

THE SACRED HEART BEAT

OF SACRED HEART CHURCH, MASSENA, NY

September 2007

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

ATONEMENT SISTER DIRECTS FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM

Sister Edward Marie Tesiero, SA, a Franciscan Sister of the Atonement, accepted the position of Faith Formation Director in the Parish of Sacred Heart, Massena, NY, and began her ministry here on August 1, 2007.

Sister arrived at Sacred Heart after completing an administrative assignment within her religious community. Over the years, several Sisters of the Atonement (Graymoor) have worked in catechetics in many parishes in the Ogdensburg Diocese and some of us number them as our own Religious Education teachers.

Sr. Edward says she is eager to begin her new ministry with our children and youth and to work and worship with the parishioners of Sacred Heart.



She already anticipates some changes in the format and scheduling of some of our Faith Formation Programs. "It is very exciting to see the number of activities and the amount of participation taking place among the parishioners of Sacred Heart. For a new person just arriving it is both breath-taking and spirit-giving."

Originally from Amsterdam, NY, Sister has served in several states throughout her years in catechetical ministry: from migrant camps in central California to lumber camps in mid-state Maine and from small seacoast towns in Oregon to college campuses in the north east. Having seen the beauty of the St. Lawrence River she says she expects upstate Northern New York will surely bring her one more joyful experience of being in God's country, among God's people, sharing God's blessings.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

LIFE FOR WADHAMS CONTINUES

Change is the law of life for institutions and buildings as well as for each of us. And life at Wadhams Hall seems to be holding its own in these recent years.

Built in 1963 under Bishop James Navagh, it served as a seminary for candidates to the priesthood from the dioceses of Ogdensburg, Buffalo, Syracuse and Cornwall, Ont. It also provided religious degree programs for laity from Canada and the U.S.

Today Wadhams serves many needs. Education, the original purpose for the building, continues to be important but in new and varied ways. Catholic Charities which coordinates its services through the Diocese is housed here. The building provides convenient classroom and guest services for Charities workshops and meetings. Both the Diaconate Program for training ordained Deacons and the Lay Ministry Program for parish ministers are steady customers using Wadhams facilities and services.

Retreats and spiritual workshops sponsored by a variety of religious groups are regularly on the calendar. From the end of July thru the end of November this year, 15 week and/or weekend retreats are scheduled. In fact, you may be surprised at the retreat groups of quilters, knitters, scrapbookers and other crafters who have found out about Wadhams. They come from Northern New York, Canada, and New England to stay from one to four days. Why? Jeff Ward, facilities operator, says they like the food, the overnight possibilities and space to spread out.

SUNY Potsdam which rents classrooms for their masters programs has an on-going agreement with Wadhams. They meet as many as three days a week.

Weekend gatherings which enable enriching community/faith experiences for the teens have been happening annually because of the dorms, chapel and food service. The grounds and large gym make Wadhams perfect for soccer and basketball sports camps.

FACILITIES

With 74 rooms and 8 suites, several eating areas on the ground floor next to the kitchen, the building can accommodate many overnights. Add 8 classrooms, several lounges, a gym, weight room, adjacent river property and a beautiful chapel. Flexibility explains the variety of programs using Wadhams.

STAFF

Seeing to all of this is Jeffrey Ward.



He came to Wadhams Hall in October of 1996 at Msgr. Robert Aucoin's invitation. From 1978 to 1996 he had been account and grants officer at Mater Dei College. Here Jeff wears many hats. His responsibilities include program planning, building/ property management as well as financial officer. He has access to all kinds of technology at Wadhams. "Whether at Wadhams Hall, home, or even on vacation, I have access to whatever is going on or coming up at Wadhams," he said. No, he is not often required to make beds nor cook. There are a number part-time people employed at Wadhams.

Denis O'Grady helps in food service and on grounds jobs.



Housekeeping duties are taken care of by Pam Bowen.

What does Jeff see for the future of Wadhams Hall? More permanent programs would help offset the fixed costs of the place, he says. Planning is ongoing to expand the retreat/spiritual resource opportunities. And, perhaps, some far-seeing donor would contribute to an elevator for the 3-floor building. (This is the reporter's earnest hope, anyway.)

ON THE BEAT

PUTTING A LID ON BULLYING

*Get out of my way, dork!
Give me that ball!
You can't be on our team. Your're too____(fat, chicken, stupid, you fill in the blanks.)*

When does playground banter becoming bullying? How much bullying goes on at Trinity? Why do children treat each other that way?

These are questions Joan Rufa and her Trinity faculty mulled over for the past year, resulting in a new program. After noticing an increase in pushing and shoving, an increase in students in tears, the Trinity teachers decided to do something about this unwanted, unchristian behavior on their campus. They worked in teams to come up with a prevention and intervention program



Bill Whitaker is full-time maintenance and grounds man.

Marie Tiernan plans and cooks meals served.



that they termed GROW—Give Respect, Offer Wisdom.

The **Prevention** segment of the program will be offered in class and on campus, where students will be made aware of their behavior and the effect it has on others. Formal instruction will be dove-tailed with class work and discussions with their instructors. The team has prepared a “Students Bill of Rights” that begins: “I have the right to be treated as a child of God.” There will be posters throughout the classrooms and halls that remind students of these basic rights.

Intervention includes “Lunch With the Leaders” whereby Mrs. Rufa will share lunch with a small group of students so they can talk freely, one-on-one. This will be a time to discuss relationships, behaviors and possible responses to unwanted behavior. What can we do? How can we do it differently? Students who persist in unwanted behavior may be assigned after school classes to discuss their actions and consequences.

The GROW program takes bullies by the horn by addressing issues, and offering alternatives. Kudos to Mrs. Rufa and her faculty for taking action on a problem that exists in all our society and giving our children the tools to handle unwanted situations.

LIFE ISN'T EASY IN ECUADOR!

Some people may still have archaic images of missionaries as pious, idealistic men and women traipsing through the jungle with Bible in hand, preaching fire and brimstone and going all out to convert uneducated aborigines to Christianity.

But most of us know that is not an accurate picture of today's missionary, and it certainly is worlds away from the impression one gets after speaking to Sr. Cindy Sullivan, a Massena native serving with the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Quito, Ecuador.

Sr. Cindy returned home this summer to visit family. Her parents are Mary and Bert Sullivan. She traveled around the Diocese telling parishioners of her experiences and asking for their help.

While religion certainly is an important focus of Sr. Cindy and others serving at the Working Boys Center, the scope of their work is wide-ranging and addresses all parts of everyday life for the impoverished in Quito.

“Our mission is total family development,” Sr. Cindy pointed out during a recent visit at Sacred Heart Rectory. “We attack poverty as a spiritual problem not merely an

economic matter. We see the Church as a living Church and we are agents of change.” She traveled around the Diocese telling parishioners of her experiences and asking for their help.

For over 30 years, Sr. Cindy has been working with and caring for the poorest of the poor in Quito, Ecuador's capital city of three million people. She first traveled to the South American city as a volunteer with the Peace Corp in 1974. In 1978, she decided to join the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and took her vows in Ecuador. She has been there since and says that is probably where she will spend the rest of her days.

“In addition to what we do at our two Centers, we do house visits all over the city. We serve over 400 families. The way our people live, the conditions they deal with, would be worse than the way animals live here in the States,” according to Sr. Cindy.

Literature from the Center and its parent organization, Family Unity International, Inc., points out that since 1964 the Working Boys Center “creates, develops and strengthens Christian moral values in all of its members. It aims to do this with programs of help and formation which break the cycle of extreme poverty in which they live. The WBC is not a charity program. It is a commitment to changes for all who choose to make them.”

The Center, which is operated by the Jesuits and BVM, has two locations that serve breakfast, lunch and dinner each day. They offer hot water and bath facilities which the families do not have at home. The Educational Center provides vocational training in 11 different trades such as industrial mechanics, auto mechanics, metal carpentry, furniture carpentry, sewing, plumbing, cosmetology, baking, sales and marketing.

“It's not a handout,” Sr. Cindy is quick to point out. “We stress education and work. Our people go to school Monday through Saturday. They learn a trade, how to budget their money and take care of themselves and others. If they come for a bath or to eat, they must also receive some training and help out.”

“One Sunday a month, each family helps another family build their house. Once a week, everybody works at the mission. They're learning to save their money and spend it wisely. We are helping someone have a better life through education and preparation,” Sr. Cindy said.

Life isn't easy in Ecuador. The country has had eight different types of government in the last 10 years, she said, and it is number one in corruption in South America.

While one could get discouraged looking at the abject poverty and instability in the country, she says her work is actually uplifting. "It is fun and exciting because the work is so positive."

Happy parents of missionary Sr. Cindy Sullivan make the most of an extended visit.



Perhaps most significant is the obvious impact the Center has on its clients. "Ninety percent still work at something they learned at the Center," she said. "This is not a little soup kitchen. We have helped more than 6,000 families over the 43 years. We have 250 people on our staff, four religious and 16-18 volunteers who live and work with us in community."

Many Volunteers come from the United States. They are asked to make a one-year commitment but may not stay longer than two years. According to Sr. Cindy they are students from places like Lemoyne College or Canisius College, married people, retirees, student groups and senior citizens.

Anyone interested in learning more about volunteering or offering financial support to the Working Boys Center can visit the website:

www.workingboyscenter.org

Contributions may be sent to Family Unity International, Inc., 12750 Stephen Place, Elm Grove, WI 53122.

FR. BERNIE REPORTS FOR DUTY!

"I was thrilled when Bishop Cunningham at our Lake Placid priests' gathering this spring gave me the news of my return to Sacred Heart. It was a few days before my ordination.

When I spent a month at St. Mary/St. Joseph's in 2005, and was here for summer 2006 as a deacon with Fr. Don and Fr. Kevin, I hoped that those positive experiences would prepare me to return as a priest.

Now, as we complete the summer and school starts, it is really sinking in— this is not a summer job, it is a real and full ministry of service to Christ and those he loves with all

his heart. As I continue my local immersion, picking up a few names at a time, I thank you for your affectionate welcome and ask for your prayers.

FOCUS ON FAITH

As St. Paul writes, Christ's message is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow, but how it is "packaged" changes, however. The circumstances of how we live and relate to one another are what causes the Church to alter the delivery and focus of God's message. Liturgical language is an example.

From the time of Jesus and the Apostles the universal language was Greek and Latin along with local languages and dialects. This is what Christian communities used at their gatherings (which more and more included Gentile members). Latin was the language of the Roman Empire (the language which everybody spoke and understood) for those first several hundred years.

In the thousand or more years that followed, the Roman Empire expanded into Europe. With this expansion new social and political structures arose with landowners and tenants, nobles and serfs. Regulations were devised dictating where people lived, who they associated with, who was educated, even often what they wore. The structure of the Church was organized in like manner. The Latin language continued to function as the language of government, education, and also in the Church. However, since Latin was not understood by ordinary people, their presence at liturgical services seemed unimportant and the focus of the liturgy turned to the celebrant only.

This is why with Vatican Council II the revised Rites of Liturgy decreed that the liturgical language be that of the people of the particular country. It allowed the participants, laity as well as clergy, to receive God's Word as they had in the first Christian communities and be able to understand, reflect on, and live more conscious of God's Word in their lives. Likewise the early images of the Church, the Communion of Saints and the O.T. image of the People of God were more evident to ordinary people in attendance at liturgies.

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