

Private schools expel students who cannot keep up. But only 0.4% of the parents of scholarship students new to school choice report this as a reason they changed schools this fall.

Poor families pick their children's schools on the basis of sports, friends, religion or location, not academic quality. Yet 85% of scholarship recipients from public schools listed "academic quality" as a "very important reason" for their application to the program. Second in importance was the "greater safety" to be found at a choice school, a reason given by 79% of the recipients. "Location" was ranked third. "Religion" was ranked fourth, said to be very important by 37%. Friends were said to be very important by less than 20%.

Private schools engage in "creaming," admitting only the best, easiest-to-educate students. But most applicants found schools willing to accept them, even though a lawsuit filed by the American Federation of Teachers prevented the program from operating until two weeks before school started. When those who were offered but did not accept a scholarship were asked why, inability to secure admission to their desired private school was only the fourth most frequently given reason, mentioned by just 21% of the parents remaining in public schools. Transportation problems, financial considerations and admissions to a desired public school were all mentioned more frequently. (Cleveland has magnet schools that may have opened their doors to some scholarship applicants.)

The data from Cleveland have some limitations, because the program was not set up as a randomized experiment. Yet the comparisons between scholarship recipients new to choice schools and those remaining in public schools are meaningful. That's because, with respect to most of their demographic characteristics—such as mother's education, mother's employment, and family size—the families of scholarship recipients did not differ from those remaining in public schools. In fact, the voucher recipients actually had lower incomes than the group to which they were compared.

Cleveland's success at school choice should not remain an exception to public schools' monopoly on education. If members of Congress care at all about the education of poor children living in the innercity, they should approve the voucher legislation for Washington now before them.

PEOPLE HAVE TROUBLE SEEING
DOCTORS BECAUSE THEY DON'T
HAVE ENOUGH MONEY—NOT BE-
CAUSE MEDICARE PAYS DOC-
TORS TOO LITTLE

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, the just-enacted Balanced Budget Act includes a provision that allows doctors not to participate in Medicare for 2 years at a time, but instead to private contract with patients so that they can charge these patients much more than the Medicare fee schedule.

There is now a move underway to strike the 2-year requirement and let doctors do wallet biopsies—decide on a patient-by-patient basis whether they are going to ask patients to give up their Medicare rights and insurance and pay the extra in an individual private contract.

I can think of nothing that will encourage patients to move into HMO's faster, so that they are protected against the fear of this type of doctor extortion. The American Medical Association supports the proposal, but it is an idea that must have been deviously planted in their association by a mole from the HMO lobby—the American Association of Health Plans.

The proposal is pure greed wrapped in the flag of freedom.

Before the Congress is drowned in the rhetoric of this issue, we should note the facts. To the extent that Medicare beneficiaries have trouble seeing doctors, it is almost totally due to the fact that the cost is too much for the beneficiaries—not that Medicare doesn't pay the doctor enough to allow the doctor to see patients.

The latest data from the independent congressional advisory panel—the Physician Payment Assessment Commission—shows that only 4 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries reported having trouble getting health care in the last year. About 11 percent had a medical problem, but failed to see a physician, while 12 percent did not have a physician's office as a usual source of care. Roughly 10 percent of Medicare beneficiaries delayed care due to cost. Considering all four access measures, about 26 percent of Medicare beneficiaries cited experiencing at least one of these problems.

PhysPRC reports that from their surveys of those who failed to see a physician for their serious medical problem, 43 cited cost as the reason. About 8 percent of those who failed to see a physician could not get an appointment or find an available physician. For another 8 percent, transportation was the problem, 13 percent felt there was nothing a doctor could do, and 11 percent were afraid of finding out what was wrong.

In another words, Congress is preparing to let doctors charge patients infinitely higher fees because less than 1 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries had trouble finding a doctor—perhaps they lived in a rural area, etc. Yet over 5 percent of Medicare's nearly 40 million beneficiaries could not get to a doctor because they didn't have enough money—and Congress is silent.

Mr. Speaker, a humane Congress, a compassionate Congress, a logical, rational Congress would put five times as much effort into addressing the problem of doctors costing too much as it would in addressing what may be a 1-percent problem of a few doctors wanting to get paid more.

Where are our priorities, Mr. Speaker? A vote to let doctors, the richest 1-percent income group in our Nation, charge the sky's the limit, while ignoring the needs nearly 2 million seniors who find doctors already too expensive is a shameful vote.

TRIBUTE TO HOLY FAMILY PARISH

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Holy Family Parish for its 100

years of providing spiritual guidance, counseling, and education to the south Bronx community.

On September 20, the parish celebrated its 100th anniversary in my south Bronx congressional district. On this joyful occasion, Archbishop John Cardinal O'Connor officiated at a Thanksgiving Mass. Parishioners joined together in prayer to thank the Lord for the parish's 100 years of fruitful service.

Holy Family Parish has a long and inspiring history of perseverance and commitment to making a difference in the south Bronx. Through the years, the church has served a vibrant community of people from many ethnic backgrounds.

In the late 1890's, Rev. Joseph S. Mechler saw the need to serve an emerging community in the Bronx. In the fall of 1897, the cornerstone for the new church was laid, and by Christmas of that same year the congregation celebrated their first mass in the new building.

Archbishop Michael Corrigan dedicated the church in 1898. He lived in the basement of the parish and served his community until his final years.

Since 1903, eight pastors have faithfully served the parish. Among them was Father Urban Nageleisen, who served the church for 37 years, until his death in 1949. He was a friend and spiritual adviser to the growing German immigrant community of the time. Under his pastorate, the church also established a school for children with the help of the Sisters of St. Agnes.

During the difficult years of the Depression, the church continued serving the faithful and the congregation actually grew in numbers.

With the passing away of Father Nageleisen, Father John Mechler assumed the leadership of the church. During those years, the church and the convent that housed the Sisters of St. Agnes were both very deteriorated. Pastor Mechler proposed and raised the funding to build a new convent and a new church in the south Bronx. The new parish kept the original cornerstone.

Throughout its history, the Holy Family Parish has been responsive to the changing needs of its community. In 1981, the parish celebrated their first mass in Spanish in recognition of the growing Hispanic community, which had become an integral part of the church. In addition, the lower part of the church has been transformed into a meeting place for senior citizens, where hot lunches, recreational activities, and medical services are provided.

Today, Father James D. Flanagan leads the church. After 100 years, the church continues to be a catalyst of positive change in our community. Over 700 children are currently enrolled in the school, which educates students from kindergarten to eighth grade. In addition, hundreds of members of the community have grown in their faith.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Holy Family Parish for its 100 years of history at the service of the south Bronx community.

AUTHORIZING USE OF CAPITOL ROTUNDA TO ALLOW MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO RECEIVE HIS ALL HOLINESS PATRIARCH BARTHOLOMEW

SPEECH OF

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 16, 1997

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, I submit this statement in support of House Concurrent Resolution 134 authorizing the use of the Capitol rotunda for a ceremony for His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the 270th Archbishop of Constantinople and new Rome on October 21, 1997, from 11 a.m. to 12 noon.

The Ecumenical Patriarch occupies the foremost position among the National Autocephalous Orthodox Churches worldwide and has the responsibility to coordinate the affairs of the Russian, Eastern Europe, Middle, and Far Eastern churches. Worldwide, the Patriarch is the spiritual leader of 300 million Orthodox Christians of which 5 million reside in the United States.

Therefore, it is important that Members of Congress, as leaders of a nation that was built on religious freedom and tolerance, have an opportunity to receive and honor one of the world's preeminent religious leaders. Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew not only promotes peace and religious understanding throughout the world, but he is also profoundly committed to preserving and protecting the environment. Today, as the 270th successor to Apostle Andrew, His All Holiness continues efforts on behalf of religious freedom and human rights.

In closing support, is an expression of appreciation to the members of the Hellenic Caucus for their advocacy of this resolution as well as H.R. 2248, the recommendation to award the Patriarch with a Congressional Gold Medal, of which I am a proud cosponsor. H.R. 134 as introduced by BILIRAKIS from Florida, is a measure which provide the occasion to receive such an individual of high character and moral standing as His All Holiness in a manner befitting their rank and title.

A TRIBUTE TO THE JERRY L. PETTIS MEMORIAL VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like to bring to your attention the fine work and outstanding public service of the Jerry L. Pettis Memorial Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Loma Linda, CA. As the chairman of the House Appropriations Subcommittee that provides funding for veterans programs, including veterans medical care, I am especially proud of this facility at this historic moment. On Thursday, September 25, this fine facility will celebrate 20 years of service to veterans who live and work in southern California. My dear friend and predecessor in Congress, Shirley Pettis Roberson, will address those attending this very special ceremony at the medical center.

In June 1974, a large crowd gathered for the ground breaking to begin construction of this facility. The first patient was admitted in December 1977, realizing a dream and long-term goal of former Congressman Jerry Pettis. Jerry Pettis was a good man and a close personal friend. Today, his legacy lives on through the commitment and fine work of the men and women who strive to serve our veterans with great care and respect. Jerry Pettis would certainly be proud of this fine institution and the many worthy people it serves.

The Pettis VA Medical Center has 125 acute care beds and 106 nursing home beds. With a budget of approximately \$109 million, over 600 volunteers, and over 1,200 employees, the facility last year alone, had over 6,500 admissions and over 230,000 outpatient visits. Working closely with Loma Linda University in many areas of clinical research and study, the medical center continues to conduct critical work in a variety of scientific disciplines.

In addition, the Pettis VA Medical Center has vigorously explored ways of providing the best possible service to the more than 290,000 veterans in Riverside County and San Bernardino County. The recently opened Victorville outpatient clinic, for example, has greatly improved access to primary care for thousands of veterans in California's high desert region.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me and our colleagues in paying special tribute to the Jerry L. Pettis Memorial VA Medical Center on its 20th anniversary. All of us owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to our veterans, and we also owe a special thanks to the memory of our good friend and former colleague, for whom this facility is named. To both Jerry Pettis, and our veterans, Congress thanks you—and salutes you—on this historic day.

IN HONOR OF KEITH AND ANNE MEDEIROS

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to commend Keith and Anne Medeiros for their distinguished careers of service to the community of Fremont, California. For 42 years, Keith and Anne lived in the Fremont area. In that time, they consistently worked to make our community a better place. Both have been dedicated to the field of education as elementary school teachers. Keith Medeiros also served as school principal, and as a member of the Alameda County Board of Education. Anne Medeiros taught English as a second language.

Their service to the community has been diverse. Keith Medeiros worked as an Indian Guide Dad, a Pathfinder Toastmaster, a Chamber of Commerce activist, a Fremont Rotarian, an on and off stage actor and toastmaster, and a Washington Township Men's Club member. Anne Medeiros served the community as a representative for Congressman Don Edwards, and as a board member for the Serra Center and the Committee to Restore the Mission. They shared their talents as members of the Fremont Gourmet Club, the Fremont Dance Club, and the Fremont Kite

Flyers. They have been world-wide travelers, goodwill ambassadors, and advocates for historic Mission San José.

Keith and Anne Medeiros set a new standard as innkeepers for those whose travels took them to the Bay Area. Their hospitality was a welcome respite for travelers.

On September 22, 1997 the friends and colleagues of Keith and Anne Medeiros will honor their many years of community service. I join my neighbors as they extend a thank you to Keith and Anne for all they have done for Fremont.

TRIBUTE TO ST. RAYMOND NONNATUS PARISH

HON. JOSÉ E. SERRANO

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 23, 1997

Mr. SERRANO. Mr. Speaker, it is an honor for me to pay tribute to the Parish of St. Raymond Nonnatus, which yesterday celebrated 100 years of serving the community in my South Bronx congressional district.

The parish was named after a 13th century Spanish mercedarian and cardinal. It is located at 1759 Castle Hill Avenue, in the Bronx.

A mass of Thanksgiving offered by Archbishop John Cardinal O'Connor opened the ceremonies of the parish's 100th anniversary. The church belongs to the family of parishes that were established in the late 1890's in New York City; among them is Holy Family Parish, which this year also celebrates its 100th anniversary.

The origins of St. Raymond Nonnatus Parish date back to 1843. A small church was erected under the leadership of Bishop John Hughes. In the 1890's Father Edward McKenna saw the church in poor condition and decided to erect a new building. The church was built in 1897 in a beautiful Byzantine style, with wonderful stained-glass windows.

Since its beginnings, the church has served a multiethnic community. In the early 1900's Catholics from all over Europe were members of the congregation. More recently, African-Americans and members of the Hispanic and Asian communities have joined the parish.

In 1908, under the pastorate of Father McKenna, a school was established to educate the children of the community. In the 1950's, Father Thaddeus Tierney oversaw the construction of a new school of accommodate the growing number of students. Even today, it remains one of the best equipped elementary schools in the Nation.

In addition, two other schools were established, the Boy's High School in 1958, and St. Raymond's Academy for Girls in 1960. A convent, a rectory and a cemetery are also integral parts of the parish.

Since the 1970's a social ministry was expanded to better serve the needs of the community. Monsignor Henry J. Vier added a Spanish mass to the Sunday schedule. He also established the Bronx Association for Special Education, the Archdiocesan Drug Addiction Program and the East Bronx Hunger Program.

Through the years, the church has been renovated several times. It now houses a magnificent marble altar, a great canopy, and an organ.