a number of other groups call themselves Merton societies but are not formally affiliated with the international Merton society, he said.

The priest said his talk at the November conference will explore Merton's involvement in racial issues.

"One of the things that (was) very important to (Merton) on the racial issue is that he felt very much that the racial problem was not only a problem of freeing the blacks, but also freeing the whites, and until freedom was active for black people, no one was really free," Monsignor Shannon observed.

Monsignor Shannon pointed out that the late monk was an avid reader of black authors, particularly James Baldwin. Merton was also intrigued by the notion that some blacks didn't want to integrate into white society because it had caused such harm to black culture.

"(Merton) was really very concerned about the issue of race as an issue of justice," Monsignor Shannon concluded.

The chaplain is overseeing the general editing of a five-volume series of Merton's

letters being published by Farrar-Straus-Giroux. This year saw publication of the series' third volume, *The School of Charity Letters*, which was edited by Brother Patrick Hart, whom Monsignor Shannon described in the preface to the collection as a "disciple" of Merton.

In 1985, Monsignor Shannon edited the series' first volume, entitled *The Hidden Ground of Love*. The second volume of letters, *The Road to Joy*, edited by Robert E. Dagg, came out in 1989.

Born in 1915, Merton converted to Catholicism while attending Columbia University in the late 1930s. He entered the Trappist monastery in 1941, and was later ordained under the name Father Louis. He spent his next 27 years at Gethsemani writing more than 60 books, many of them dealing with questions of peace, non-violence, social issues, and Eastern religions as seen through the eyes of a man struggling to live out his commitment to monasticism.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Registration for the Merton conference is \$12 for the workshops only, and \$22 for the workshops and a dinner that evening. The conference will run from 9:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. For information, contact the Thomas Merton Society, Nazareth College, 4245 East Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14610.

## TGA

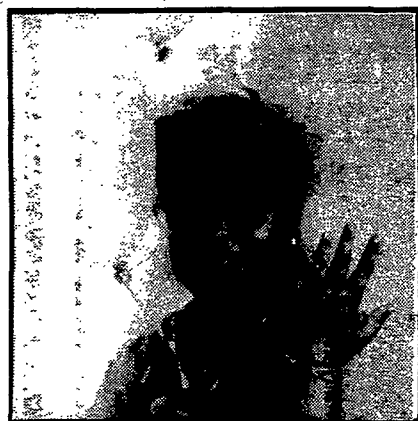
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taking place the weekends of Oct. 20-21 and 27-28, and Nov. 3-4. Parishes will conduct their own follow-up efforts until Thanksgiving, after which the diocesan development office will take over the task.

In a limited follow-up campaign last year, the development office attempted to contact 14,000 such non-contributors, garnering about 4,000 pledges totaling \$130,000. The goal this year will be to contact 30,000 people, Seeberg said.

Although the diocese is gradually weaning itself from total reliance on the TGA, Seeberg said the annual appeal will remain an important component of diocesan fundraising efforts. The appeal also enables the diocesan development staff to make contact with potential donors to capital campaigns and individuals who may be sources of endowments and bequests.

"We're trying to constantly broaden the base of support, to surface people who are capable of giving at higher levels so that we can start a capital campaign," Seeberg said. "The annual giving program fuels this broader effort."



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