

**N.Y. priest will speak on Vatican II church**

**IRONDEQUOIT** — Father Michael J. Wrenn, special consultant for religious education to the archbishop of New York, Cardinal John J. O'Connor, will speak on "The Church Since Vatican II — Setting the Record Straight," at St. Thomas The Apostle School Hall, 4536 St. Paul Blvd., Feb. 24 and 25.

At 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 24, Father Wrenn will speak on "Constitution for an American Church: An Analysis in Light of Vatican II." Then, on Saturday, Feb. 25, he will speak at 10:30 a.m. on "The Church's Moral Teaching Today in Light of the Holy Father's Veritatis Splendor," and at 1 p.m. on "Negative Reactions to the New Catechism — Why?"

Father Wrenn is author of "Catechisms and Controversies: Religious Education in the Post-Conciliar Years," and serves on the Executive Board of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars. He also serves on the Board of Notre Dame Catechetical Institute, and also the Board of Christendom College. In 1991, he was named Prelate of Honor to Pope John Paul II, and in 1993, a Chevalier of the Republic of France for his contribution to French culture.

Suggested donation is \$4 per session or \$10 for all three sessions. Registration for the Saturday sessions begins at 10 a.m. On Saturday, participants may bring a bag lunch or order lunch during registration. Free coffee and tea will be offered.

Free baby-sitting also may be arranged by calling Liz Moffitt at 716/323-2236.

For information, call the Irenaeus Study Center at 342-4670, or David Higbee at 342-1901.

**Mission collection slated for March 4-5 weekend**

The 1995 Black and Indian/Home Mission Collection has been scheduled for the weekend of March 4-5, in conjunction with the first Sunday in Lent.

Last year, the collection provided \$6.4 million dollars for evangelization in the United States to Black and Native American communities in some 140 dioceses. However, requests to the fund totaled \$16 million, and the collection has had a \$200,000 drop-off since 1992. As a result, grants to dioceses have decreased.

**Tax advice available at Wayland Fire Hall**

**WAYLAND** — Confidential income-tax counseling for Steuben County senior citizens is available at no charge.

This program will take place at the Wayland Fire Hall on East Naples Street from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Wednesday, March 1 and Wednesday, April 5. Specialists will answer tax questions, check over tax returns and/or help prepare returns.

**Home for aged issues call for more volunteers**

**ROCHESTER** — St. Ann's Home, 1500 Portland Ave., needs volunteers for clerical positions and other tasks. For information, call the volunteer office at 716/342-1700, ext. 289.

**Delegation brings Rochester to Rome**

By Father Robert F. McNamara  
Guest contributor

When Pope John Paul II beatified Brother Grimoaldo Santamaria on Jan. 29, naturally there were bus loads of pilgrims on hand from his Italian birthplace, Pontecorvo, and from Ceccano, the town where he died.

But no delegation from outside Rome received a more cordial welcome than local Rochesterians who represented in large part the American branch of the Santamaria family. For them it was "Rochester Day."

Courier readers already know the story of Brother Grimoaldo of the Purification (1883-1902). Although this Passionist seminarian, born Ferdinando Santamaria, was called to heaven at only 19, he had already achieved heroic holiness — not by spectacular deeds but simply by loving God and neighbor "with all his strength."

The beatification took place in St. Peter's. By 9:30 a.m. the immense Roman basilica was full to capacity. One woman and three men were to be declared "blessed" — the last step before being proclaimed saints. Large paintings of each hung from the high balconies surrounding the principal altar, but they were to remain veiled until the moment of the beatification rite.

The entrance procession began from the rear of the church. Preceded by bishops, cardinals, and the priests who would concelebrate Mass with him, the Holy Father walked down the long main aisle. Although his pace was deliberate, he was otherwise vigorous. Applause greeted him in a wave as he moved forward blessing the crowd. Circling the papal altar, he mounted its steps, kissed the altar table, and went to the throne on the large platform facing the nave.

The Mass was that of the Sunday. It differed from the typical majestic papal Mass only in the brief rite of beatification.

After the initial penitential prayers, the pope resumed his chair.

Four bishops now approached him to request that he enter into the calendar of the "blessed" these four venerable candidates associated with their dioceses.

The archbishop of Xalapa, Mexico, spoke for the heroic Rafael Guizar Valencia (1878-1938) bishop of Vera Cruz. The cardinal-archbishop of Maples spoke for the zealous Franciscan missionary, Modestino of Jesus and Mary (1802-1854). The archbishop of Zaragoza, Spain, spoke for the Spanish humanitarian and foundress, Mother Genoveva Torres Morales (1870-1956). Finally, the bishop of Frosinone spoke for our humble, cheerful Passionist student, Grimoaldo Santamaria. Brief biographies of the four were then read to the audience.

Pope John Paul answered the petitions, not with a solemn decree as in a canonization, but with a simple formulary of consent, in which he assigned a liturgical feast day to each of the "beati." For Blessed Grimoaldo it was the date of his death — Nov. 18.

As the pope finished his official declaration, the four tapestries were unveiled, revealing the portraits of the new "blesseds." A vast murmur of wonderment rippled through the congregation, followed by thunderous applause.

The Holy Father wove the four "blesseds" into his homily. After that the liturgy proceeded as usual. Representatives of the various pilgrim groups had been chosen earlier for particular roles: to bring up the offertory gifts, to receive Communion personally from the pope, or to attend a small select audience with him right after the ceremony.

The Passionist authorities, gratefully aware of what Vincenza Santamaria Panella of Rochester had done to promote the cause of her holy brother, showed the Rochester embassy every consideration. They obtained for them special seats at the beatification and the Monday audience, and they saw to it that several Rochesterians were given special privileges.

Grimoaldo's niece, Ida Turan of Webster, not only sat next to young Nicola Romano — whom her uncle had miraculously saved from death — but she also served as a bearer of the offertory gifts, along with her nephew, Dr. Robert Agostinelli. Among those who received Communion from the Holy Father were Iris Schlegel Ioannone, daughter of Grimoaldo's other surviving niece, Helene Panella Schlegel, and Schlegel's nephew, Richard Agostinelli of Los Angeles. Helene Schlegel and Rochesterian Rose Di Salvo Collins, a longtime devotee of Grimoaldo, were guests at a small papal audience held right after Mass in the northeast corner of the basilica. (Father Foster P. Rogers, pastor of Auburn's St. Alphonsus Church, also attended this audience.)

Three more kinsfolk of Blessed Grimoaldo were introduced to John Paul at Monday's general audience in Paul VI Hall: Gregory Schlegel, Robert Schlegel and John B. Agostinelli.

Our two diocesan seminarians studying at the North American College in Rome also took part in the beatification. William McGrath of Palmyra received Communion from the



Passionist Father Marcellino Di Benedetto introduces Pope John Paul II to Helene Schlegel, Blessed Grimoaldo's niece.



The Rochester delegation at the shrine of the Blessed Grimoaldo, Ceccano, Italy.

pope, and Fairport's Eric Phillips read the second (English) reading of the Mass. Most honored of all was Father John T. Reif, pastor of Webster's St. Rita's Church. He was one of the two dozen priests and bishops who concelebrated the Eucharist with the Holy Father.

The Rochesterians also attended other services conducted by the Passionist Fathers in Rome, in Pontecorvo, and in Ceccano (where Grimoaldo's remains are to be permanently enshrined). Most of the pilgrims were back in Rochester by Feb. 1. The trip had been hectic but unforgettable. It had brought the Santamaria family closer together in affection and peace. Yet, as Ida Turan reminded her kin, proud though they might be of their saint, they must not monopolize him. Like his mother, Cecilia, and his sister, Vincenzina, they must share him with others.

To what providential role will the new blessed be called? He is already becoming popular among Italian youths as one of theirs. Will this result in more vocations to the priesthood and the religious life?

Bishop Angelo Cella of Grimoaldo's home diocese suggests that he may come to be a role model for the army of everyday Catholic missionaries — men, women and children — whom the pope is calling on to re-evangelize our post-Christian society in the third millennium.

Missionaries, as St. Paul said, must be "all things to all men." Brief though his career, Santamaria had lived many lives. Mature child and childlike adult. Happy member of both a human and a monastic family. Always a learner and always a teacher. Strict ascetic and high contemplative, yes; but also skilled rope-maker and gardener. Who knows? Grimoaldo's work as an apostolic missionary may be just beginning.

Later this year the Rochester diocese will solemnly and appropriately celebrate Blessed Grimoaldo's beatification. After all, it was here that American devotion to this "honorary Rochesterian" got its start.

Father McNamara, diocesan archivist, lives at St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Irondequoit.



The above photo shows the tapestry unveiled during the Blessed Grimoaldo's beatification.