

# Midwest Bits and Pieces

AUGUST 1, 1990

## Teaching Students What Is Right

An article in the Wall Street Journal for April 6, 1990, says that educators in public schools are not willing to teach moral values in schools today. The article has a number of points which should be of interest to many of our Brothers. Brother Robert Lavelle sent the article to us.

"A growing number of parents.... are pushing educators to cram moral lessons into the already crowded school day. But school districts are finding that many teachers are opposed to the task and play hooky when assigned to teach such classes.

"About 84% of public school parents want moral values taught in school, and 68% want educators to develop strict standards of 'right and wrong', according to a Gallup Poll. Parental pressure has recently spurred some state legislatures and education departments to urge public schools to teach students values such as honesty, respect, and patriotism....

"But polls also show that most teachers object to the concept of morality education on philosophical or practical grounds; many fear that such programs will stir up controversy in classrooms where diverse student bodies already cause plenty of headaches....

"Concern over values among parents and educators is reinforced by statistical measures. A recent Louis Harris & Associates Inc. survey conducted for the Girls Scouts found that 47% of students would cheat on an exam; in another survey, 66% said they would lie to achieve a business objective.

"To decide what to teach, state education boards generally round up diverse professionals who arrive at an acceptable list of values to be taught. Respect, responsibility, compassion, honesty and civic participation usually head the list.

"Districts often buy a prepackaged values curriculum, such as one from the Thomas Jefferson Center, a Pasadena, Calif., nonprofit group that promises to build character in children in just 10 minutes a day. Sales this year have jumped fourfold.

"But organized programs have failed to score with many teachers. Some teachers at training sessions openly say that, on principle, they will refuse to teach values courses.

"After a decades-long drive for teachers to be value-neutral, some say they can't adjust to openly teaching right and wrong. McGuffey Readers, with their strong moral messages, have long been shunned for value-neutral texts and teacher-training courses.

"Other hard--pressed instructors resist moral education as an added burden. In Chicago, teachers complain that it takes time away from English and math classes on which they are evaluated.

"Teachers also fear sparking lawsuits or parental wrath. Some Portland, Maine, parents have already protested when the teaching of tolerance raised the issue of homophobia. Howard County, Md., plans to promote 'respect for life' as one of 18 approved values, but teachers expect tricky questions about abortion and the death penalty. Some teachers in San Marcos, Calif., fear they will foster family discord by lifting the moral standards of students above those of their parents.

"Despite misgivings about teaching moral values, some teachers are warming to the task.....Some districts find that grading teachers for imparting values stimulates interest."

## William Schu

Brother William Schu is leaving the Seton Thrift Shop and will be living in California next year. In response to a letter to Bishop O'Connell of Knoxville, informing him of the move, bishop O'Connell wrote: "I certainly wish you well, Bill, in the future and am extraordinarily and profoundly grateful to you for your presence among us and for the zealous manner in which you have worked in the Harriman area.....I have the highest admiration for the work of the Holy Cross Brothers (and Sisters, too) and I am surely sorry to see you leave."

## Formation Program In East Africa

The continuing growth of the formation program in East Africa and the collaborative efforts undertaken between the Indiana Province and the Eastern Province of Brothers as well as between the Districts of East Africa and West Africa have resulted in the creation of new programs, formation staffs and houses. This takes place less than ten years after the initial efforts began as a result of district chapter discussion and legislation.

Holy Cross Novitiate at Lake Saka, Uganda, will profess three brothers and three seminarians in July. The new group will be composed of two brothers and five seminarians from the District of East Africa and four brothers from the District of West Africa. Father George Lucas (E) is director of novices assisted by Brother Joseph Tsiquaye (MW - West Africa). Father John Gerber (IP) will be in residence.

### THANKS

Brother Robert Siegel and I wish to thank all of you who have sent contributions to the HOLY CROSS BROTHERS and BITS AND PIECES this past year. We are in need of your continued support to supply us with news items. Should any of you have persons not on our mailing list whom you wish to receive copies of either of these, please send their names and addresses to us and we will add them to the list.

## **Chester Caster**

Brother Chester Caster has received an indult of departure. Chester will remain in the Harriman area to continue his work. We wish Chester and those who work with him all of the best as they assist the people of Appalachia.

## **Letter From Robert Ludwig From Brazil**

The new president took office and put in price controls. Also, cleaning house, he dismissed over 100,000 federal employees. He has the backing of the people up to a point. Price controls are good. But our gas and oil bill went up 100% in one month. We had raised tuition and wages just a few days before controls. Now expenses just keep going up and we can't raise tuition.

School enrollment is up to 2,080 for Dom Amando and we have the nursing branch of Santarem University here, plus a computer school. Also, the physical group from another school. With triple shifts, there is quite a bit of wear and tear on the school and grounds.

Brother Joe Kinsman went to Chile for a meeting and all kinds of mischief took place while he was gone. Rather serious. Some kid got some medicine and with a syringe injected it into our deep freeze that supplies cold water. Also one of the college students asked to get into the classrooms to study for an exam. He cut the wires to fans in three classrooms. We do have good students. Just a few need a kick in the pants.

The day of high interest in savings is over. In March, interest was 73% and in April 85%. Now it is below 65% a month. We got caught with money in overnight accounts. We get it back in September 1999 - or perhaps never.

## **Congratulations To Jubilarians From Bangladesh**

Brother Ronald Christenson writes:

"Dear Fellow 40th Jubilarians,

"Congratulations to you all. May we all meet in 2000!"

"Brother John Harris and I will try to meet in July to celebrate in Kathmandu, Nepal....Brother Gerald Kraeger is here in Dhaka, but cannot get away to be with us in Nepal. So Gerald and I will get together for a private celebration...."

"....We've all had our ups and downs, but here we are in 1990! God has been good to us. AND with all our experience behind us, it is nothing to look forward into, and up to the end of one more decade....Average ages are going up constantly. Maybe we'll be part of that huge earth population 'they' are predicting for the time between 2010 and 2020...."

"God bless all of you 40's, as well as the 25's, 50's and 60's+, who are celebrating."

# REWEAVING RELIGIOUS LIFE

Beyond The Liberal Model

Mary Jo Leddy

REWEAVING RELIGIOUS LIFE: Beyond the Liberal Model, by Sister Mary Jo Leddy, has just been published and will be one of the books we will use during the upcoming visit. Should you have seen the add for this book and intend to order it, please send us your request for the book and we will mail it to you at once. Others will receive it at the time of the visit.

## Thomas Minta

Brother Thomas Minta has accepted a position at GOODWILL in Chicago as employment specialist and instructor for the deaf and hearing impaired clients of GOODWILL. His position will involve intake, testing, job development, teaching pre-employment training and developing individualized placement plans for individuals. He will also present seminars and workshops to employers and referral sources.

He was attracted to this position because it would give him active contact with the clients and enable him to use his sign language fluency, interpreting skills, and the cultural and psychological understanding of deafness which his course of studies provided. The clients who come to GOODWILL are among the lowest disability level of deaf people in the Chicagoland area. This is a ministry to the genuinely poor.

## Retirement Fund For Religious

The Tri-Conference Retirement Office announced that it had received \$19.4m to be distributed to 591 congregations representing 73,309 religious over the age of 50. We received a check in the amount of \$51,334.44 as our share for this year.