

## Be polite but hang up, say experts on scams

For older adults who find it hard to hang up on possible con artists, LIFE SPAN and the Advocacy Committee on Older Adult Issues have advice.

"Many older people are lonely and trusting, and polite," said Sister Gratia L'Esperance, RSM, of the Mercy Center with the Aging and advocacy committee. "They find it hard to say no."

Advice from the committee and LIFESPAN includes watching out for contractors who "happen to be in the neighborhood" selling repairs.

Calls that change your local or long-distance carriers without your consent, possibly as part of a sweepstakes offer.

Telephone marketers — generally the longer the call, the likelier the sell. Pitches for hearing aids.

Any unsolicited marketer or sweepstakes offer.

In addition, LIFESPAN suggests:

Be polite but firm and assertive; say "I am not interested, thank you," and hang up or close the door.

Require two or three references from any prospective seller, get a second opinion or estimate; have the seller come back when a relative or friend can be with you for support.

Before buying hearing aids, call Al Sigl Center for references, 716/271-0680; or Self-Help for Hard of Hearing (SHHH), 716/383-8425.

Call your Fair Business Council to ask if complaints have been filed about a contract or to register a complaint.

Call the Attorney General's Consumer Complaint Department at 716/327-3240 to report consumer fraud or receive information.

Call Thelma Nemeroff at LIFESPAN, 716/454-3224, x 151, for talks to groups about senior scams.

# Officer worker set to leave 'special job'

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

LIVONIA — A short message on her computer screen said a good deal about the personal touch that Margaret "Mergie" Enright has brought to her job.

Enright, 60, is leaving her position as bookkeeper/secretary at St. Joseph's/St. William's churches in Livonia and Conesus this month. Even though her replacement had not been hired, the dedicated Enright was leaving a computer note July 1 for that person on how to pay the lawn maintenance man. She ended the message by commenting, "He's a good kid."

In fact, Enright said, there are lots of good people in her parish community — and that's what has made her work so rewarding.

"It's a special job, that's for sure," she said. "The people are usually wonderful."

Enright began working for St. Joseph's/St. William in 1978 as a secretary. She added bookkeeping responsibilities in 1983, and has worked full-time in that dual capacity ever since.

During that time, she said, the parish has undergone substantial growth, with several young families moving into the Livingston County parish. She said approximately 750 families are registered at the two churches — 650 at St. Joseph's and 100 at St. William's — compared to a combined total of 300 families when her job began.

There has also been a sharp rise of people flocking to the Conesus Lake area during the summer months, she added.

"We would grow by 300 people at weekend Masses," she said.

Enright said that the expansion of Interstate Highway 390 from Rochester to Corning in the early 1980s made for easier access to Livonia and Conesus.

"That had a lot to do with the growth. I

don't know how we got by without it now," she remarked.

Enright added that her job also expanded in 1989 when St. Joseph's/St. William acquired St. Michael's Cemetery, which had been the property of the former St. Michael's Church in Livonia Center.

Over the years, Enright noted, she has been the initial contact for a wide variety of inquiries coming into the parish. Requests, she said, can range from people seeking money or food, to cemetery records information for genealogy studies.

Among the more humorous calls, Enright said, are salespeople who have asked to speak to the wives of St. Joseph's/St. William priests.

"We always got the salespeople asking if Mrs. Schifferli was there, or Mrs. Trott or Mrs. Collins. And Father Schifferli's name was always really massacred. It would be 'Schifferelli' or something like that," Enright said of the longtime pastor, Father Jerome Schifferli, who lives in retirement at St. Joseph's/St. William's.

Another of her favorites, she said, was the query, "What time is your midnight Mass?" However, she pointed out, "That's not such an unusual question now because midnight Mass does start earlier."

Enright said that her listening skills have come in handy — not only when people complain, but also when they need a shoulder to lean on.

"I've always liked to be of service. You have people come in who have problems; it's a lot of listening," she said.

Enright said that new priests, as well, have turned to her for help, especially when needing information about parishioners.

"I know a lot of phone numbers," she explained. "You get to know a lot of people."

However, Enright said, the past couple

of years have proven to be quite challenging. Father William Trott, the St. Joseph/St. William pastor since 1989, died suddenly in October 1996. Then his replacement, Father Robert Collins, who came to the parish in December 1996, died in February of this year.

"It was hard, going through all that we did. But people came forward and helped us out. The people are great," Enright said.

Even so, Enright admitted, the tragedies have factored into her decision to step down at this time.

"We've had a lot happening in the parish. I feel burned out — which I don't like to say, but it's true," Enright remarked. "I was tired."

Enright plans to leave her position at the end of July. She will remain a parishioner at St. Joseph/St. William, where she has belonged ever since she and her husband, Bob, were newlyweds 37 years ago.

Enright said she's been busy on the banquet circuit lately. She attended two receptions last month that honored retiring parish office workers in the region, and she was also recognized during and after the 5 p.m. Mass at St. Joseph's on June 27.

"Christian, woman, wife, mother, teacher, secretary, bookkeeper, welcomer, Eucharistic Minister, friend and confidant to many, she let her light shine before many, giving praise to God," Father Schifferli wrote in a June 27-28 parish bulletin tribute to Enright.

Enright, on the other hand, seemed a bit embarrassed by all the hoopla.

"I can't believe it, how much (the parish community) did for me," she said.

She said that although it wasn't easy, she did manage to control her emotions at the June 27 festivities.

"My grandkids came, and I didn't want to be blubbing in front of them," she explained with a laugh.

## Thoughts to Consider



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Funeral Director

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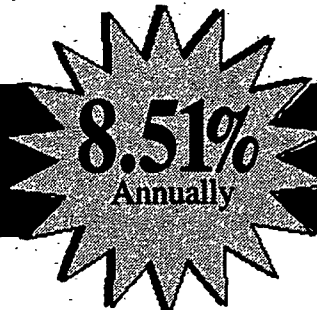
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