

House marks half-century of hands-on Christianity

Continued from page 1

Peter Maurin, a devout French Catholic from a peasant background. Day's life was changed through her contact with this social activist, who advocated non-violence, anarchy and personal responsibility for one's fellow men and women.

Father Ehmann, now living in retirement at Rochester's Holy Apostles Church, noted that Maurin's "personalist" philosophy sought social change through a grass-roots revolution. As Maurin saw it, "people wouldn't live with unjust structures if they were imbued with the Christian spirit," Father Ehmann said.

At Maurin's suggestion, Day established *Catholic Worker* in 1933. A penny newspaper devoted to the struggles of the unemployed and forgotten, it combined lively accounts of Depression-era poverty with an emphasis on church social teachings.

It was this spirit of socially aware Catholicism that attracted such young Catholics as Art Farren and his wife, Mary Bigham Farren, to attend Day's speech in Rochester.

"I grew up in the Great Depression," said Farren, who now lives in Canandaigua. "The Great Depression was a real depression — and that was a real reason (to listen to Day.)"

Guided by Father Ehmann and such other diocesan priests as Father George C. Vogt, Farren and other young Catholics formed study groups to explore Catholic social teaching on labor and justice. Eventually, this group started its own "House of Hospitality" modeled on the soup kitchens and shelters run by Catholic Workers in New York.

After operating the ministry at various locations in the 1930s, the Rochester workers moved into the three-story building on South Avenue in 1941. The woman who owned the building sold it to the workers for \$3,000 — a price the new owners took 27 years to pay back.



Farren remembered having difficulty finding volunteers until the house became well-known. Occasionally, he recalled with a laugh, he even engaged drunken guests to help him prepare the daily meals.

Farren noted that many of those who came to the house were hungry for more than the meals served by the house's staff.

"At least half the people who came to the daily meal came not because they were hungry, but because they needed someone to listen to them," Farren said.

Harry Murray, an assistant sociology professor at Nazareth College of Rochester, echoed Farren's thoughts in his recently published book, *Do Not Neglect Hospitality — The Catholic Worker and the Homeless* (1991, Temple University Press). To conduct research for the book, Murray lived at St. Joseph's during the summer of 1982. He continues to volunteer there regularly and is active in anti-war protests.

"One time, a young black man came in really drunk and started several fights," Murray wrote. "We finally dragged him off someone and hustled him out the door."

Rather than retreating inside, John (a staff member) stayed outside with him, stroking his back and saying, 'You're a good man, Dwayne. Don't forget that — you're a good man.'

"This supportive, affirming approach to even the most troublesome of guests seemed to affect the whole atmosphere of the house ... (which was) far less violent (than other Catholic Worker houses)," Murray continued.

Although ending all forms of social violence is a goal of St. Joseph's House, the Rochester facility has sometimes emphasized its concern for the poor over efforts to attack the causes of militarism.

Art Farren's son, Patrick, served as house director in the late 1960s, and revitalized St. Joseph's social-justice efforts during the Vietnam War. The house became a haven for young local men who met to discuss draft resistance, Patrick said, noting that he was convicted of refusing conscription in 1969.

Following that conviction, a judge ordered Patrick Farren to leave Rochester to work in a Boston mental hospital. He retained fond memories of how the house's guests came out to support him.

"Dozens of the gentlemen came and went to the trial," he said.

Mark Scibilia-Carver of Trumansburg also brought a concern for social activism to the house. A staff member from 1980-85, Carver wrote an article for the

house newsletter, charging that the Seneca Army Depot in Romulus stored nuclear weapons. The government has refused either to confirm or deny the allegation.

Carver's article inspired investigative articles by *City* newspaper and Gannett Rochester Newspapers, sparking several anti-nuclear demonstrations, sit-ins and acts of civil disobedience at the depot. The protests continue today.

He and his wife, Linda, now operate Jubilee House, a Catholic Worker men's shelter in Trumansburg.

Carver and other St. Joseph's veterans speak highly of the Catholic Worker movement's efforts to change the world and the people in it.

"I think they come as close as any group can to pulling out Jesus' social teachings," he said.

Mary Rose McCarthy, a current staff member and a coordinator of a work cooperative that employs some of St. Joseph's guests, echoed Carver's comments.

"I think the bottom line is none of this happens without personal sacrifice," she said. "I think the Catholic Worker provides encouragement for that kind of personal conviction. It's provided a place where you can live out these ideals."

EDITORS' NOTE: St. Joseph's is currently looking for staff members and volunteers. For information, call 716/232-3262.

Obituaries

Sr. Rose Gonzaga Newton, SSJ; served as teacher and principal

ROCHESTER — Sister Rose Gonzaga Newton, SSJ, who served as a teacher and principal at several diocesan schools, died Friday, Aug. 16, 1991, at the Sisters of St. Joseph Convent Infirmary. She was 86 years old.

A native of Corning, Sister Rose Gonzaga moved to Rochester as a young girl. She graduated from Nazareth Academy in 1925 before entering the Sisters of St. Joseph from Corpus Christi Parish later that year. Sister Rose Gonzaga earned her teaching certificate from Nazareth Normal School in 1933, her bachelor's degree in education from Nazareth College in 1945, and her master's degree in music from DePaul University, Chicago, in 1956.

Sister Rose Gonzaga taught at several diocesan schools early in her teaching career. She helped open St. John the Evangelist School in Spencerport in 1927. She later went on to teach at St. Monica's and St. Ambrose schools, both in Rochester.

In 1949, Sister Rose Gonzaga enrolled at DePaul University, where she earned her degree in music. After she returned to Rochester, she became music supervisor for

her congregation.

Sister Rose Gonzaga served as principal of Holy Apostles School from 1957 to 1963, before returning to teaching at St. Paul's School in Oswego. She later taught at St. Theodore's School and Nazareth Hall, both in Rochester.

In 1972, Sister Rose Gonzaga moved to the SSJ motherhouse to assist the administrative staff. Due to failing health, she moved to the Sisters of St. Joseph Convent Infirmary in 1982.

A Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Rose Gonzaga was celebrated in the motherhouse chapel on Aug. 19. Father Thomas Rosica, CSB, was the principal celebrant. He was assisted by Fathers John Norris, Peter Bayer and Charles Ryan. Monsignor William Shannon and Father Paul English, CSB, were also present for the Mass.

In addition to her fellow Sisters of St. Joseph, Sister Newton is survived by several cousins.

Donations in memory of Sister Rose Gonzaga Newton can be made to the Sisters of St. Joseph, 4095 East Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14610.

Katherine Dooley, St. Monica's parishioner

Katherine M. Dooley, a parishioner at St. Monica's Church since 1916, died on Friday, Aug. 9, 1991, at St. Ann's Home, 1500 Portland Ave. She was 98 years old.

Mrs. Dooley's son, Father Bernard Dooley, SJ, of Washington, D.C., celebrated a Mass of Christian Burial on Aug. 12 at St. Monica's Church. The Mass was concelebrated by her nephew, Father Emmett Halloran, pastor of St. Patrick's in Macedon; Father Robert Werth, pastor of St. Bridget's; and Father Robert Gaudio, pastor of St. Monica's.

A native of Macedon, Mrs. Dooley moved to Rochester after marrying her husband, the late John P. Dooley, who died in 1958. She was also a former resident of St. Mark's Terrace in Penn Yan.

Her daughter, Virginia O'Connor, of

Chili, said Mrs. Dooley was a daily communicant of St. Monica's Church, where she served as a longtime member of the parish Altar and Rosary Society.

"She was ... one of the pillars of the church," O'Connor said.

Mrs. Dooley was predeceased by a son, Justin, and a daughter, Ann. Her brother, the late Father John L. Maxwell, served as pastor of St. Vincent DePaul Church in Churchville from 1957-71.

In addition to her daughter, son and nephew, Mrs. Dooley is survived by another daughter, Mrs. Robert (Betty) Boucher of Penn Yan; another son, Hugh Dooley of Medina, Ohio; a sister, Sister Teresa of Jesus, OCD, of Rochester; 18 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

— Rob Cullivan

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