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New Jersey Catholic Records Newsletter

VOLUME XII NO. 3

SPRING 1993

History conference held at Xavier Center

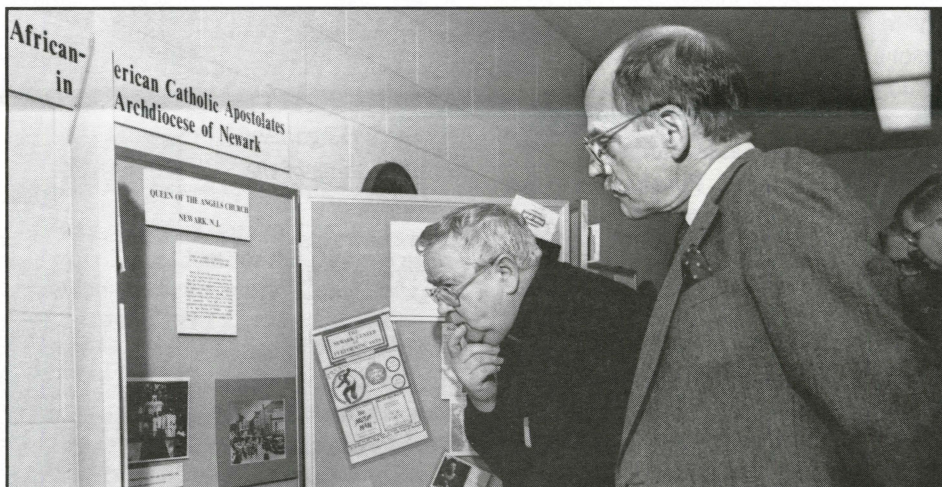
On March 30 the Commission-sponsored conference on collecting, preserving and writing the history of Catholics in New Jersey attracted about 100 clergy, religious and laity to Xavier Center on the campus of the College of St. Elizabeth in Convent Station. After welcoming remarks by Bishop Dominic A. Marconi, Monsignor William Noé Field presented an overview of the topic, with interesting illustrations from the archives of the Archdiocese of Newark and Seton Hall University.

Next, Dr. Ronald Grele, director of the Oral History Project at Columbia University spoke on oral history as a prime tool of historians, particularly those who deal with groups or individuals who leave little or nothing in the way of written materials for tracing their activity. Grele emphasized that oral history interviews should develop into "conversational narratives" in which there is both rapport and tension between the participants. The interviewer should have researched the background and career of the interviewee, and not be afraid to ask "difficult questions."

Oral history interviews are of prime importance in writing the history of "grass roots" organizations like parishes because so much of their written record reflects the result of activity but not the lively process of interaction which produces the result. A vigorous discussion after Grele's presentation provided answers to practical questions from the audience.

Following this discussion, Reverend Mr. Peter R. Cebulka received the

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Participants examine part of the exhibit on African-American Apostolates in the Archdiocese of Newark on March 30, 1993.

Heritage Institute preserves history and culture

One hundred years ago, as immigrants in the hundreds of thousands entered the country each year, leaders of American society advocated a process of "Americanization" to turn the newcomers into good American citizens. Unfortunately, in practice the effort often resulted in demeaning the cultural heritage of the immigrants, in stripping them of their past, and in making their children ashamed of both their parents and their cultures. In time American society recognized that the diversity of cultural backgrounds could be an advantage rather than a problem but by then much had been irretrievably lost.

One effort to restore and preserve the cultural inheritance the immigrants

brought with them is the Heritage Institute of the Diocese of Passaic. Established in 1971 on the initiative of Bishop Michael J. Dudick, the Institute concentrates on gathering, preserving and exhibiting "the liturgical, cultural, historical and artistic treasures" of all the ethnic groups (principally Ruthenians and Hungarians) in the Byzantine-Ruthenian Diocese of Passaic. Originally housed in one room of the diocesan chancery building on Market Street in Passaic, the Institute now occupies a substantial portion of the new headquarters in West Paterson.

In establishing the Institute, Bishop Dudick argued that we all need

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Heritage Institute

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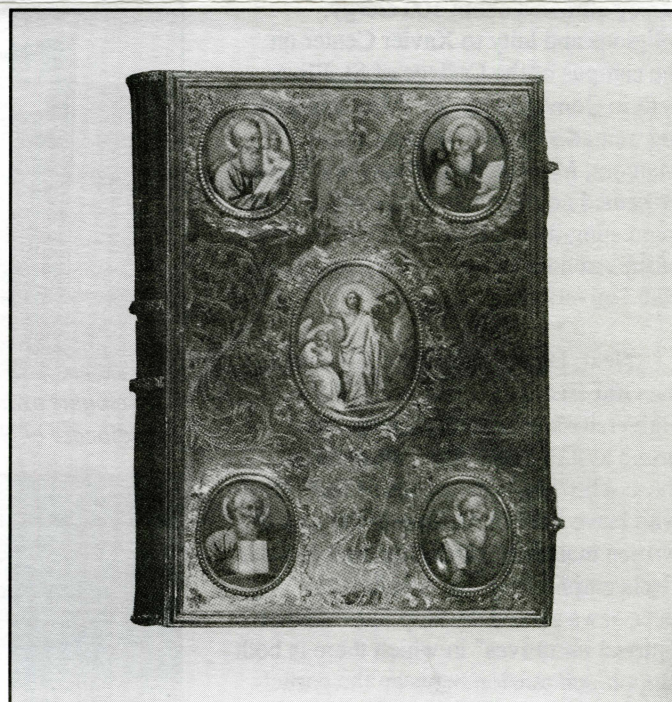
to know our past in order to understand our present and prepare for the future. The Institute, headed by an executive board of priests and laity from throughout the diocese and representing all its ethnic traditions, gathers, preserves and exhibits manuscripts, books, icons, liturgical vestments and utensils, national costumes, photographs and other artifacts illustrative of the European and American history of the people who comprise the Diocese. Many of the items have been gifts to the Institute over the years -- personal libraries, icons and other memorabilia have been willed to the collection -- but the Diocese also seeks out particular items at auctions and through other sources. Pilgrimages to the Holy Land and Greece, to cite one example, have offered opportunities to obtain items for the growing collection.

Recognizing the close intertwining of religion and daily life, the Heritage Institute preserves and exhibits not only items of religious significance but also examples of both fine and folk art. Delightful models of churches, both in

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Above: This gallery exhibits some of the paintings of prominent East European artists.



Right: Ornate Gospel Book, showing the Risen Christ in the center and the Evangelists at the corners.



Highly decorated chalice from the collections of the Heritage Institute.



Below: Some of the icons, both ancient and more recent, are shown in this view of one of the galleries.

History Conference

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Dr. Ronald Grele listens to a question from the audience at the Commission's program on March 30, 1993.

Archbishop Peter L. Gerety Award for Church History. Given annually to a student at Immaculate Conception Seminary for original research in church



Some of the key figures in the Conference on Collecting, Preserving and Writing Catholic History are (left to right): Dr. Ronald Grele, Archbishop Emeritus Peter L. Gerety, Reverend Mr. Peter R. Cebulka, Sister Mary Ellen Gleason, chair of the Program Committee, and Bishop Dominic A. Marconi, chairman of the Commission.

history, this year's prize went to Cebulka, a student for the Diocese of Metuchen, for his essay "Come Away to a Deserted Place: Communities of Contemplative Women in the State of New Jersey." His study examined the responses of Poor Clares at Bordentown, Carmelites at Flemington, and Dominicans at Newark and Union City to the

reforms initiated by Vatican Council II. Archbishop Gerety made the presentation and briefly encouraged the participants to study local church history.

After lunch, the conference concluded with a panel discussion on various aspects of collecting, preserving and

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Meet the Commission

The fifth of the nine children of Robert and Barbara Wallace, Joseph D. Wallace was born in Camden, New Jersey. He attended parochial school at St. Margaret, Woodbury Heights, and went to Holy Spirit High School in Absecon. His undergraduate work took him to the University of Scranton, where he completed study for the Bachelor of Science degree.

His studies for the priesthood began at St. Pius X Seminary, Dalton, Pennsylvania, and were completed at Immaculate Conception Seminary. Father Wallace entered Immaculate Conception while it was still located in Darlington, New Jersey, and then accompanied the institution when it returned to its earlier site, the South Orange campus of Seton Hall University. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Camden on May 25, 1985. Father Wallace has continued his formal studies since ordination, receiving the Master of Divinity degree from Seton Hall Univer-

sity. He is currently a candidate in Ecclesiology at St. Charles Seminary, Overbrook, Pennsylvania.

Father Wallace is associate pastor at St. Rose of Lima Parish, Haddon Heights. In addition, he is coordinator of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs for the Diocese of Camden, a position which offers him frequent opportunities to address Jewish and Christian congregations throughout South Jersey. His ecumenical activities include participation in the Tri-State Roman Catholic-Orthodox Dialogue, centered in New York City, and membership in the National Association of Diocesan Ecumenical Officers.

Father Wallace is also a prolific author. He writes a regular column and editorials for the *Catholic Star-Herald*, the newspaper of the Diocese of Camden, and also contributes to other periodicals and occasional publications of the Diocese. He describes his



Reverend Joseph D. Wallace

interests as reading, music, theater and international travel -- but his other activities must certainly limit his opportunities for the last-named. For the Commission, Father Wallace serves on the Oral History Committee.

Noted with Pleasure

Sister Margherita Marchione, M.P.F., a long-time member of the Commission, was honored recently by the New Jersey Christopher Columbus Quincentennial Observance Commission as one of six outstanding Italian-Americans in New Jersey. Professor Emerita of Fairleigh Dickinson University, Sister Margherita was cited for her outstanding contributions to education and scholarship at the Observance Commission's Quincentennial Dinner.

History Conference

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writing church history. The panel, led by Father Michael G. Krull, included Dr. Peter J. Wosh, director of library and archives for the American Bible Society, Monsignor Joseph C. Shenrock of the Trenton Diocese, Monsignor Francis R. Seymour of Newark, Sister Irene Marie Richards, O.P., archivist of the Dominican Sisters of Caldwell, and Sister Margherita Marchione, M.P.F., editor of *The Papers of Philip Mazzei*. Each spoke to some practical research and writing questions, based on their own experience in the field.

Participants also enjoyed the opportunity to examine a display presenting the history of Queen of Angels Parish, Newark through records, correspondence, posters and other memorabilia. The exhibit, prepared by JoAnn Cotz of the Seton Hall University Archives, demonstrated another method of making local history come alive.

Heritage Institute

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Europe and the United States, as well as gorgeous examples of national costume and finely crafted wood and pottery items form a very significant part of the collection. In addition, the Institute owns paintings by East European artists -- Boksay, Erdely, Borecky and others. Taken together, the collections of the Heritage Institute offer interesting and enlightening insights into the cultural and especially religious history of the ethnic groups which compose the Diocese of Passaic.

Many of these items are regularly on display at the Heritage Institute's quarters in West Paterson. In addition, the Institute periodically offers special exhibits dealing with particular topics or types of artifacts. Among these offerings

have been exhibits focusing on Easter and Christmas customs, Hungarian and Carpatho-Rusyn folk art, wooden models of the wide variety of church architecture of Eastern Europe and numerous others.

The Institute has also mounted exhibits outside its walls, in, for example, the Passaic Public Library. The largest and most notable of these occurred in May and June, 1992, when the Paul VI Institute for the Arts sponsored a large exhibit in Washington, D.C. of items from the Institute and a series of lectures on Byzantine-Ruthenian history and traditions. What began as a modest effort to preserve the cultural heritage of the peoples of the Diocese of Passaic is gaining recognition as a significant resource of wider interest.

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Most Reverend Dominic A. Marconi, D.D., *Chairman*; Reverend Monsignor Joseph C. Shenrock *Vice chairman*; Bernard Bush; Dr. Rita C. Carney; Jo Ann Cotz; Reverend Augustine Curley, O.S.B.; Reverend Monsignor William N. Field; Reverend Monsignor Charles J. Giglio; Sister Mary Ellen Gleason, S.C.; Reverend Michael G. Krull; Reverend Raymond J. Kupke; Joseph F. Mahoney; Sister Margherita Marchione, M.P.F.; Reverend Monsignor Robert Moneta; George L.A. Reilly; Sister Irene Marie Richards, O.P.; Sister Thomas Mary Salerno, S.C.; Bernhard W. Scholz; Reverend Monsignor Francis R. Seymour; Reverend Monsignor Edwin V. Sullivan; Reverend Joseph D. Wallace; Reverend John F. Wrynn, S.J.; *Consulting Member*: Barbara Geller

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