

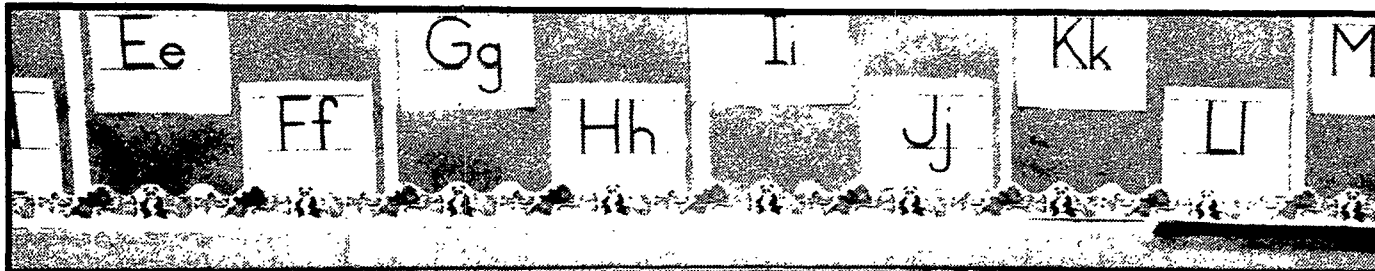


CATHOLIC COURIER

DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER, NY

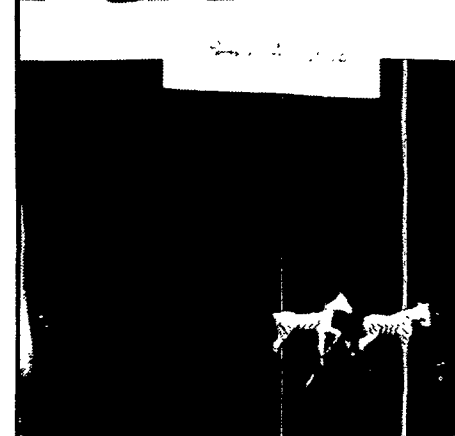
Vol. 103 No. 45 Thursday, August 13, 1992 75¢ 32 pages/2 sections

Educational
Electives
supplement
pull-out
after
page 8



Pioneers forged trail to security by consolidating

Elyssa Maltzan cleans the board on the last day of classes at the former St. James School in 1990. The Rochester school was closed as part of reorganization in the Northeast Quadrant.



Peter Aloiso presents his project during a fair at Christ the King.

Although Catholic-school consolidation is still a relatively new concept in the Rochester area, reorganization has been a reality — and a necessity — in Elmira for the last 20 years.

"Our school board (in the early 1970s) could look ahead, and I think that's why we're still here today," said Ann O'Connor, who has taught in Elmira's Catholic elementary schools since 1968.

In 1972, the Southern Tier became the first region of the Diocese of Rochester to implement school consolidation. A second consolidation wave occurred in 1986, and this year

— under a new plan in which the diocese will oversee administration of all schools — Elmira is once again experiencing change.

O'Connor's husband, Skilly, was a member of the school board that decided in favor of the initial consolidation in 1971. In addition to closing St. Anthony's School, the plan mandated the transition of St. Patrick's School from K-8 to a junior high. Four other schools — Our Lady of Lourdes (pre-K-6), Ss. Peter and Paul (K-6), St. Casimir's (pre-K-6) and St. Mary's (K-6) — were designated as regional schools.

Ss. Peter and Paul closed in 1976, leaving nine parishes in Elmira and Elmira Heights to feed a total of four schools.

Ten years later, another consolidation came about with the advent of the Holy Family Catholic School System. After St. Patrick's School closed in 1986, an alignment emerged that is still in place today: Holy Family Primary School (pre-K-3), housed at St. Mary's; Holy Family Intermediate School (4-6), located at Our Lady of Lourdes; and Holy Family Junior High (7-8), at St. Casimir's.

Dedication to Catholic education has enabled the schools to endure in spite of declining enrollment and difficult economic times, said Connie Dunn, principal of Holy Family Primary School, 421 Fulton St.

Continued on page 14



Brandin Kelly completes his work on the last day of classes at the former St. James School.



Floriana Leone, principal at Christ the King School, says goodbye to a preschooler at the end of the school day in 1991.

Story by Mike Latona, Staff Writer