

Bishop doubts validity of claimed messages

DULUTH, Minn. (CNS) — Bishop Roger L. Schwietz of Duluth told priests and other representatives of the Catholic Church not to visit the site where a Wisconsin man claims the Virgin Mary told him to construct a shrine.

In a March 27 statement, Bishop Schwietz said he seriously doubts the divine origin of messages Steve Marino of Green Bay, Wis., claims to have been receiving from Mary.

According to Marino, Mary told him in a series of oral messages to build a 1,000-seat chapel complex in Kettle River, Minn., a farming area west of Duluth, where she said she would appear soon. He has published and distributed 100,000 copies of the alleged messages from Mary in five pamphlets. He has said Mary wants the chapel built there by 1995.

Bishop Schwietz said without elaborating that his doubts were based on evidence presented to him.

"I am deeply concerned about the

potential harm that can be caused to those who might give credence to these messages and events and/or commit personal resources to specific projects related to them," he said.

He added that he meant to imply no judgment about possible motives of the individuals involved.

The St. Paul (Minn.) *Pioneer Press* daily newspaper reported that a spate of real estate purchases in the Kettle River area fueled suspicions among townspeople about the motives of Marino and his friend, Earl Nett, who publishes the pamphlets.

Since October, Nett has purchased a house, 40 acres of land and a vacant store in the name of the Messages from Mary/Mary's Guest House Corp.

But Father William Fournier of the Diocese of Duluth told Catholic News Service March 30 that Marino and Nett have been "most cooperative" with Bishop Schwietz and the diocesan staff.

"It's not an antagonistic situation at all," he said.

Father Fournier said Marino assured Bishop Schwietz before the statement was released that he would abide by the bishops' decisions in the matter.

In view of his doubts and concerns, Bishop Schwietz said, he thought it "imprudent and presumptuous" for anyone to buy property; to support or promote the reproduction and distribution of messages; to support, promote or contribute funds for a chapel; or to make pilgrimages to the Kettle River area.

His statement prohibited priests, deacons and religious from visiting the site or accompanying other groups there "lest their presence and actions be taken as evidence of some kind of official approval by the church."

He also turned down Marino's request for permission to build a chapel and forbade liturgical celebrations in the fields around Kettle River or in buildings other than Catholic

churches.

According to Father Fournier, Marino and Nett will meet with diocesan representatives to discuss what to do with money that has already been raised for the chapel.

Bishop Robert J. Banks of Green Bay, where Marino lives, issued a statement saying he shares Bishop Schwietz's doubts about the supernatural nature of the messages.

A year ago, Marino started a popular Family Prayer Night that meets weekly at St. Agnes Parish in Green Bay. The evening includes either a Mass or Communion service, recitation of the rosary and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Hundreds of participants come from around the diocese and elsewhere.

Marino has established similar prayer nights elsewhere in the diocese and around the world, and is devoting part of his time to continuing that work.

Catholic Courier (USPS 135-580)

Vol. 103 No. 26 April 2, 1992
Published weekly except the first Thursday in January.
Subscription rates: single copy, 75¢; one-year subscription in U.S., \$19.50; Canada and foreign \$19.50 plus postage.
Offices: 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624, 716/328-4340.
Second-class postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Catholic Courier, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.



Hosts an EASTER OPEN HOUSE

Saturday & Sunday
April 4 & 5 and April 11 & 12
10am-6pm
Unique assortment of Easter Gifts In-Store Specials, Refreshments
1901 Rochester Rd. (Rt. 332)
Canandaigua
396-2021

EASTER SUNDAY BRUNCH

11:30A.M.-3:30P.M.

Champagne, Dessert and Beverage Included \$14.95 per person plus tax and gratuity

\$13.95 per person without champagne
Children 6-12 \$6.50
Children 5 & under are FREE

Free Parking in the Midtown Garage

For Reservations Call 546-2490



1400 Midtown Tower

OPPORTUNITY'S KNOCKING



TAKE ADVANTAGE OF A NEW LOW RATE ON OUR HOME EQUITY LINE OF CREDIT.

Now's the time to tap the equity in your home and get a low rate of only 6.0% APR guaranteed through January 4, 1993. After that date, the rate will change to Prime* plus 2%. In addition, your total costs will be just \$50 for lines up to \$50,000, including application and closing costs.

You can use this line for college, home remodeling, even to consolidate other debts such as credit card expenditures at a lower interest rate.

6.00%
APR
INTRODUCTORY RATE
GUARANTEED THROUGH JANUARY 4, 1993

Best of all, your interest may be 100% tax deductible. Consult your tax advisor for full details.

Applying has never been easier. Stop by any Central Trust branch, or call us and we'll come right to your home or office to take your application.

But don't delay. Let us welcome you now to one of the best deals around.

Oh, Yes you can!

8.50%
APR
REGULAR RATE
BASED ON PRIME PLUS 2% IF RATE WERE FIGURED AS OF FEBRUARY 3, 1992

*The Prime Rate as published in the Money Rate Section of the *Wall Street Journal*. With this special offer, the interest rate will be 6.0% APR through January 4, 1993. As of January 5, 1993, the APR will be Prime plus 2%. This rate may vary, but will not exceed 16% APR. This special offer may be withdrawn at any time. Property insurance required. Call any Central Trust office for more information.

Central Trust

Member FDIC

Equal Housing Lender