

# Beloved local priest retires

## ST. ELIZABETH SETON: Associate pastor will consider new assignment after medical treatment

ERIN REEP  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Father Edward Coleman has seen a few saints in his 47 years of ministry.

Many of them have been in an unlikely place: prison.

In his 23 years as a prison chaplain, Coleman said he served men who had committed terrible crimes. But although their acts were terrible, many of them were good men, he said.

"By golly, they'd put me to shame. They were saints," he said.

Coleman, 75, will celebrate his last Mass at 10:30 a.m. Sunday before retiring as associate pastor at St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church. Many of his parishioners don't want to see him go.

"We're sad. We don't like to see him leave," said Sun City resident Lorraine Pojman while warmly shaking Coleman's hand after he celebrated Wednesday morning Mass.

Standing nearby, husband Jim said, "I love him. We don't want to see him leave." Jokingly, he added, "He's too young yet."

A luncheon in Coleman's honor will follow Sunday's Mass. A sign on the desk in the church office Wednesday morning said the lunch already was sold out.

"We had 300 tickets," said parish secretary Jeanne Schofer. "They're gone."

Coleman was raised in Rochester, Minn. After graduating from high school, he joined the Marine Corps at age 17. He served in World War II, then studied economics at St. John's College in Minnesota. About that time, he began thinking about entering the priesthood.

"Then when I graduated, I decided to give it a try," he said, adding that he entered the seminary at age 23. "And here I am. I've been very satisfied, very appreciative, very grateful."

Coleman belongs to the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. The order's Web site, [www.omiusa.org](http://www.omiusa.org), defines an oblate as "a person whose life, by special dedication, is offered in service to the Lord."

The order was founded in 1816

by the Rev. Eugene deMazenod, who organized a group of priests to preach the gospel to the working poor in southern France. In 1826, the group received papal approval as a religious congregation "under the patronage of Mary Immaculate," the Web site states. There now are about 5,000 oblate priests and brothers who work in 68 countries on every continent, according to the site.

After joining the order, Coleman was sent to an American Indian village in Minnesota for four years. From there, he was transferred to Sandstone Federal Prison between Duluth, Minn., and Minneapolis, he said. At first he lived on the prison premises, but later moved into a trailer in a wooded area off prison property.

Coleman said he liked prison ministry and related well with the prisoners. The toughest part, he said, was dealing with the prison bureaucracy. His responsibilities included conducting services, working as a mediator for prisoners with the parole board and counseling inmates.

The best part of the job, Coleman

said, were "the great people I met. I met some tremendous guys."

However, he said there were times when the job was frustrating. He recalls a prisoner named John who faithfully helped him, celebrate Mass, often preparing communion. The other prisoners nicknamed the inmate "Father John."

Although he found fulfillment in prison ministry, John couldn't seem to get his life in order outside of prison upon his release, Coleman said. John was in and out of prison three times before being incarcerated the final time.

The tough part of ministry is seeing one's mistakes and very few success stories, Coleman said.

"You see all your failures," he said.

Sometimes, Coleman dealt with the stress of prison ministry simply by crying.

"And then somebody gave me a Labrador retriever."

He said no matter how exhausted he was at the end of the day, he knew he could take the dog out for a walk.

Coleman remembers one prisoner from New York who had no religious

background and grew up as a youth on the streets. He was in prison for drug involvement.

"But for the years that he was there, he grabbed on to religion," Coleman said.

The man was released and went back to New York. Although he never saw the man again, Coleman said he married and lived a more successful life.

Coleman also spent eight years in Canada, working with Eskimos in Palatuk in the Northwest Territories, he said.

Father Raymond Greco, another associate pastor at St. Elizabeth Seton, said Coleman has shared responsibilities with the staff and is "always right there whenever you need anything done."

"I feel very sad about Father Coleman's retirement, because so far, we don't have a replacement for him. He has a very big following here. We'll miss him a lot."

Once he retires, Coleman said, he plans to have some medical work done. Then, he said, he would consider being sent somewhere else with the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

OVER



STEVE CHERNEK/DAILY NEWS-SUN

Lorraine Pojman greets the Rev. Edward Coleman, an associate pastor at St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church in Sun City. Coleman is retiring after 47 years as an active priest.

# Catholic women battle porn

By RUTHANN HOGUE  
Staff writer

Catholic women across the retirement communities handed out white ribbons by the thousands this weekend in celebration of Pornography Awareness Week and the White Ribbon Against Pornography campaign.

The campaign, originated by Morality in Media, has been picked up by many local Catholic churches including St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. Joachim and St. Anne, St. Clement of Rome and Our Lady of Lourdes. The idea is to pin a white ribbon symbolizing purity on the chest of every church member, to remind each to fight against all that is immoral or unclean.

"There's a lot that can be done, if you just get them into fighting it," said Fran Julien, a founding member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton who has participated in the WRAP campaign for two years.

Julien has been fighting pornography for 16 years. She began by joining an anti-pornography group headquartered in Modesto, Calif., that encourages writing letters to politicians and the media.

"We write to congressmen, the president, aldermen — anyone, even television and radio stations and so on," Julien said.

Their message?

To ban pornography from every newstand, broadcast outlet and backroom video store in America.

"I have wonderful children and grandchildren and I love them dearly and I love the young people," Julien said. "And when I see on the news every day that there is a woman being raped, children being molested, and it is nearly every day,



Gregory Harris/Daily News-Sun

Bishop Thomas O'Brien visits St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church Saturday, where the White Ribbon Against Pornography Campaign was launched this weekend.

OVER

this is my reason. And you know, it is due to pornography. From all indications, this is what happens to these people mentally, and the poor women and children suffer."

Although Julien said there doesn't seem to be much of a problem with pornography in Sun City, she does see room for improvement. She knows of a card shop that sells suggestive greeting cards. Some convenience stores sell magazines that she believes should not be on the

racks where children can see them. And until she complained, she said, one local grocer displayed suggestive women's magazines with stories in them that deal with sex and covers featuring scantily clad women.

"Here, in Sun City, if I see anything objectionable, I have approached the manager and they are very cooperative, Julien said.

Amanda McGovern, with St. Joachim and St. Anne Catholic Church in Sun City, said fighting

local pornography isn't always easy.

A Sun City woman while shopping in a lingerie shop on Bell Road, reportedly discovered that the store offers sexy video tape rentals in the back room.

"She called the sheriff and he said he can't do anything about it as long as it's in the back room," McGovern said. "We thought, 'Well that's a fine how do you do, as long as it's in the back room.'"

At St. Joachim and St. Anne, 1,872

white ribbons were handed out by the Catholic Daughters of America to remind people to take action when they run into similar situations. Although most people probably will not wear the ribbons through the end of the campaign on Saturday, McGovern said, she hopes they will remember to pass on the message.

"Something is wrong, something is amiss in our society," she said. "If there is anything they can do, they should do it."

# A time of grace

## Retired doctor looks back on first year as priest

By Betty Latty  
Special to Community

He describes the past year as "extremely full of grace."

The Rev. William Harnischfeger, M.D., the retired Sun City cardiologist and widower who was ordained a Roman Catholic priest on his 70th birthday, Oct. 8, 1993, was looking back on his first 12 months as a clergyman.

"I never dreamt that this would be such a wonderful year in so many respects," he said during an interview at his home recently. Not even when as a child in Germany he announced to his family that he wanted to be a "seelenarzt," or "soul doctor."

Or while he was a medic in the German army on the Russian front in World War II.

This weekend, in Sacramento, Calif., he will formally become a knight of the Holy Sepulchre, a confraternity with origins in 1100 A.D., with Roger Cardinal Mahony of Los Angeles, officiating.

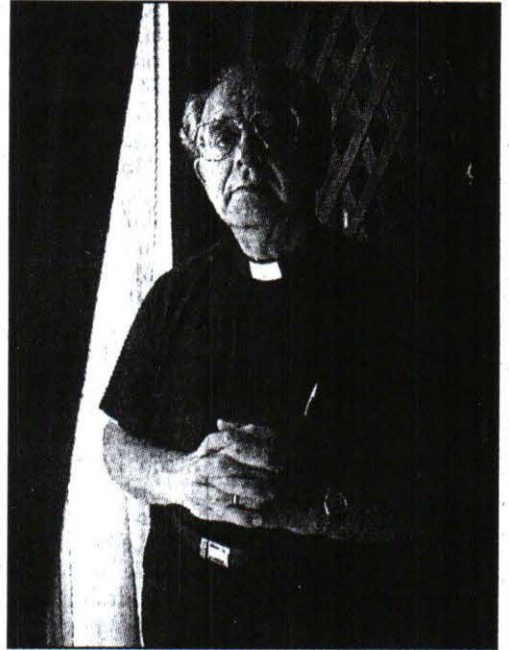
"It is a very rare honor," said the priest, chuckling over his formal mailing address. "I am now Rev. Sir William Harnischfeger, M.D. — but I want to be called Father Bill."

As associate pastor at St. Elizabeth Seton Church in Sun City, where he was ordained, he celebrates mass daily, then visits ailing parishioners and patients in nearby Walter O. Boswell Memorial Hospital, sometimes making as many as 38 calls a day.

"It gives me the opportunity to offer what I call three-dimensional medicine — I understand the physical, the psychology, and the spiritual," he said. "I give talks on wellness and spirituality, too."

His past year took him to important religious sites and his boyhood home — travel twice touched by tears.

In the spring, he joined seminarian friends on a two-week study tour to the Holy Land, attending seminars led by Jewish rabbis in See **PRIEST**, Page 10



Randy Reid / Staff photographer  
Ordained as a priest on his 70th birthday, the Rev. William Harnischfeger likes to be called Father Bill.

## PRIEST

From Page 1

Jerusalem.

Then he flew to Rome, and celebrated mass in St. Peter's Cathedral, assigned to the Lithuanian Chapel, which is dedicated to Mary, the mother of Jesus.

The observance of Pentecost on May 22 found Harnischfeger offering mass in St. Laurentius Church at Bad Soden, Germany, his birthplace. "I was very moved," he said, "to give communion to my brother Josef, 83, and sisters Marina, 84, and Maria, 81. Marina came to my ordination."

St. Laurentius, he added, "is the church where I was baptized, received first communion and was confirmed. My late wife and I were married in it and celebrated our silver anniversary there."

In Bad Soden, the whole town came out to hear a favorite son celebrate Mass.

"It was wonderful," beamed the priest, while sorting through color snapshots. "There was a procession, led by the present and former pastors in red robes, banners, a brass band and a welcome from the parish council chairman."

An official dinner at a local hotel followed, and he was reunited with fellow students he had not seen in 52 years.

The tears in Bad Soden, he said, were tears of joy.

More recently, Sun City's Father Bill went to Mexico City, on a pilgrimage led by Phoenix Bishop Thomas O'Brien, to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, whose story always has held special appeal for him.

He recounted an emotional time on the visit as he sat one day in the rear of the church, waiting for his tour bus.

"A pilgrimage of probably 1,000 nuns of the Order of St. Claire — wearing brown habits much like the Franciscans' habits — discovered me and began to kiss my hands. Then appeared Indians, coming to church on their knees, and little children. I was so moved to see (their faith), that I blessed them.

"This went on and on, and my tears profusely came down. I very nearly missed my bus."

Those tears, he said, simply, were for "faith, a true faith experience."

As for the years ahead, projected Father Bill, "It's whatever happens, it's God's will."

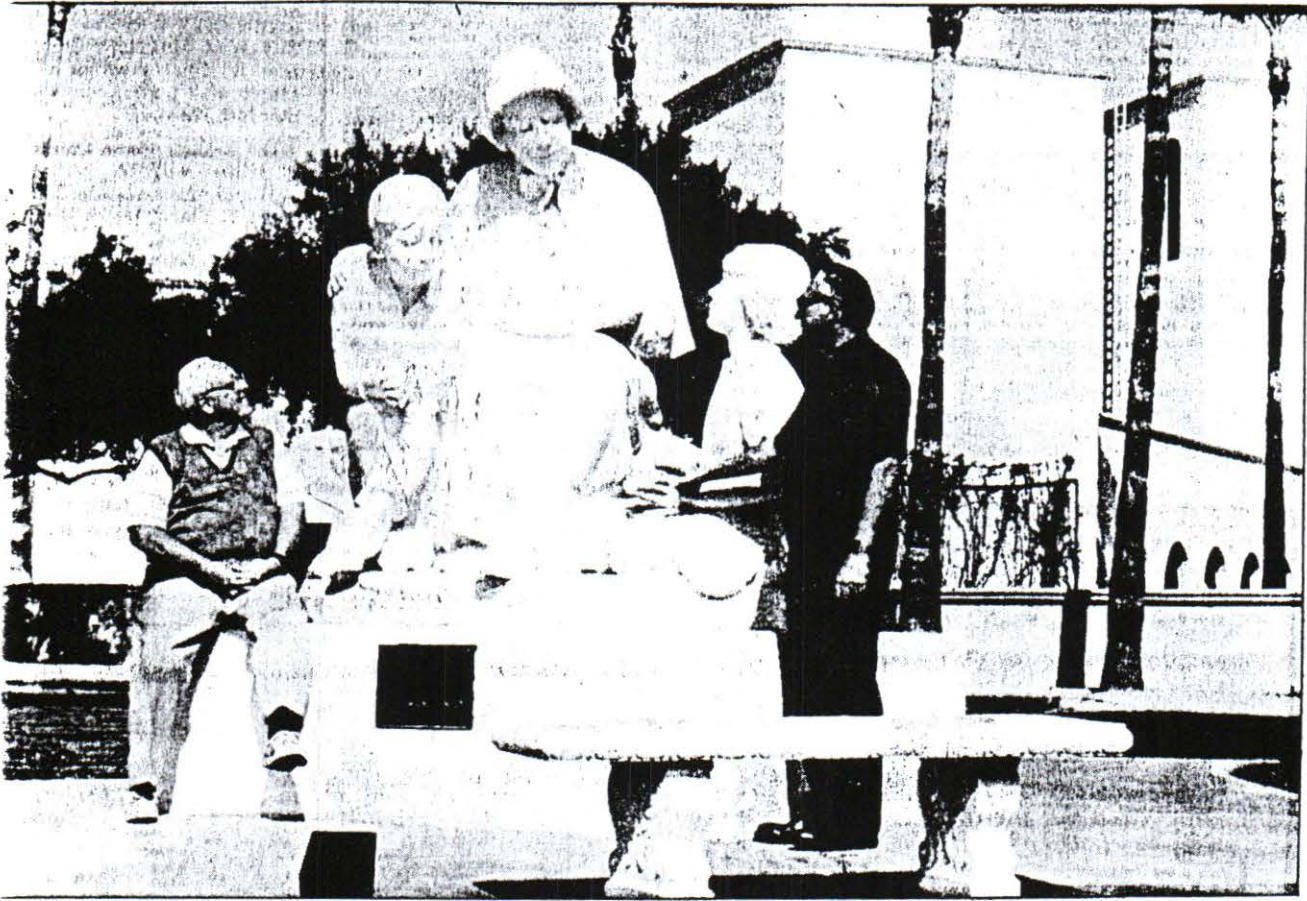


Photo by Frances Guarino

**STATUE OF A SAINT** — Harold Jones, left, president of St. Elizabeth Seton Men's Club, and Pastor Matt Feit admire a statue of St. Elizabeth Seton reading to two children. The statue was donated to the Sun City church in

honor of the Hellman family, relatives of Mother Seton. Beatrice Hellman of Sun City is the only living member of the Hellman family. She lives at Wooddale Cared Living Center.

## Church honors American saint

"The parish is a people ... called together ... in faith and prayer"

— National Conference of Catholic Bishops

By **CONNIE STEELE**  
Daily News-Sun staff

St. Elizabeth Catholic Church in Sun City is named for Elizabeth Bayley Seton, a convert from New York who became the first American-born Catholic to be canonized. Elizabeth Seton was a wealthy Episcopalian who, after being widowed as a young mother with five children, found answers to her spiritual questions in the Catholic Church.

In 1809, Mother Seton founded the order of American Sisters of Charity, in Emmitsburg, Md. Seton's Sisters of Charity taught poor mountain children in the same school with Seton's own children. Her efforts led to the formation of the Catholic parochial school system in the United States.

St. Elizabeth is Sun City's third Catholic parish and was formed in 1976 by Bishop Edward McCarthy of the Diocese of Phoenix.

Before 1979, when the congregation moved into its permanent Spanish-style building, worshipers met Saturdays or Sundays in Sunland Memorial Chapel and the Bell Recreation Center's social hall. Daily Mass was celebrated in St. Clement of Rome Church.

Although Bene Gonzales, a Phoenix architect, designed the

### International fair features entertainment

Daily News-Sun staff

**SUN CITY** — Members of St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church will sponsor the 11th annual International Food Fair from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday.

Each year the food fair draws hundreds of people to the church at 98th Avenue and Palmeras Lane with ethnic foods, a bazaar of second-hand items, art works, handicrafts and baked goods.

Entertainment includes Parnell Grina's Orchestra, the All Stars, with "Rocky" Rockwell on the trumpet and trombone; Folklorico Ballet dancers; International Dancers; Ed Dolovy, accordionist; and Jay Creviere, banjo player.

Visitors will have their choice of German bratwurst, sauerkraut and potato salad; Irish corned beef and cabbage; Italian sausage and pepper sandwich, and cannoli; Polish sausage, sauerkraut, pierogis and golomki; or shish-kabob and enchilada rice. Ethnic beverages, coffee and soda pop will be served.

Two handmade quilts will be sold in a silent auction. Rag clowns will be sold in the bazaar along with other handmade gift items.

A percentage of the fair's proceeds will be given to worthy causes not directly related to the church, said Eleanor Thompson, the fair's cochairman with Tom Long.

Last year, three \$1,000 donations were given to the Sun City Prides, the Dysart Community Center in El Mirage and St. Mary's Parochial School in south Phoenix, Thompson said.

Spanish-mission style stucco church, the church's founding pastor, the Rev. Paul Smith, proclaimed his Irish heritage by placing a Gaelic cross on the dome of the church.

The church has undergone many changes since Elizabeth's day. Many activities that once were handled by priests and clergy are now performed by lay-parishioners in Catholic

parishes. These changes have occurred within the Roman Catholic Church over the past 27 years since the Vatican II council, according to the Rev. Matt Feit, pastor of the church at 9728 Palmeras Lane.

The changes are "really just getting back to where it was in the early days when the lay people took a greater role," Feit said.

Some lay people, called ministers of the Eucharist, have been trained to bring holy communion to the sick. Others distribute the Eucharist during celebration of the Mass. Adult acolytes assist the priest while lay people lead the congregation in reading holy scripture during the Mass.

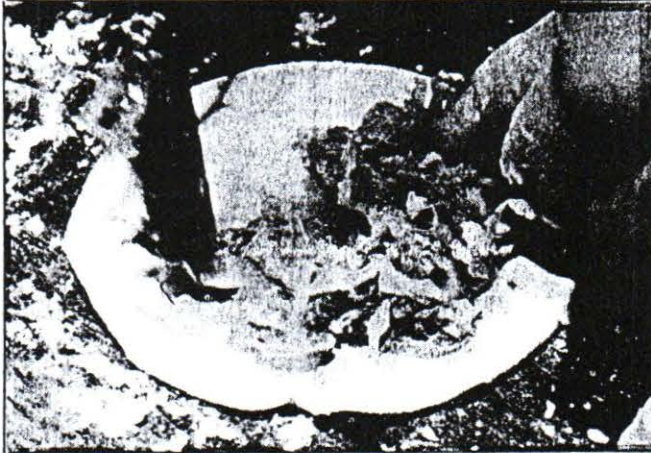
Ancient church practices and beliefs find expression in the essentials of the Mass and worship services, Feit said. He said changing the altar drapings according to the religious season and other customs are symbols of the mysteries of the faith.

"All the essential elements of the faith are mysteries, he said. "In the sense of a profound truth that we can't fully understand, that human reason cannot comprehend."

The church reflects the act of faith, the priest said and added. "The church doesn't have all the answers. The answers all revolve around the greatest mystery that is God."

Lay participation makes for a busy church. At nearly any

See Catholic, C5



Daily News-Sun photos by Stephen Chernek

**SAVORY STUFFING** — Sauerkraut is placed in a dough shell and folded over, then boiled. Pierogis stuffed with cheese will also be available.

**FOOD FAIR** — Felix and Vern Tuleja cook pierogis in the kitchen at St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church Wednesday, preparing for the International Food Fair from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., Saturday. The church is at 98th Avenue and Palmeras in Sun City.

## Catholic church hosts food fair and bazaar

From C1  
 "There are activities going on," Feit said.

The Legion of Mary meets at 10 a.m. Mondays; the Holy Spirit Charismatic Prayer Group, 2 p.m. Tuesdays; the Choir, 6:30 p.m. Wednesdays; the ladies workshop, 9 a.m. Thursdays; and the Seton Sisters, the Parish Council and St. Vincent De Paul divide the month's Fridays among them.

The women's Seton Society sponsors weekly workshops where members make items to sell in the Seton Shop. Among their activities are a monthly coffee Sunday for the congregation, an annual rummage sale and an annual International Food Fair and Bazaar, which is Saturday.

The men's club sponsors quite a few events to promote "goodwill" for its 300 members, resident Harold Jones said.

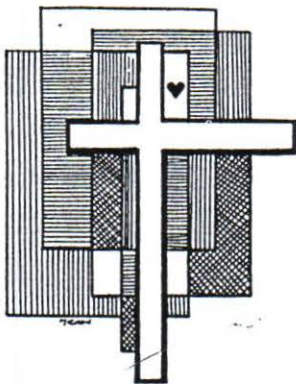
At 7 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month, the club's programs "try to bring outside interests to its members" and "to build camaraderie among the men," Jones said.

The men "bring good cheer to those who can't get to church," Jones said, by visiting "our people who're in the hospital and nursing homes."

For active church members, the men sponsor golf outings, days at the race track, and New Year's, St. Patrick's Day and Oktoberfest dinner-dances.

"There are so many organizations in the church," Jones said.

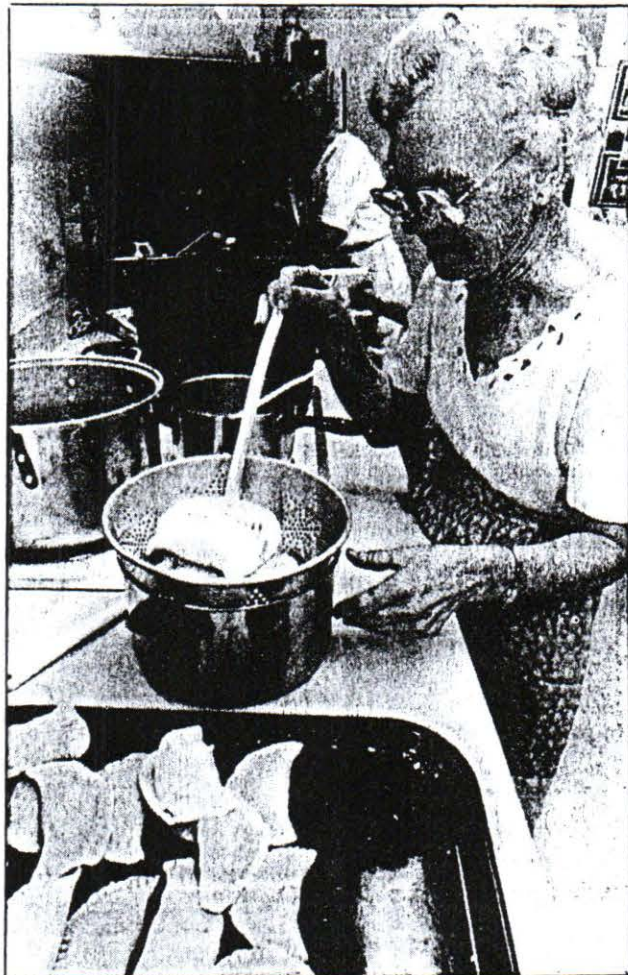
One of the biggest is the Polish-American Club that is shepherded by the Rev. Richard



Ciesniewski. Club members meet for dinner at the church the first Sunday of each month. Each year, the congregation celebrates a Polish folk-Mass.

People who attend St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church live primarily north of Bell Road in Sun City. But some come from Glendale, Peoria, El Mirage and Surprise.

Although a few young people attend, "I generally discourage them from coming here," Feit said. "They should be where there are programs for their age group."



**HOT PIEROGIS** — Julia Radecki dips a freshly boiled pierogi in butter.

A10 NEWS-SUN SATURDAY, JULY 18, 1987

# Parishioners amaze St. Elizabeth

By PATWOOD WILLIAMS

News-Sun staff  
SUN CITY. A former Midwesterner, the Rev. Matt Feit, was amazed that his parishioners raised \$40,000 at the recent International Food Fair, an annual event at St. Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church, 9728 Palmeras Lane.

"I told my colleagues in Chicago that it took months of planning, but they raised \$40,000 in just seven hours," said the pastor of the church for which the first service was held April 18, 1979.

The church is named after Elizabeth Seton who in the 1800s founded the first free Catholic day school from which the parochial school system originated. She also opened the first Catholic orphanage. She was canonized in 1975, the first native-born American to become a Catholic saint.

Early pastors were the Rev. Paul Smith, the Rev. Henry D. Hodges and the Rev. Bernard P. Jones, now retired but still on the list of clergy.

Father Matt, as he prefers to be

called, is also assisted by the Rev. Richard Ciesniewski and the Rev. Edmund DeCaboote, Order of St. Benedict.

Deacon William P. Tone has served under all of the pastors. Social worker Belinda White from Catholic Services is available Tuesday afternoon and all day Thursday.

Frank Biskup is president of the Parish Council and Bill Murphy on the liturgy committee for the Choir. Otto Besch is in charge of song leaders and organists.

Matt Feit was born in Chicago in 1923 and attended St. Roberts school on the northwest side and St. Michaels High School in the Old Town area.

He served in the Army Signal Corps during World War II in New Guinea and the Philippines.

After three years at the University of Notre Dame, he entered seminary and was ordained at age 33 in 1956.

He served parishes in Madison, Wis., and Milwaukee and taught

**'I was surprised at the tremendous amount of help the lay people, both men and women, provide in this parish.' — The Rev. Matt Feit**



at the Preparatory Seminary in Lake Koshkonong, Wis. The next four years, Feit worked with a rehabilitation project for priests at Jemez Springs, in northern New Mexico.

In 1974 he moved to Phoenix and has served at St. Gregory, St. Theresa, St. James, Most Holy Trinity and Holy Spirit Churches. He became pastor at St. Elizabeth Seton in January.

## Seton pastor

There are approximately 30 special ministers of the Eucharist chaired by Millie Erickson and 12 ministers to the sick and confined chaired by Betty Gumina and about 30 acolytes chaired by John Overman. Bruce Johnston is in charge of lectors, and Gerald Fintak in charge of ministers of hospitality.

"An acolyte might be a district court justice from Michigan, for example," said Feit, citing the fact that acolytes here come from all walks of life.

He said that his parish is not completely composed of retirees but contains many working people in their 50s from nearby Westbrook Village and in the area of 77th Avenue and Union Hills Road.

Discussing the fall visit of Pope John Paul II, Feit said he hopes to discourage many of his parish from attending the outdoor Mass because only one gate to Sun Devil Stadium will be used, necessitating long lines and long walks from parking.

There will be other events not so strenuous with opportunities to see the Pope, Feit said.

Marion Kuncik is president of the St. Elizabeth Seton Society; Anthony Tomlon is president of the church's men's club; Fred Miholich, rosary workshop; Mary K. O'Malley, the singles group; Mary Rodgers, Legion of Mary; Jenny Guse, Holy Spirit Prayer group; Ab Wickham and George Sorace, building and grounds; and Grace Van Slyke, Helping Hands.

The church annually holds many events including an Oktoberfest, money from which is used to retire the church debt and for other charities. Frank Charles is in charge.

Retreats organized by the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale and marriage encounter weekends are also scheduled as well as events for singles, including a July 22 theater party at Metro Playhouse.

Currently the exterior of St. Elizabeth Seton Church is being painted for the first time.