

## CHAPTER XVI:

# Parish Community Grows Through Team Ministry

The transition between the pastorate of Fr. Paul Bouffard and that of the 'Team Ministry,' established by Bishop John A. Marshall on March 21, 1973, was not an easy one. As noted previously, Fr. Bouffard was asked by Bishop Marshall to accept the pastorate at St. Francis Xavier Parish, Winooski. Rev. Bernard H. Messier, age 42, and Rev. Philip C. Boisvert, age 29, were chosen as two of the three priests who would constitute "Team Ministry;" they arrived at St. Joseph Parish in March. The third member, Rev. Francis R. Prive, age 32, joined the Team on November 2, 1973.



The first Team Ministry of St. Joseph Parish: Rev Philip C. Boisvert, March 21, 1973- June 22, 1978; Rev Bernard H. Messier, March 21, 1973-still assigned; Rev Francis R. Prive, November 2, 1973- July 15, 1983

An immediate reaction of the parishioners of St. Joseph Church to the "removal" of their pastor was to present a petition to Bishop Marshall signed by more than 1000 members, asking that Fr. Bouffard be returned as pastor of St. Joseph Parish. The bishop did not honor the petition and it was never mentioned again. A few dissenting comments were heard on occasion, but being an industrious people, the members of St. Joseph Church again immersed themselves in the work at hand and that instinctive sense of community began to emerge in new forms.

Frs. Messier and Boisvert approached the situation calmly by simply offering themselves fully in the service of the people at St. Joseph Parish, continuing projects that were in progress, such as the rebuilding of the front steps at the entrance of the church. Ministering to the parish at this time was a monumental task for two, as there were over 25 societies and organizations already active in the parish. When Fr. Prive joined the Team in November, the full Team began to evaluate, reflect, plan, pray and act together for the parish.

Transitions of every kind were taking place in this community, which was an interesting and fascinating aspect of the parish. Previously there had been few changes in the authority structure of the parish. Having a Team Ministry

was in itself a major change. Who would be called the "pastor?" If all three were pastors, then who was the "real pastor?"

Along with this physical change of priests came another change which was as confusing. The approach to decision-making was different. Never before were questions about the school directed to one priest, questions about liturgy and worship to another priest and questions about the high school program to a third priest. Parishioners had been accustomed to directing all questions to the pastor. It was confusing, to say the least. Fr. Messier, because he was older than Frs. Boisvert and Prive, was often placed in the role of traditional pastor by the parishioners. The education of parishioners to an understanding of Team Ministry often occurred when in a "teachable moment" Fr. Messier would say, "Why don't you talk to Fr. Prive? This question belongs to his area of responsibility?" or "It sounds great but you'll have to talk with Fr. Boisvert to make some decisions on this matter!" Education came in dealing with practical questions.

One area of change that was evidenced immediately was the Sunday morning 11:15 liturgy. Fr. Boisvert had organized some young people and formed a folk group. When they began playing and singing at the 11:15 Sunday Mass, there was immediate reaction by a few parishioners. Fr. Boisvert had also used a Charlie Brown cartoon character on a banner which was displayed to the left of the sanctuary. One parishioner wrote a letter to the editor of the *Burlington Free Press*. It is difficult to tell whether the reaction was to the banner, to the folk group or the fact of change as such!

Change was inevitable! Shortly after the above incident the Team decided to introduce weekend Mass schedule changes, in order to accommodate the introduction of coffee hours after the Sunday morning Masses. The original schedule of 8:00, 9:00, 10:00 and 11:15 did not allow sufficient time between Masses, whereas a schedule of 8:00, 9:30 and 11:00 did so. This change was essentially slight but for a few it was "radical" and reaction was pronounced, but as with other changes in the future most parishioners were very pleased with what they were experiencing in the Team Ministry.

It is difficult to explain "Team Ministry" to anyone who has never had the experience of teamwork. The team concept includes certain essential elements. From the outset, Team Ministry at St. Joseph Parish was based on prayer, recreation, support and communication. The Team believed that prayer served as the basis and source of every ministry and provided necessary strength and direction.

They viewed recreation together as important because it would add a dimension to Team relationships that was other than the usual "business of the day." And they saw support and communication as crucially necessary in order to experience the sense of stability and security which can come only from a deeper openness and trust in one another as an added strength for ministry.

To understand the nature of Team Ministry as seen by the Team at St. Joseph Parish in its early years, it is necessary to review the definition then formulated: "Team Ministry is a community of priests each working in areas over which the individual priest has authority but always in collaboration with the consensus of the others on the Team, sharing equally in all common responsibilities, as well as in all common benefits." This same spirit of team ministry was meant to apply to all other relationships with parish staff, Parish Council, committees and organizations, constituting a total team approach.

Decisions on responsibilities for each priest were reached through prayer and reflection, while responsibility for the parish as a whole was kept as a vision and task by all three priests on the Team. Ultimately, it would occur that one priest would have to fill in for one of the others or, at times do double duty, as the intricacies of scheduling became more complex, but this was to be expected, and certainly accepted, in Team Ministry!

In the new Code of Canon Law which went into effect on November 27, 1983, Team Ministry was presented as a canonical term and concept, with the administrator of the Team approved by the bishop. It explicitly stated that "only clergy may be members of the official *Team*." In the beginning of Team Ministry at St. Joseph Parish, not yet having this canonical definition, "Team" and "Staff" were ambiguous in the eyes of some staff members. The priests saw themselves as the "Team Ministry" and yet desired to work as a total team with employed parish staff and volunteers. In the first few years, new parish staff were added and regular weekly "Staff Meetings" and "Staff Days" (evaluation, planning and spiritual growth days) became routine. Because of the regularity of these staff meetings, decision-making or "direction-taking" was often handled at this level. "Staff" soon came to include the Principal of St. Joseph School (Nazareth School), the Parish Director of Religious Education, Visitation Coordinator, Youth Ministry Coordinator and Liturgy Coordinator. On occasion, students who were majoring in human services at Champlain College and doing their field experience at St. Joseph Parish were also included in "Staff."

Decision-making in the first Team Ministry was most important, but sometimes little understood by parishioners. Canonically and realistically, the Team of priests at St. Joseph Parish was and still remains ultimately responsible for all decisions of the parish. In legal matters relating to administrative affairs of the parish, one priest, the ap-

proved administrator, signs for all. Yet, a spirit of team decision-making was intended for the Team, the Staff, the Parish Council, the Commissions and the Committees and parish organizations as a whole. It was, and still remains, a conscious goal that this spirit, which is the spirit of Vatican Council II, pervade all areas of ministry.

Each priest on the Team at St. Joseph Parish had areas of particular responsibility and was considered the final decision-maker in his respective area. It was presumed, of course, that communication and consultation had occurred with related commissions, committees, paid and volunteer staff, and that their opinions had been considered. If a decision was broader than the Team priest's particular responsibility and touched on other areas as well, or on the total parish, then more time and consultation were necessary. At the Team level, it was understood that no decision in any area was acceptable unless there was a true consensus of the Team. The Team at St. Joseph Parish continues this practice today. Consensus of the Team has been a key concept in the history of Team Ministry at St. Joseph Parish.

In this framework then, how did Team Ministry become translated into living reality? For the first few months beginning in March 1973, it was a matter of becoming acquainted with St. Joseph Parish. Both Frs. Messier and Boisvert had little knowledge of the parish prior to their assignment. They were also anticipating a third member and did not want to move ahead until his arrival.

By November 1973, when Fr. Prive arrived, Frs. Messier and Boisvert were ready to look ahead and begin planning. After the 1973 Christmas liturgies, all three began to meet regularly and frequently, in order to draw for themselves a picture of the total parish, asking questions such as the following:

- What is the financial picture of the parish and of the school?
- What is the relationship between parish and school?
- What are the organizations of the parish and school? ... and what kinds of things are they doing ... and why?
- What is the focus for unity in the total parish picture?
- Where should immediate efforts and energies be placed?

In looking at the financial picture, some of the answers did emerge. The January 1974 "Stewardship Report" which was presented in a pie-shaped visual form, conveyed a message of total stewardship of "time;" "talent" and "treasure;" and gave a clear picture of parish priorities at that time. Parish debt service was almost 11% of the total budget; St. Joseph School subsidy totaled nearly 40%; Rice High School subsidy was 5 %; the total amount spent on other religious education efforts (C.C.D. for grades one through eight, the high school program, adult education and clergy continuing education) was only 4%; expenses for areas

such as liturgy, parish life, social concerns and efforts to reach out to parishioners with NEWSNOTES and similar communications was 7%; administration and maintenance of church, rectory and convent (not including school building) took up 26 %; and the remainder was diocesan collections for missionary and other purposes, which were income and expense but did not enter directly into the parish picture. The answers that emerged stated clearly that the Team Ministry vision for the future had to incorporate a more spiritual picture and give a direction that would strengthen religious education and provide more outreach to the parishioners and the community in general. Thus the Team launched its initial efforts!

Visitation of parishioners, especially the sick and the elderly, was a priority for the Team. In the beginning, it was a practical impossibility. There were 1700 households listed in the parish files. The Team hired a Parish Visitor to accomplish this task. Sr. Joan Caron, R.S.M., joined the Staff in August 1974. She diligently visited households on a regular basis and prepared a list for return visits. She recruited a group of volunteer visitors who worked with her to do the return and continuing visits of elderly and shut-ins. She was 65 years of age at this time. In August 1981, Sr. Joan left the position of Parish Visitor to accept the task of Directress of Novices for her religious order and was replaced by Sr. Lucille Bonvouloir, another Sister of Mercy, who continued the work begun by Sr. Joan and added a more intense outreach effort. She worked with many community social agencies, and attempted to provide emergency food and shelter. She also worked closely with the Parish Christian Service Commission, St. Vincent de Paul Society and City Hall. During her time at St. Joseph Parish, she also worked closely with student interns from Champlain College. In June 1983, she left St. Joseph staff to pursue studies in Public Administration at George Washington University. Sr. Gail Jarvis, another Sister of Mercy, filled the position, presently entitled "Parish Visitation Coordinator;" until June 1987, when she was replaced by Sr. Isoline Duclos, R.S.M., the present coordinator.



Sister Gail Jarvis, R.S.M.



Sister Isoline Duclos, R.S.M.

The visitation efforts were important, particularly in the Christian Service area. The priests became involved when needed and especially in cases which were discussed at Staff meetings; recommendations of the Parish Visitor were followed up as soon as possible by one of the priests. The final result showed a tremendous expansion of parish efforts at outreach and Christian service.

One of the many other concerns of the Team at St. Joseph Parish was the Religious Education program. In 1973-74, it was a question of simply maintaining the program and perhaps looking ahead at possibilities for the future. In August 1974, those possibilities became more concrete as Sr. Aline Paris, R.S.M., was employed as Parish Religious Education Director. Her focus was to strengthen teacher preparation; she also did much in the area of parent contact and parent preparation. In August 1981 however, Sr. Aline accepted the position of Principal at Christ the King School, in Burlington, and resigned from her responsibilities at St. Joseph Parish. Miss Agnesanne Danehey replaced her for a period of one year, followed by Mrs. Cheryl Veilleux. In August 1984, Sr. Helen O'Brien, R.S.M., joined the Staff as Parish Religious Education Coordinator.

Most importantly as a Team priority, however, has been the area of worship and spiritual life. There was a Liturgy Committee established in 1973, which worked very closely with Fr. Boisvert on all parish liturgy planning. Mrs. Claire



Sister Joan Caron, R.S.M.



Sister Lucille Bonvouloir, R.S.M.



Sister Aline Paris, R.S.M.



Agnesanne Danehey



Cheryl Veilleux



Sister Helen O'Brien, R.S.M.

Brassard, the first chairperson, helped create the sense of importance which liturgy held in the eyes of the Parish Staff through her many hours of planning, study and evaluation. In the fall of 1974, Fr. Boisvert re-directed his efforts to a greater concentration on Youth Ministry and Fr. Prive assumed responsibility for Liturgy. In the years that followed, the Liturgy Committee played an important role in educating itself and the parish in matters relating to worship and prayer. Mrs. Jacqueline Labrecque, who became chairperson in 1975, expanded the educational scope of the Liturgy Committee and began to strengthen elements of liturgy that truly enhanced parish celebrations ... the training of lectors, altar servers, ushers ... the institution of a Children's Liturgy Subcommittee and a Themes Subcommittee. As she and her husband, Richard, were the coordinating couple for the Pre-Cana marriage preparation program, the spirituality and proper liturgical celebration of marriage was also a focus during the years she served as chairperson.

Much attention was given as well to two other major areas of spirituality which related to the Visitation Program: the efforts of Sr. Aline Paris in the parish religious education program, and those of the Principal and staff of St. Joseph School (Nazareth). One of these efforts was the Annual Communal Anointing of the Sick. The other was an annual Parish Retreat which occurred originally in the fall of each year and then was moved to the time of Lent, which is the Church's annual renewal time. The Communal Anointing, which was first held in 1975, involved many committees and parish contacts to help express parish concern for the sick and shut-ins. The Parish Retreat, initiated in October 1974, was an ever-present sign that renewal in the parish must happen through families and individuals who choose to be renewed!

In the late 1970's, St. Joseph Parish Council adopted a Parish Commission structure for Parish Council and Parish Committees. Mrs. Labrecque became the Spiritual Life Commission Chairperson and Mrs. Laurette LaChance took the chair for the Liturgy Committee. After the latter's service of two years, Kenneth Hebert (now Brother Timothy of Weston Priory) became chairperson. He served

for one year and was replaced by Mrs. Alice Farkas. She also served one year at the end of which Mrs. Kathy Matthews was elected by the Liturgy Committee. In 1985, Mrs. Matthews was employed as the staff Liturgy Coordinator.

The primary goal of the first Team Ministry was "To Know and Experience Jesus Christ" and this was to be done chiefly

"through well-prepared liturgies:"

It was precisely in and through

liturgy that the parish did grow in Christ and became strengthened as a community of faith-filled people. In 1978, when Rev. Bernard Gaudreau arrived at St. Joseph Parish to replace Fr. Boisvert, he accepted the responsibilities of Liturgy and Spiritual Life. He continued with these responsibilities until re-assignment in 1983.



Kathleen Matthews



Second Team Ministry of St. Joseph Parish: Rev. Bernard J. Gaudreau, June 22, 1978 - July 15, 1983; Rev. Bernard H. Messier, March 21, 1973- still assigned; Rev. Francis R. Prive, November 2, 1973- July 15, 1983

Another important area of concern from the beginning of Team Ministry was St. Joseph (Nazareth) School. Sr. Therese Duval, D.H.S., was principal when Team Ministry was introduced; she had been principal since the fall of 1971, and had served on the school staff since 1951. After she received a new assignment in June 1975, Sr. Mary Lou



Sister Therese Duval, D.H.S.



Sister Mary Lou Smith, O.H.S.

Smith, D.H.S., replaced her. Sr. Therese worked through the transition from the Mothers' Club, which was a strong and loyal school support group, through the new concept and organization of the Home and School Association and the School Board. Sr. Mary Lou continued in the transition and with the help of Fr. Messier, who was the Team liaison to the School Board, and Mr. Raymond Nichols, the Chairperson, gave strong direction to the school.

During Sr. Mary Lou's term as principal, a slight crisis was encountered but overcome as quickly. In the July 13, 1977 issue of the *Burlington Free Press*, Public School Superintendent Lansing K. Reinholz was quoted as saying that "while he has heard nothing officially, he has it on 'good authority' that closing of St. Joseph School on Allen Street as early as January 1978 is a 'distinct rather than remote' possibility." Sr. Christine Moriarity, the Catholic School Diocesan Superintendent, initiated a decisive off-setting reaction, along with the Team Ministry and School Board. Bishop Marshall made an excellent public statement that chastised Mr. Reinholz for devastating "St. Joseph's School and the courageous, self-sacrificing efforts that are being made by the people of that parish...". John Fisher, as Chairman of the School Board, wrote a letter to the editor of the *Burlington Free Press* pointing out that Mr. Reinholz had made statements "solely on the basis of 'good source' which is in fact only 'bad rumor'." Mr. Fisher also indicated that "the facts are as follows: (1) St. Joseph School finished the financial year in the black again this year, due to the continued support and dedication of the parents in the Home and School Association and people in the parish; (2) In the last two years, we have purchased all new series of textbooks for our students. We do not receive any government or state aid for these texts. We also continue to fund an active science program; (3) We have been active in the 'Right to Read' and 'remedial reading' programs which are important for many of our students; (4) We are now in the final stages of formulating a school handbook entitled *Together is the Way We Do It*; (5) We have recently received the results of the SRA nationwide

school testing program and are pleased with how well our students did. This is one indication of the quality of education they are receiving; and (6)

I am continually impressed with the dedication shown by our teachers and their concern for the students.' The "crisis" served to solidify and strengthen support for the school. The new handbook was given to each family in September 1977. Sr. Mary Lou Smith continued until June 1978. The new principal for fall 1978, was Sr. Alice Bowman, D.H.S.



Sister Alice Bowman, D.H.S.

St. Joseph School opened in September with a renewed enthusiasm. Sr. Alice stressed in-service education for staff and continued to work on overall improvement of the school program. It was during her term that a Kindergarten class was re-established. She also encouraged and helped organize the St. Joseph (Nazareth) School Alumni Association. The first Alumni Day was celebrated in the fall of 1982.

Other areas that Sr. Alice considered important were the Library, Kitchen and Maintenance staff; she worked closely with these and gave strong support to all. In June 1983, Sr. Alice departed for Newport, Rhode Island, to be the secretary for a parish Day Care Center. Sr. Martha O'Brien, R.S.M., accepted the position of principal.



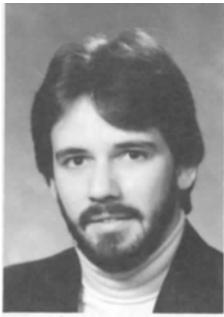
Her vision of St. Joseph School Sister Martha O'Brien, R.S.M.

was expressed in these words as she began her term: "I believe in a good, quality Catholic education which is based on a value-oriented program in a self-disciplined atmosphere which allows for maximum learning." With her years as principal at Mater Christi, her vision and teaching experience in grades three through twelve, St. Joseph School started the fall of 1983 with renewed vigor. As present principal, enrollment at the school has expanded due to the quality educational program she is directing.

A less major but still important concern of the Team Ministry at St. Joseph Parish has been high school youth. When Fr. Boisvert established a High School Youth Advisory Board in the fall of 1974, it was a sign of concern on the part of Team Ministry and the parish. The Youth Advisory Board spent much time planning activities and looking at ways of reaching out to youth who were not involved in parish activities. One special project was to renovate the old rectory and classrooms at the south end of the church on the second floor, to be named the "Odyssey Center" for use by high school youth.



Sue Gilbert



Michel Gilbert



Richard Trombley

By the summer of 1975, things were in full swing and a number of projects and activities were carried out. Youth Ministry continued to flourish throughout the next three years. In the fall of 1977, Conrad and Sue Gilbert became the Moderator Couple for the Odyssey high school program. In June 1978, Fr. Boisvert was transferred to the pastorate of St. Teresa Parish in Hyde Park. The coordination of the Odyssey program was placed in the hands of Sue Gilbert. By January 1980, her son Michel was able to assist and eventually assumed the coordination of Odyssey. In the fall, he entered the seminary to study for the priesthood. He was followed successively by Richard Trombley, a second year Theology seminarian studying at St. Michael's College, and Deacon James Hughes (ordained to the priesthood on June 4, 1982), who was doing an internship before ordination. Each coordinated the Odyssey program for one year. In the fall of 1982, Mark Gilbert (brother of Michel) assumed the position of Youth Ministry



James Hughes . . . now  
Rev. James Hughes



Mark Gilbert



Gertrude Cross

Coordinator. With his training and experience in youth ministry, he was able to give this program the impetus that it needed. Since the position at St. Joseph Parish was half-time, he also coordinated youth ministry for Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Williston. Because he and his wife, Patty, had the good fortune of welcoming twin girls into the family on New Year's Day 1983, he had to forego one parish job to work full-time in the regular job market. Since he lived in Richmond, he chose to retain Williston

Youth Ministry. Miss Gertrude Cross was then hired for the position which was now full-time. In August 1984, Sr. Lindora Cabral, R.S.M., became the Youth Ministry Coordinator. She continues to serve in that position.

While the major programs of Visitation, Religious Education, Liturgy, the School and Youth Ministry were in the forefront of the active participation that developed the faith community at St. Joseph Parish during these years of Team Ministry, the underlying framework that provided the monetary support to make all this possible was developed by the total stewardship approach of "Time, Talent and Treasure;" a recurring theme of the Team. Fr. Messier had specific responsibility with the assistance of well-qualified laity, especially Mr. Robert Keenan,

prepared thoroughly developed programs. Projects were introduced in conjunction with timely and calculated education to "total stewardship." The results were astounding!

The first project in 1973, was the completion of the front steps of the church. A total of \$15,000 was collected to fund this project. The next summer (August 1974), the steeple was repaired and painted at a cost of \$5,000. A renovation and maintenance program was initiated for all buildings ... rectory, church, school, convent and janitor's house ... which remains ongoing. The old confessionals were removed from the chapel and reconciliation rooms built in early 1977. Painting went on constantly at the rectory, the school and the convent. After a Time and Talent survey in late 1977, a special stewardship education effort was initiated in early 1978. A combined census information-sacrificial commitment approach was taken and stewardship began to show its effect. The monetary result was that parish ordinary income went from an average of \$1,900 weekly with three collections at Mass, to more than \$3,000 with one collection, a more liturgical approach. There was a simultaneous increase in parish ministries and a willingness to volunteer for ministry in many forms. Annual renewal in sacrificial giving has always been presented with an accompanying spiritual renewal.

In addition to meeting the ever-growing needs of the parish programs, the Stewardship Commission (Robert Keenan, Chairman) installed a new 6-inch water main to



Sister Lindora Cabral, R.S.M.



Robert G. Keenan, Chairman  
of the Stewardship  
Commission

the church, iron rails at front and rear entrances of the school, a new fire alarm detection system at the school and new storm windows throughout the Rectory. One large undertaking was a federally-funded Energy Grant project of replacing all windows and insulating the attic of the school, at a cost of \$129,489 of which \$86,546 was the federal share. Practical projects were the normal approach of the Stewardship Commission, such as insulating, changing regular lights to fluorescent ... anything for good stewardship! In early 1983, a massive new project began ... the four-year long celebration to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the building of the church. With this came an organized effort at renewing faith commitment and sacrificial giving. A special fund drive was begun ... with a goal of \$600,000.00, which was attained.

The Centennial celebration mentioned above was highly organized and carefully coordinated by Mr. Robert Keenan, the Centennial Committee Chairman. The full report which shows the extent of planning has been included in the appendices (Appendix K-1), and should be read in order to appreciate the dedication and commitment of the "volunteer" efforts of "time," "talent" and "treasure" which made up this three and one-half year celebration. The goal of the Centennial Committee was "to renew and celebrate the faith life of St. Joseph Parish, using the occasion of the building of St. Joseph Church on Allen Street." The theme, taken from Ps. 127, was "Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain who build it." Both the goal and the theme rose out of a parish faith community that gave witness to these in its lived history.

In July 1983, further changes took place in the Team structure. Fr. Prive accepted the position of Diocesan Director of the Office of Youth Ministry and Fr. Gaudreau, who had been appointed Diocesan Director of Liturgical Development in 1982, left St. Joseph Parish to begin the third phase of his approved program, which was to coordinate liturgy planning in designated parishes.

The third Team included Fr. Messier and Rev. Gerald Bombardier, previously Principal of Mt. St. Joseph Academy in Rutland. Rev. Fernand Couture, s.P., who was previously at St. Mary Parish, in Taylorville, Illinois (Diocese of Springfield), was assigned as Parochial Vicar. This was to be Fr. Couture's first year preliminary to his application for incardination in the Diocese of Burlington. He also accepted to administer the parish in Montgomery Center, when the vacancy arose in January 1984. As new members at St. Joseph Parish, Frs. Bombardier and Couture had little or no knowledge of the parish, much less any acquaint-



Third Team Ministry of St. Joseph Parish: Rev. Gerald W. Bombardier, July 15, 1983 - still assigned; Rev. Bernard H. Messier, March 21, 1973- still assigned; Rev. Fernand Couture, s.P., parochial vicar, September 1, 1983- June 20, 1984.

tance with the ten-year history of its Team Ministry. The practice of working closely with lay people, to the point of utilizing their judgments and expertise in making decisions, was a theoretical concept that was valued but very difficult for them to carry out on a daily basis. Both Frs.

Bombardier and Couture came from experiences that placed decision-making with the expertise of the priest. Fr. Bombardier began his attempts at adjusting immediately.

Fr. Couture suffered through a difficult year of trying to absorb the "new wine in old wineskins." In June 1984, Fr. Couture was reassigned to St. Peter Parish in Rutland. Fr.

Conrad Bessette, who was convalescing from an illness, was assigned as Parochial Vicar with part-time ministry. On December 1, 1984, his status was changed to full-time ministry. He was re-assigned to St. Mary Parish, in Newport, on Nov. 18, 1987. The present Team now consists of

Fr. Bernard Messier, the Canonical Moderator of the Team and Fr. Gerald Bombardier; Fr. Dennis Laroche, M.M., is

the newly assigned Parochial Vicar. The regular Staff Meetings continue, as well as communication with the various parish commissions, committees and organizations.

The concepts of delegated authority and full participation of the laity are a constant effort. Team Ministry flourishes! No one knows the future; only the past is fully known and the present unfolds. If trends can help to give insights into

the future, however, there is a definite brilliance for St. Joseph Parish. Faith has been the foundation and faith continues to be the mainstay. It is this source which has been

the driving power of all that has happened at St. Joseph Parish. What has occurred in the past 137 years gives indication that the best is yet to come!



Fourth Team Ministry of St. Joseph Parish: Rev. Conrad Bessette, parochial vicar, December 1, 1984- November 15, 1987; Rev. Gerald W. Bombardier, July 15, 1983- still assigned; Rev. Bernard H. Messier, March 21, 1973 - still assigned



Fifth Team Ministry of St. Joseph Parish: Rev. Gerald W Bombardier, July 15, 1983-still assigned; Rev. Dennis LaRoche, parochial vicar, November 15, 1987- still assigned; Rev. Bernard H. Messier, March 21, 1973- still assigned.

