

# Catholic Courier

DIocese OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

VOL. 106 NO. 37

THURSDAY, June 15, 1995

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12 PAGES

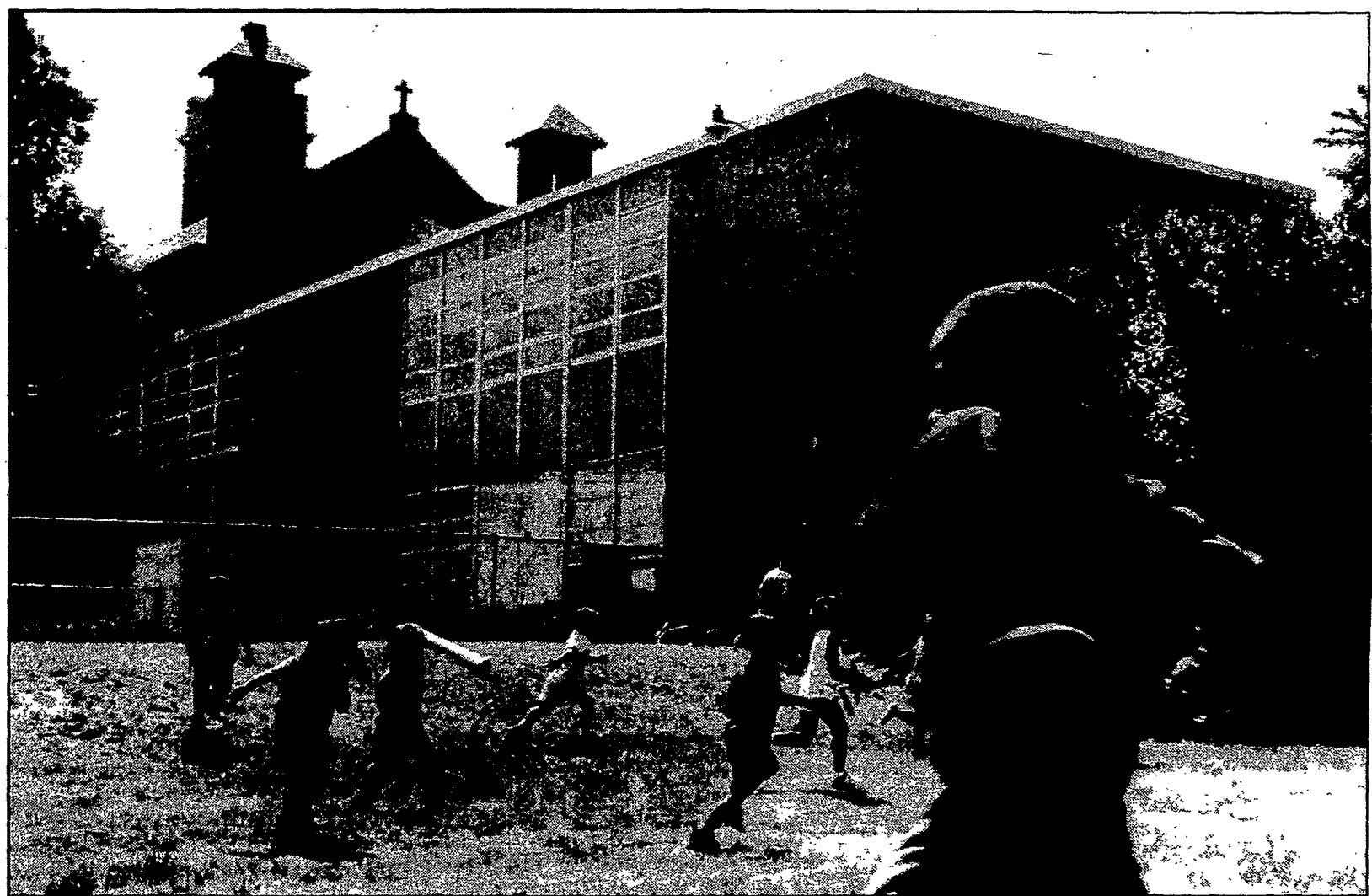
## Changing roles



Valerie Clark instructs her first-grade class at The Children's School of Rochester, housed in the former St. Anne's School building, 1600 Mt. Hope Ave. in Rochester. Citing a shortage in space, the school soon plans to move out of the St. Anne's facility into Rochester's School of the Arts, 45 Prince St.

PHOTOS BY  
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STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



Children play outside the former Our Lady of Perpetual Help School, 1069 Joseph Ave., Rochester. A portion of the school building is now home to the Oregon-Leopold Day Care Center, a United Way-affiliated agency serving children located primarily in Monroe County's northeast quadrant.

## Former schools still echo with children's voices

Looking for a place to run a day-care center, a career-training program, or even a public school? If so, a former Catholic school building may be just right for any of these plans.

Since 1989, several such buildings have become available with the closing, moving or consolidation of a number of schools within the Diocese of Rochester's Catholic school system.

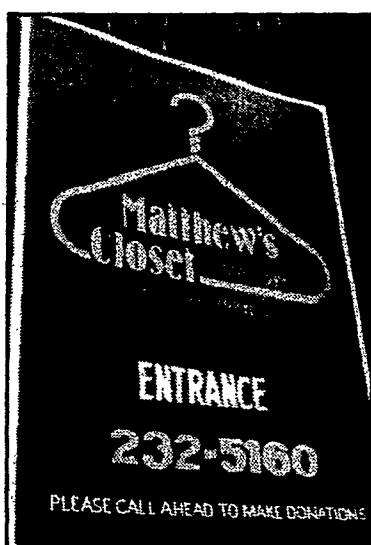
As the following examples will illustrate, the closing of a Catholic school does not necessarily mark the end of an educational era at affected parishes. Many times these developments can begin fruitful relationships between parishes and tenants in need of school buildings for educational uses.

For the most part, these former school buildings continue to play a vital role in the lives of parishes on whose grounds they once educated young minds. Religious-education classes, bingo, parish council meetings and church dinners continue to take place in these buildings, which also have become home to a number of non-parish programs.

Some parishes, such as St. Theodore's in Gates, have even located parish ministry centers in these buildings, occupying space not used by other groups or, as in the case of St. Theodore's, All Saints Junior High.

But most parishes seem to have worked out a shared-space arrangement with other groups that use the building. Many parishes host functions on weekends or evenings in the same rooms used by their tenants in the daytime.

The closing of Most Precious Blood School's pre-kindergarten-



The former Corpus Christi School on Rochester's Main Street now contains Matthew's Closet and a parish day-care center.

through-second-grade program in Monroe County's northwest quadrant this month is the latest in more than a dozen Catholic school closings that have taken place throughout the diocese since 1989. Father William E. Graf, pastor of Most Precious Blood Parish, noted that his parish is still negotiating with a possible tenant for the school building, but whoever rents the edifice will certainly "preserve its mission," the pastor said.

That means the building will likely house a program that either cares for or educates children and/or adults in one fashion or another.

Indeed, most of the buildings that have lost schools since 1989 have been rented to a variety of educational programs, according to pastors throughout the diocese who were interviewed for this story.

Some of the old Catholic school buildings have become schools again, housing either a public institution or a new Catholic educational program.

The Greece Central School District's purchase of the building that once housed Cardinal Mooney High School is arguably the most well-known example of such a transition. Bought from Cardinal Mooney's operating order, the Brothers of the Holy Cross, after it closed in June, 1989, the former Cardinal Mooney High School currently houses Greece Apollo Middle School.

Three former Rochester Catholic schools — whose missions ended in 1989 — also house public schools like the former Cardinal Mooney building.

Our Lady of Good Counsel/Genesis Catholic Junior High, which

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STORY BY

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