Priest suspends 200 students because of parent's truancy

Associated Press

CHICAGO — A priest enforcing a show-up-or-get-out order has suspended 200 students at a Roman Catholic school because their parents — whether Catholic or non-Catholic — did not attend Mass on Sunday.

The suspension at Holy Angels Elementary School were imposed to reaffirm an agreement parents signed to attend church each Sunday, said the Rev. George Clements, pastor of Holy Angels Church.

"If parents don't attend Mass, their children cannot stay in this school," he said Wednesday.

Re-admission for the children would depend on their parents' meeting with him and promising again to attend Mass regularly, said Clements.

Clements said a majority of the parents at a meeting Wednesday appreciated his views, but some parents said they would remove their children from the school.

Patrick Ellington, whose 5-year-old daughter, Melody, attends kindergarten at the school, said she "can't deal with Father Clements' rule that we have to go to Mass every Sunday."

Ellington, who is not Roman Catholic, said she had young children who were enrolled for her to attend Mass each Sunday. She said she enrolled her child in the parochial school because she thought she would get a better education there.

"I feel that the child's education is more important than my spiritual background," Ellington said.

About 35 percent of the children at the school are not Roman Catholic, officials said.

All parents were asked to sign a contract before their children enrolled showing they understood their obligation to attend Mass, said Clements.

"We clearly do not want any families to become involved in Holy Angels family feels they are reluctant to agree to this contract," the contract read.

Attendance always has been required, but the rule had not been enforced until a spot check for attendance Sunday, said Clements.

N.Y. City's 'Hell Gate' yields cars, human bodies, bones

Associated Press

NEW YORK — A search for a missing state trooper has led to six sunken cars, two bodies, a human bone and a growing list of other curiosities in the bottom section of swirling currents known as Hell Gate is a burial ground for the unexplained.

Police divers who found the bodies of the trooper and a reputed mobster on the sludge-covered bottom of the East River, which runs under the Manhattan Bridge, were searching again today, Harbor Unit Captain John Hollihan said Wednesday.

"The scuba team is going back to that location because when they pulled up the car yesterday with the trooper, they found about four or five more cars down there," Hollihan said.

The probe in the treacherous waters of Hell Gate, where the East River meets the Harlem River between Manhattan and Queens, has unfolded like a well-crafted mystery novel.

The search began on Monday after police received information that the body of the state police detective might be in the river. Instead, they recovered a Lincoln Continental, the body of Robert K. Przybylo, 53, of Randolph, N.J. He reportedly had mob connections and had been missing since 1979.

On Tuesday, divers discovered the unmarked state police car used by Detective Richard Snyder, missing since Sept. 20. When it was lifted out of the river, the detective's body was found stuffed in the trunk.

Police on Wednesday revealed another four cars — a Mercedes Benz, two Cadillacs and another luxury car — had been brought up, with only a single bone as a clue to their former occupants. Homicide Detective Lt. Robert Larkin said it was a human bone. It has been sent to the medical examiner's office.

Reapportionment ruins incumbent's chances

Associated Press

The mucky political waters of reapportioned districts swallowed up some familiar faces in the state Senate during primaries Tuesday, including veteran Newberry Sen. Robert Lake and Lexington incumbent Ferbrand Norma Russell.

The Senate reapportionment plan, which divided the upper chamber into single-member districts, was intended to give blacks a better chance at winning elections in the upper chamber.

But the results for blacks were mixed at best, with some losing in black major- ity districts and others gaining runoff with white incumbents. Not all of the surprises were in contents where race was a factor.

FOR EXAMPLE, Lake, a 15-year Senate veteran from Newberry, fell to attorney Thomas Pope. Russell, the first Lexington Republican, lost to her former campaign manager, Ad- dos "Joe" Wilson, by a 54 percent to 46 percent margin.

Florence Sen. Tom Smith was in a close race with black state Rep. Frank Gilbert in District 30, and appeared headed for an Oct. 11 runoff.

Voting in that district was "not totally along racial lines. You had crossover from both races," said Gilbert.


IN DISTRICT 40, Sen. Marshall Williams, chairman of the powerful Senate Judiciary Committee, defeated black state Rep. Earl Middleton by a 54 percent to 40 percent margin in District 40, which had a 50.7 percent black majority.

"It looks like it (the vote) was split down racial lines, which I'm sorry it did," Williams said, explaining the close finish. "He put on a good push. I saw what they were doing today. They were working and getting the vote out, and my crowd was staying home."

Middleton planned to challenge up to 300 ballots in his Democratic primary, complaining that those voters had placed ballots in the Republican primary in June.

Lourie claimed 54 percent of the vote against his challenger, state Rep. Mary Miles of St. Matthews, vowing to be the first black woman in the upper chamber.

"I'VE ALWAYS found campaigns based on race or heritage to be something that I just do not approve of," said Lourie, who added that support of black elected officials helped him.

In District 14, Gaffney Democratic incumbent Harvey Peeler knocked off a strong challenger, former South Carolina congressman Ken Holland, who failed by a 2-to-1 margin.

Holland complained that the late settlement of a two year reapportionment battle gave incumbents little time to prepare and confuse many voters.

But he was generally upbeat.

"I think I'll be able to pick up the pieces of my shattered life and go home," said Holland, laughing. Cherokee County Councilman J.R. Stroupe finished third.

ANOTHER INCUMBENT, Sen. John Lindsay of Bennettsville, defeated attorney Greg Ohanesian in District 28 by 64 percent to 36 percent.


The Senate race was the first in which blacks have had a chance to gain a substantial share of Senate representation since Reconstruction.

Make-up exam

Little Dee Dee works on painting his face at USC's Homecoming Carnival Wednesday.