Marketing has distorted Halloween

By Barbara Ann Homick Staff writer

ROCHESTER — It's 5 p.m. The sun is starting to sink. The wind is playing with the front-yard leaves. And neighborhood children are turning into frightful creatures: before their parents' eyes.

Probably one of the most exciting evenings of the year for children, Halloween is celebrated the night before All Saints Day, a holy day of obligation for Roman Catholics.

Halloween has several possible origins. some based on myth, others on superstition. According to Tom Tripiciano, an alcoholism and drug-abuse counselor for the Livingston County Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, the Halloween tradition may have originated with the Druid festival Samhaine.

Tripiciano, who often speaks about the occult to local groups, said the pagans believed that the sun god, Chrom, went down to the world of the dead on October 31. With the sun underground, the world was covered in darkness, and evil spirits took control. Chrom needed human blood to return to life, so the pagans sacrificed babies and virgins. Because of this prevalent evil, people stayed inside on this night

The most commonly cited basis for Halloween is the notion that evil spirits roam the earth for a "last fling" on the

Artwork courtesy of WUHF-TV31, Rochester.

DIRECTOR

Catholic Social Services of Broome County, New York is seeking candidates for its Director. Candidates must possess strong clinical and management skills to direct and administer a budget of approximately \$800,000 covering 21 full time and 5 part time employees involved in 3 major Human Service Programs. This position requires a minimum of a Masters Degree in social work/human services, areas such as personnel, marketing, clinical and management. Candidates must possess a strong commitment and familiarity to Catholic Social teaching. Must be Mr. Joseph Slavik able to relate to various funding sources. In-

Catholic Charities 232 Main Street Binghamton, N.Y.

13905 (607) 729-9166

Deadline for inquiries - November 8, 1990 - Catholic Social Services is a division of Catholic Charities of Broome County, an equal opportunity employer.



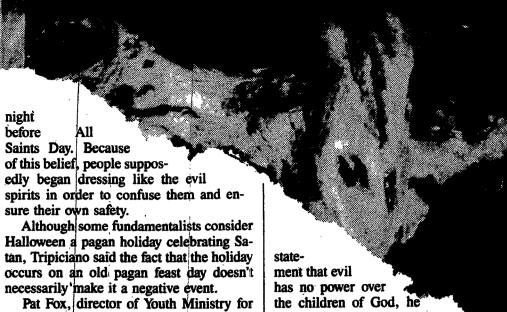
quiries directed to:

Open House

A warm welcome to all 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students, your parents and friends to visit DeSales Regional High School

> Sunday, November 4th 2:00-4:00pm DeSales Regional High School

90 Pulteney Street • Geneva, NY 14456 • (315) 789-5111



the Rochester diocese, agreed, but said it's time to get Halloween back to its roots. Commercialization and marketing have distorted the holiday's original meaning, he

In the past, Fox noted, people used to dress up as their favorite saints on All Hallows Eve. Recent marketing trends, encourage more sinister however, costumes.

As a result, some young people are confused about the desire to dress up as evil creatures. Does adopting an evil facade create a desire to delve into the dark side?

Not necessarily, said Fox. Although some youth's may have an unnatural fixation with evil - which should be evident to parents and friends — most kids who favor ghoulish costumes do so to compete with their friends for the honor of being the goriest on the night of frights.

"I don't think the kids are calling the costume manufacturers and asking them to make scarier costumes or more fake blood," said the youth director. "But once it's out there, they want it."

Horror movies add to children's confusion about evil, Fox said. Such movies as Nightmare on Elm Street, Friday the 13th and Halloween glamorize the evil of serial killers, he said, adding that these movies often mix sexuality with gore, since the slashers usually go after scantily clad

"These movies cloud sexuality with reality, adding a sexual double meaning to violence," he remarked.

So why do young people enjoy dressing up as Freddy Krueger and Jason? Much of it is peer pressure, said Fox.

"It starts off as media pressure, and then kids aren't cool if they don't buy in to it," he

Tripiciano said that for Christians, Halloween is ideally a mockery of evil. Children dress up as evil beings because it's a

Tripiciano agreed with Fox that horror confuses children. In earlier films of the genre, good always won out over evil, he noted, whereas today's horror flicks often portray evil as indestructible through such undying characters as Freddy and

Even without the overtones of evil, Halloween marketing can give kids the wrong ideas, the two experts agreed. Riding on the yearlong popularity of the Teenage Mutant Ninia Turtles movie, TV show, action figures and games, marketers are taking full advantage of turtle-frenzy this Halloween.

"With the Turtles, we are teaching our kids that the only way to fight violence and terror is with violence and terror. Tripiciano said.

So what can parents and children do to create a healthy balance of fun and fright at Halloween?

Tripiciano suggested emphasizing the two-day holiday - Halloween night and All Saints Day. If kids realize that dressing up as monsters is a harmless way of mocking their power, they will be less inclined to dwell on the holiday's darker aspects, he

"We can't stop kids from experiencing things, and we can't pretend evil doesn't exist," Tripiciano observed. "But we must have a sense of caution about what myths we let our children play out.".

He said it is also important for parents to stay attuned to their children's interests with evil to distinguish between innocent curiosity and morbid fascination.

Placing an emphasis on the darkness before the dawn is the best way to achieve a healthy balance, according to Tripiciano.

"It is OK for young people to dress up if they know they are mocking - rather than celebrating — evil. In that way, Halloween can be an enriching experience for our vouth." he said.

HOUSE OF GUITARS

Most New Album and Tape Releases Just \$5.98 & \$6.98 CD's From \$3.98 to \$11.98 Each

We received 12 correct entries identifying Chicago Transit Authority as the original name of the group Chicago.



The winner was Josh Culhane of Martha Brown School, Fairport.

TRIVIA

This week's question:

in 1964 Roy Orbinson released the song Oh, Pretty Woman. In 1982 the group Van Halen re-released it. Whose version achieved the highest position on the Billboard Top 40?

Name:	
Address:	
City:	State:
Zip Code:	
School:	

Rules:

Each week, the Catholic Courier, in conjunction with the House of Guitars will feature a Music Trivia contest. All you have to do to enter is answer the question, fill in your name and address and the school you attend (if applicable), cut out the coupon and send it in to the Catholic Courier. If more than one correct entry is received, a drawing will be held and one winning entry will be drawn.

If yours is the winning entry, you will be mailed a coupon for a free album or tape of your choice redeemable at the House of Guitars, 645.

All entries must be received within seven days of this paper's issue date. Winning names and answers will be printed the week following

The Catholic Courier **Music Trivia** 1150 Buffalo Rd. Rochester, NY 14624