

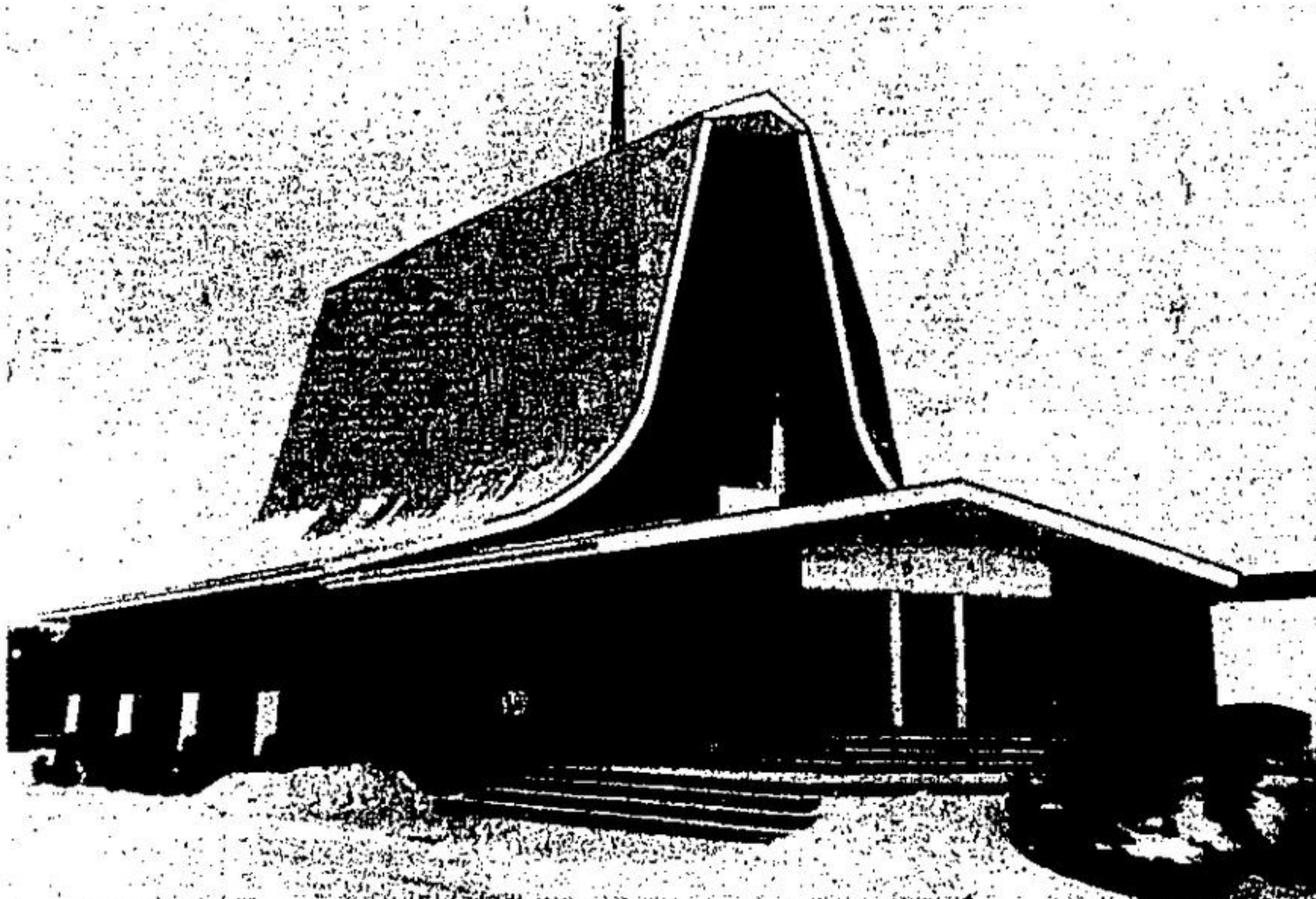
Holy Cross parishioners embrace 'Renew' message

By ANIPEDERIAN
Herald Staff Writer
It's time to start afresh, according to Catholic churches in the Hamilton diocese, which includes Georgetown's Holy Cross Parish on Maple Avenue.
Through the innovative Renew program introduced by



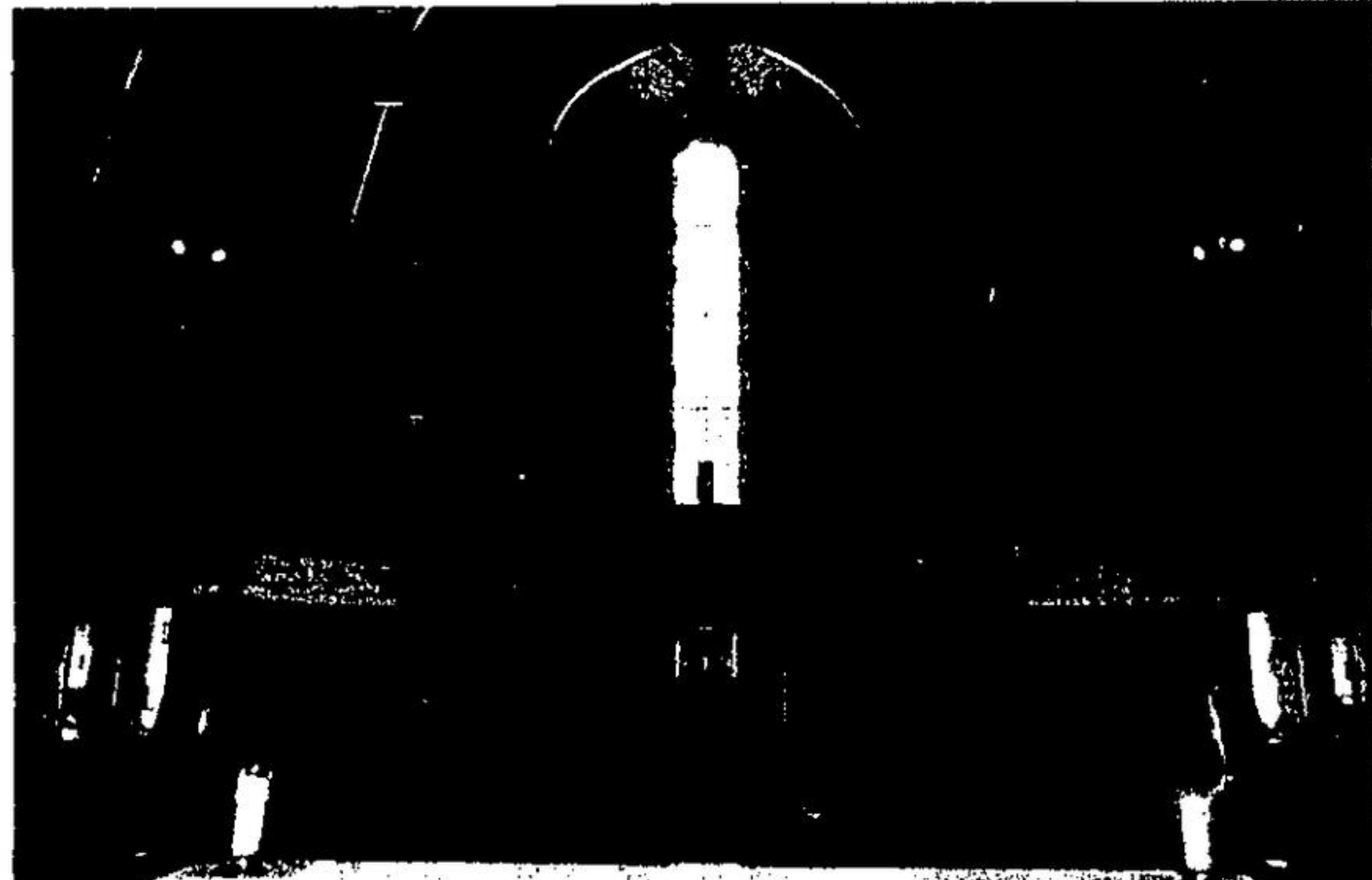
Twenty-first in a series

Bishop Paul Roding in connection with the 125th anniversary of the diocese, Catholic churches are seeking to deepen Christian faith amongst their members.
They're giving out the theme message of religious renewal to the flock, encouraging them to reassess their beliefs and



A new building as far as local churches go, Holy Cross church was completed in March, 1983, a year after construction began. Modern in style, it sits on Maple Avenue south of Guelph Street. Before construction could begin, the landscape had to be

altered considerably. The steep hill south of the Holy Cross Catholic School was reduced to a more gentle slope, a branch of the Credit River creek was diverted and the flats were built up to road level.



Nine arches sweep upwards to bear the roof of Holy Cross church. Constructed in Peterborough, some of the laminated arches tower 60 feet above the church floor, giving the church its

bell shape. Unique among Halton Hills churches, Holy Cross design means parishioners can sit in a half-circular arrangement of pews about the altar.

group leaders.
Holy Cross' Father Dave Cote, 40, said about 25 groups conducted six-week sessions last fall. A three-year program, Renew will resume each spring and fall.
He said it isn't a year-round program because prolonging it had the possibility of making it tedious and less effective than a short one. There were 300 local parishioners involved over the fall semester.
Larger group sessions, speakers and films are planned for Renew's spring semester.
"The changes I've introduced at Holy Cross have always been with the view of attempting to build a more vibrant faith in the community, which is also the object of the Renew program," Father Cote said.

Father Cote has been pastor of Holy Cross Parish since September, 1980. When he started, he was the sole religious leader for the over 1,200 Catholic families in Georgetown.
With such a large membership, it isn't surprising to learn he doesn't know everybody who comes to church. He said Sunday attendance is about 1,800.

"You're dealing with such great numbers that it would take somebody with a good memory a very long time to know all the people in the community," Father Cote said. "It's one of the heartaches of a pastor of a very large parish."
Personally favoring smaller parishes, he said the shortage



of priests and the economic situation have made them unfeasible.
Helping him minister to the needs of such a large congregation are associate pastor Father Murray Kroetsch, who

was appointed to the position in early summer, and lay pastoral assistant Winston Robinson, who was formerly a piano technician.
"There are many needs in a parish of this size which aren't necessarily limited to priests," Father Cote said.
Mr. Robinson is responsible for the liturgy music, serving as organist and director of three church choirs.
"Because you're a priest doesn't necessarily make you skilled in those areas," Father Cote said.
Mr. Robinson is also responsible for a lot of church-oriented hospital and home visits.
"He goes in preparation for one of us, in order to get to know the people and assess their sacramental needs, and we follow up with a visit," Father Cote said.
He said introducing a full-

time lay assistant had been a big change for the parish to swallow. Never introduced before at Holy Cross, the idea took church members awhile to get accustomed. Father Cote said it's a common practice in other churches and one he brought to Holy Cross as a result of his experiences in other parishes.
"The trend is to open up the ministry of the Catholic church to more lay participation and involvement in the church. Hiring lay assistants is one way in which this is being manifested in larger churches," Father Cote said.
This was just one of the changes the Holy Cross parish accepted with the end of the Capuchin fathers' ministry of the church.
Ministering to the Catholic community in Georgetown since May, 1968, the Capuchin

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reawaken their spiritual lives from the depths of routine church attendance.
Small groups were formed this fall to study and reflect upon scripture in parish homes under the direction of trained

Speaker from New Jersey

Sister Suzanne Golas will address social justice committees of the Catholic Diocese of Hamilton at the Chancery Auditorium Feb. 3 at 7:30 p.m. Sister Golas is head of the Social Concerns Committee of the Archdiocese of Newark, New Jersey. She is one of the authors of the RENEW program, which now involves thousands of area Catholics. Her visit will be of special interest to those who have been working with refugee committees and social action projects in the area. Admission is free. The auditorium is located in the Chancery Office, near the Cathedral of Christ the King on King Street West in Hamilton.

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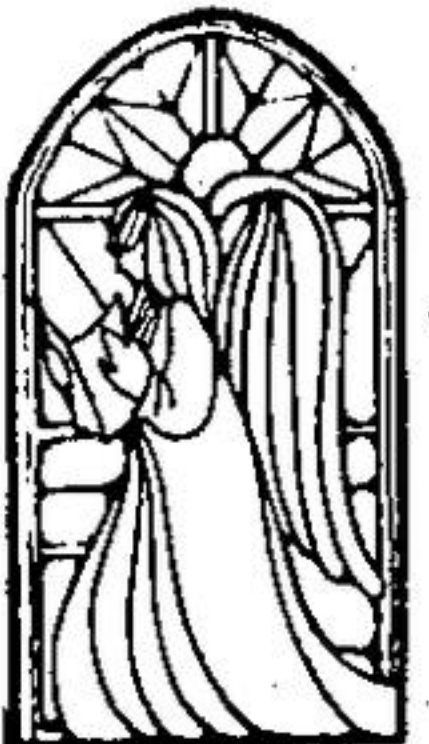
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