

on the MOVE

Story by Mike Latona

Keeping your

Like any college freshman, Dave Chen was challenged in many ways by his new environment.

He was surprised, however, that his Catholic faith would also be quickly put to the test.

In his first weeks at the University of Rochester, Dave attended Bible-study sessions with a campus group known as Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. This nondenominational organization exists on several hundred campuses across the country, and is committed to teaching and modeling a lifestyle of evangelism — a zealous effort to spread Christianity.

After a time, though, Dave began to realize that his Catholicism was being lost in the shuffle.

"All of a sudden, people began making jokes about the pope," Dave said.

Some members, he added, warned of eternal damnation if you did not dedicate your life to Christ.

"They would judge you — 'this one's saved, that one's not saved.' Being not confident of my faith, I was disturbed," recalled Dave, 21, who is now in his junior year.

Near the end of his first month, Dave sought out Catholic campus ministers at the University of Rochester's Newman Community. Although he said he still respects Inter-Varsity for its enthusiasm, he decided not to continue with the group.

Dave is now a member of the Newman

Community's parish pastoral council. He said he is thankful for the experience with Inter-Varsity because he no longer takes his Catholic faith for granted.

"A total smugness about one's faith is not good," David said. "Once you're smug, God doesn't work as much in your life. You almost have to live on the edge."

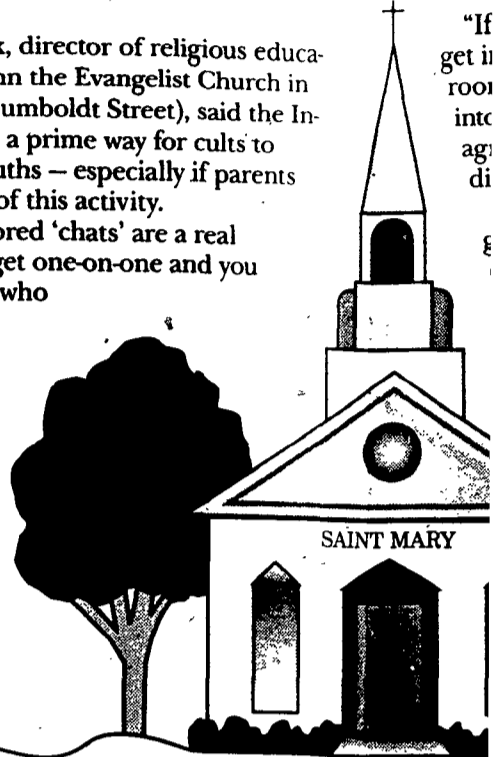
Campus evangelical organizations are just one of a wide range of influences that might challenge a young Catholic's beliefs. And, more and more, such groups and individuals are finding their way right into your home — via the Internet.

Several web sites are devoted to religious groups, ranging from Judaism to Buddhism and, yes, expounding on various forms of Christianity including Catholicism. However, thousands of web sites also promote Satanism, vampires and witchcraft. "Chat lines" are also available so that Internet

users can exchange their views on these subjects.

Patrick Fox, director of religious education at St. John the Evangelist Church in Rochester (Humboldt Street), said the Internet can be a prime way for cults to influence youths — especially if parents aren't aware of this activity.

"Unmonitored 'chats' are a real danger. You get one-on-one and you have no idea who the other person is," said Fox, who regularly conducts seminars and workshops for teens on cult awareness.



Upcoming Supplements

ARMCHAIR COLLEGE FAIR

Publication Date: Feb. 27 - Deadline: Feb. 13

(Bonus distribution to high school juniors & seniors)

Our Armchair College Fair supplement provides an up-to-date review of higher education for readers young and old — from the high school junior just starting to consider college options and the senior who's been postponing her decision, to the empty-nesters looking for ways to broaden their horizons.

RETIREMENT

Publication Date: March 20 - Deadline: March 6

The approach of the "golden years" is of special interest to Courier subscribers. This special supplement will offer retirement information from the unique perspective provided by Catholic teaching and values. Areas to be covered include financial planning and money management, volunteering as a way of keeping active, travel and health-related issues for seniors.

MILESTONES

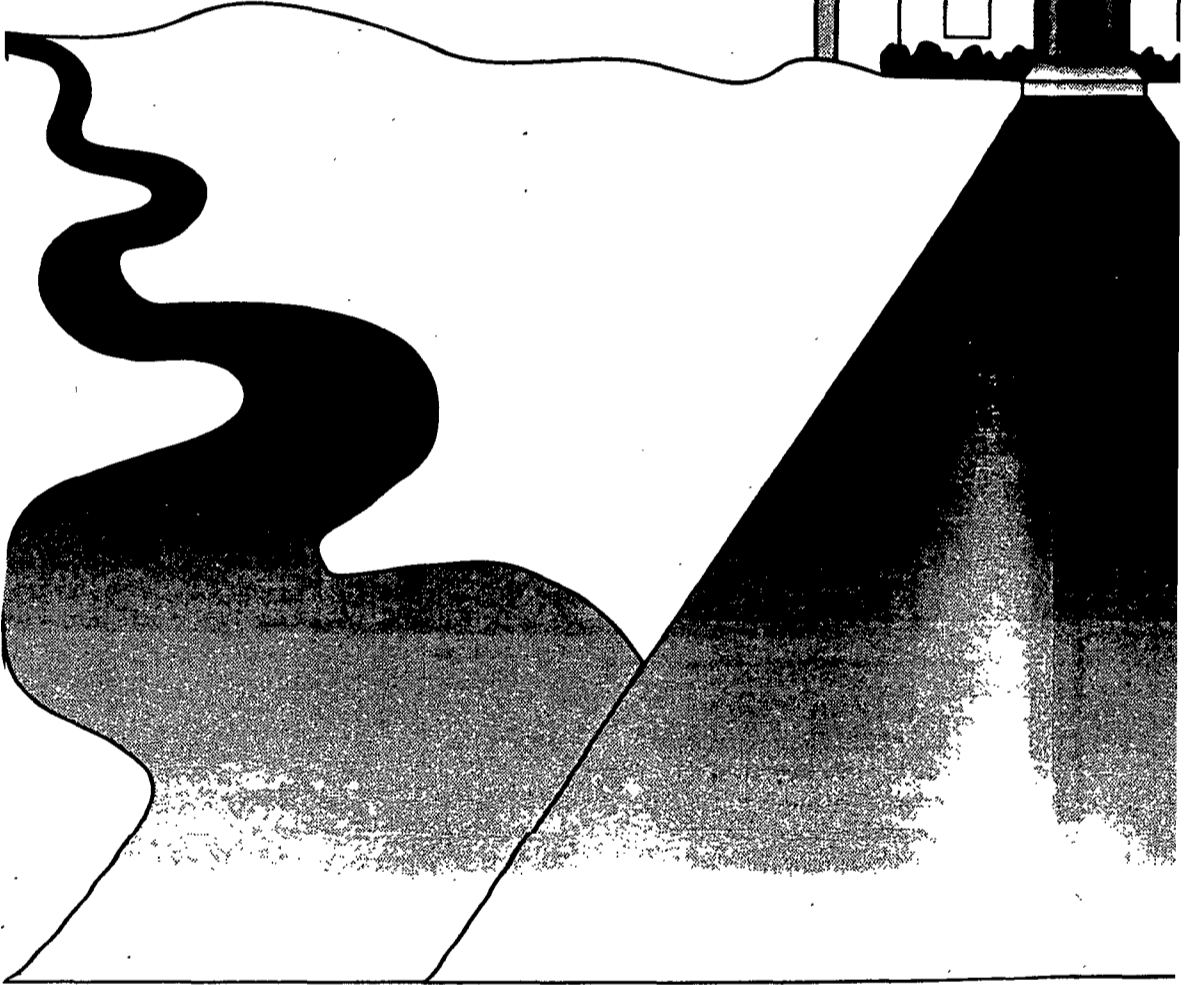
Publication Date: April 17 - Deadline: April 3

This third-annual supplement will honor the significant achievements of priests and religious celebrating jubilees of their vocations, and of those who are retiring from active ministry. It will provide biographical sketches of those in the diocese celebrating such milestones, and will focus on their lives as models for others considering vocations.

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