

At the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, the bishops urged more laity participation in the church. One of the Council Fathers, St. Louis Cardinal Joseph Elmer Ritter suggested that the St. Louis Archdiocese laity might benefit from renewed and new parish sodalities. Children of Mary shared their lifetime of sodality experience helping Monsignor Fenton J. Runge who headed the St. Louis Archdiocese Federation of Sodality.

CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING

In the late 1940s and '50s some Jesuits called racism a sin in their lectures at the monthly E. de M. meetings. They discussed Ritter's desegregation of the St. Louis Archdiocese Schools in 1947 and explained why he had excommunicated a few Catholics who publicly opposed the change.

Some Children of Mary, who had for generations helped the poorest St. Louisans in the segregated city, offered enlightened reflections on racial inequality, limited educational opportunities and poor job opportunities. In the 1960s, Mother Patricia Barrett, R.S.C.J., and a Maryville College of the Sacred Heart political science professor and author, frequently addressed the Children of Mary on Catholic social justice ideals behind the Civil Rights movement. She recruited some members to join her in her after-school work with Pruitt-Igoe public housing project residents.

In 1964 she gave an especially moving talk explaining her participation in the historic protest march of interfaith clergy and nuns under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King in Selma, Ala. The Selma march she joined was in reaction to "Bloody Sunday" when Alabama authorities tear-gassed peaceful marchers in a Voters' Rights March in Selma. Two days later, appalled St.

Louis religious leaders chartered a plane to Selma to join interfaith leaders from across the nation and march for a second voters' rights protest.

Mother Barrett, a Child of Mary, walked with the brave African-American Franciscan Sister Mary Antona Ebo and *St. Louis Review* editor, Monsignor Edward O'Donnell, later bishop of Lafayette, La..

Monsignor O'Donnell later spoke to the Children of Mary and invited them to support the new Archdiocesan Human Rights Commission. Both Mother Barrett and Monsignor O'Donnell encouraged Children of Mary to help break the cycle of poverty by helping them help themselves – tutoring them to prepare for technical career school or college.

By the 1960s, many of the Saturday sodalists went in carpools in the evenings to tutor at Providence House adjacent to St. Teresa of Avila on North Grand and to a Great Books Program and other adult education programs at St. Bridget of Erin Church, adjacent to the Pruitt-Igoe public housing project.

Mimi Connaughton Jackson, 1968 president of the Saturday group, recalled tutoring at Holy Guardian Angel Parish near the Darst-Webbe housing project, south of downtown. Other E. de M. served as Big Sisters for Holy Guardian Angel girls, taking them on "outings" to the Zoo, the Missouri Botanical Garden, libraries and amusement parks.

Saturday group sodalists sewed blue gabardine jumpers for many girls at Holy Guardian Angels School.

"We'd make them, fit them on the children, then come back and sew them. We made so many," Mimi Jackson said.

THE SECOND WESTWARD MOVE

In the late 1960s, many things changed at meetings.