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Active as ever

This month the *Catholic Courier's* Senior Lifestyles section (pages 10-13) highlights the ongoing dedication of retired nurse Rosa Wims and the accomplishments of mystery writer Edward Hoch.



Officer Randy Holmes (top left) stands with Pac-Tac and Combat volunteer Sister Mary Dismas, RSM, outside the Lewis Street Center with neighborhood children Jabrel Scott (from left), Kenarvis Hurst and Koree Hurst.

ROB CULLIVAN, STAFF WRITER
ROCHESTER, NY

It seems many religious and secular figures concerned about inner-city violence can cite their own horror stories about its effects.

At the House of Mercy on Central Park, Lavon Horn's eyes teared up when she recalled her late son, Robert Jr., who was shot dead along with a friend at the age of 19 as he and his murderers argued over a \$10 debt.

Father Laurence Tracy, administrator of St. Michael's Church, 869 N. Clinton Ave., reported that three of his parishioners have died violently over the last couple of years.

During a Feb. 10 seminar on community violence at Hillside Children Center, 1337 E. Main St., Audrey Smith remembered hearing how gang members confronted her son on Genesee Street and gunned him down before he was to join the family for a Labor Day picnic in 1990.

"From that day forward I have had chest pains," Smith said, adding that she founded Family and Friends of Murdered Children as a support group for people like herself. "It's the type of group you don't like to see grow," she commented.

At the same seminar — sponsored by Rochester Area Family Life Association — State Supreme Court Justice Charles Siragusa noted that when he drives around the city, its streets often remind him where various murder victims lived. On their behalf, he sought justice when he served as a prosecutor in the Monroe County District Attorney's office.

Concluding the Feb. 10 seminar, Juliet Anderson, president of Metropolitan Funeral Chapels, noted that even

FIGHTING VIOLENCE

Churches, agencies envision city streets free from scourge



Citizens turned in nearly 300 firearms as part of the Rochester gun buy-back program, which ended Feb. 12. About 50 guns, some of which are displayed here, were turned in at Catholic churches.

PHOTOS BY S. JOHN WILKIN, PHOTO INTERN

her employees — who are trained to deal with the anguish that overcomes the deceased's loved ones — have grown tired of preparing the bodies of violently killed teenagers for funerals.

"It's really getting to everybody," she said.

Anderson said she wants those who indulge in violence "to realize this is a real world, not a TV world."

Like Anderson, many commentators complained that violence in the real world does not resemble the fantasy images of violence viewers see in movies and television shows. It is difficult, they said, to teach children death is final when actors die on one show only to rise up and seize the day on another channel.

But the world many urban residents live in today sometimes *does* resemble the television pictures they see of far-off wars and of countries torn by terrorism.

The world that a large number of city residents experience each day often includes the following elements, which are usually worse in neighborhoods that lack employment opportunities for its young males.

Drive-by shootings.
Guns going off in the night.
Armed hold-ups.
Drug dealers battling over "turf."
And, of course, the domestic beatings that cause children — and adults — to sometimes beat each other in the street.

Beatings and fights sometimes also reflect anger at poverty, racism and the myriad obstacles to a good life that most people endure peacefully, but that some are unable to withstand without striking out.

The year 1991 alone yielded 69 mur-

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