

celebrates 10 years of excellence at a Gala on November 13, 1998 at The Power Center.

The Imani School is a private, Christian co-educational school serving children from pre-school through eighth grade. Founded in 1988 by Windsor Village United Methodist Church, it began with 25 three- and four-year-olds. Today, the enrollment for 1998-99 includes 450 students, with a waiting list of more than 100 applicants each year. The school is accredited by the National Private Schools Accreditation Alliance, and admission is open to all students on a first come, first serve basis.

The Imani School has earned a national and international reputation for academic excellence and service to the community. The School has been featured on numerous television programs, including on CBS television as a "Cool School" for its outstanding community service, on NBC Today Weekend, and on a British Broadcasting Company program broadcast around the globe. Its success has attracted many dignitaries, including First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, Texas Governor George W. Bush, former Governor Ann Richards, and Houston Mayor (and former director of the U.S. Office of Drug Control Policy) Lee Brown, who hailed Imani as "one of the finest schools in the nation".

The Imani School's record certainly backs up these claims. Ninety percent of all former Imani students who enter area public schools for the first time place in classes for the academically gifted. SAT scores for the school surpass the national average in both reading and math at every grade level. Students in fifth through eighth grades won a gold medal for "Best of Show", as well as first and second place awards, at the Regional Association of Christian Schools International Science Fair. In addition, Imani students received seven out of ten of the first awards given at the 1997 NTA Regional Science fair sponsored by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Imani students also were awarded first and second place in the primary division and first in the intermediate division in the area Juneteenth Black History Essay contest.

The Imani School is also involved in positive school/community partnership efforts including a collaboration with the Garden Terrace Retirement Home, where students in the third to eighth grades make weekly trips to do crafts, entertain, or just visit with elderly residents. Also, middle school students join preschoolers and parents to repair and paint homes and provide food, clothing, and toys to needy families. Each summer, the Imani School provides summer camp programs to residents of the Patrice House, a shelter for abused and neglected children. Imani students also speak before corporations including Exxon and Chevron and at educational events throughout the community.

The Imani School has also achieved athletic success. At the end of Imani's first season in the Private School Basketball League, two students were chosen All Tournament Players.

To the students, their families, and faculty of the Imani School, I say congratulations. Your hard work and dedication is paying off. To the Windsor Village United Methodist Church, I say thank you for having the wisdom to start the Imani School and the fortitude to keep it strong. Your efforts have produced a school that is an example of the educational success that can be achieved with a supportive community, dedicated parents and teachers, and a commitment to innovation and excellence.

IN MEMORY OF A HERO AND A PASTOR, REV. EDWARD CONNORS

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 2, 1998

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, it has been nearly thirteen years since the Rev. Edward T. Connors, retired pastor of Immaculate Conception parish and chaplain of the 9th "Yankee" Infantry Division during World War II, passed away on January 28, 1986, but his memory and spiritual inspiration still remain strong in Central Massachusetts.

Father Connors received many awards and honors throughout his lifetime, including the Silver Star, one of our nation's highest honors for heroism, for rescuing a soldier from "no man's land" through a mine field that was considered suicidal to cross. He was also honored frequently for his life's work in the Worcester region, including the Fourth Degree Patriotism Award from Bishop O'Reilly Assembly, Knights of Columbus, in 1980, and the Crusader of the Year award from Holy Cross College in 1981. In 1985, he was honored by 1,600 at a testimonial at Worcester Auditorium.

Many families and veterans, clergy and faculty, from the cities and towns of Worcester, Northbridge, Grafton, North Grafton and Whitinsville still remember his courage, humor, intelligence and dedication as a pastor, community leader, and humanitarian.

In his memory, and on behalf of all whose lives were touched by this pastor and gentleman of distinction, I would like to enter into this RECORD the January 30, 1986 article in the Worcester Telegram and Gazette describing his deeds and his contributions to our nation.

[From the Worcester Telegram and Gazette Thursday, Jan. 30, 1986]

REV. EDWARD CONNORS, RETIRED IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PASTOR

The Rev. Edward T. Connors, 80, retired pastor of Immaculate Conception parish and chaplain of the 9th "Yankee" Infantry Division during World II, died Tuesday in St. Francis Home, 37 Thorne St.

He lived at 87-5 Park Ave.

Father Connors was chaplain of the 9th Infantry Division during the invasions of Tunisia, Sicily, Italy, France, Belgium and Germany—invasions which cost the division 4,581 lives during the war.

After he was discharged from service in 1945, Father Connors returned as a curate at St. Peter's Church.

In 1950 he was named pastor of St. Phillip's Church in Grafton. He was also pastor at St. Mary's parish in North Grafton before becoming pastor of Immaculate Conception parish in Worcester in 1952. During his pastorate at Immaculate Conception, the parish built a new church in 1957. He retired in 1980.

Born in Whitinsville, he was a son of Bartholomew J. and Mary (Haggerty) Connors.

He graduated from Northbridge High School and from Holy Cross College in 1927. He studied at St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore from 1927 to 1931, and was ordained in Springfield in 1931 by Bishop Thomas J. O'Leary.

He was assigned as curate of St. Peter's church and athletic director of St. Peter's High School in 1931, when the football team then won the state championship. Lester "Buster" Sheary, who was coaching three sports at St. Peter's when the new curate ar-

rived, recalled, "If anyone ever revived St. Peter's athletics, it was Father Ed."

And Joseph Walsh, St. Peter's basketball standout during Father Connors' second tour there after World War II, recalled his spirit: "He had a special enthusiasm for the athletes and the teams."

Two years after his arrival at St. Peter's, Father Connors joined Father James M. McCarron in forming the Catholic League for Worcester and County high school basketball teams.

In 1935, Father Connors was transferred to Sacred Heart Academy and a year later to St. Bernard's High School in Fitchburg, where he was athletic director until he entered the Army in 1942.

"CONNOR'S COFFEE SHOP"

Partly because of his pleading with military and church authorities, he was allowed to follow "his boys" into the front lines.

The legend of the chaplain's "coffee shop," his friendly mingling with enlisted men, his disregard for rank, his intense interest in "his boys" regardless of their religion, and his heroism long outlived the war.

In particular, "Connors' Coffee Shop" was a tradition among the troops of the 9th during any respite from battle. Brewed in a big aluminum pitcher and heated on a ration-can stove with kerosene, the coffee was simply boiled and served. When the coffee ran low, Father Connors just added more grounds and water.

"We never dared get all the way down to the bottom of the pot," he mused. "We were afraid of what we might find in it. There was a quarter-inch cake of coffee on the sides of it to add to the flavor, and there were days when the men claimed they had to chew it—it was too strong to drink."

Father Connors was awarded the Silver Star for rescuing a soldier from "No Man's Land" through a mine field that was considered suicidal to cross.

One veteran of the 9th, of the Greek Orthodox faith, recalled Father Connors as "a great chaplain . . . he was right down in front when it all counted. He was one of the troops."

In recalling the growth of the ecumenical movement, he once said of the soldiers of the 9th, "We didn't talk it; we've lived it . . . It was no big deal for us. This was the way we lived those years: Dedicated to our own faith, praying together in a common purpose." He told of a Jewish chaplain who was shelled and dying in a battlefield in France.

"He asked for my blessing before dying. Not absolution," he added. "He died a strong, dedicated Jew, but wanted my blessing. We all must have a faith. We must believe in it. Stand up for it. But—we can all pray together."

During the war, he became a close friend of Gen. William C. Westmoreland, later Army chief of staff.

When he returned to Worcester after the war, Father Connors yearned for a reunion with his 9th Division comrades. So he launched a yearly tradition in his home parish, then St. Peter's parish. The reunion and memorial Mass were conceived, he said, to celebrate the living and honor the dead of the 9th.

HONORED MANY TIMES

Father Connors received numerous awards, including the Fourth Degree Patriotism Award from Bishop O'Reilly Assembly, Knights of Columbus, in 1980, Crusader of the Year award from Holy Cross College in 1981.

Of his parishioners, Father Connors said, "I hope I have inspired them as much as they inspired me."

In March 1985, he was honored by 1,600 at a testimonial at Worcester auditorium.

Bishop Bernard J. Flanagan then called Father Connors "a good friend and an example of a dedicated and zealous priest."

The Rev. Paul T. O'Connell, his associate for 10 years at Immaculate Conception Church, said Father Connors had really taught him "the good things in life."

And President Ronald Reagan wrote from the White House, "Your spirit of patriotism and your spirit of faith is the same that built America."

Father Connors was spiritual director for 35 years of the Worcester Diocesan Council of Catholic Nurses. He was also chaplain for Division 36 of the Ancient Order of Hibernians in Worcester and chaplain of the St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee in Worcester.

He was a member of the Emerald Club.

He leaves several cousins.

The funeral will be tomorrow with a concelebrated Mass at 11 a.m. in Immaculate Conception Church, 353 Grove St. Bishop Timothy J. Harrington will be principal celebrant. Burial will be at 2 p.m. tomorrow in St. Patrick's Cemetery, Whitinsville.

Calling hours at the church are 2 to 9 p.m. today.

A wake service will be there at 7 p.m. today. Members of Division 36, Ancient Order of Hibernians, will convene at 7 p.m. to attend the service.

It is requested flowers be omitted. Memorial donations may be made to the Clergy Fund of the Diocese of Worcester, 49 Elm St.

Athy Memorial Home, 111 Lancaster St., is directing arrangements.

INDIAN PRIME MINISTER'S APPEARANCE MET WITH LARGE PROTEST

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 2, 1998

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee went to the United Nations in New York last week. He was met by about 200 protestors, mostly Sikhs, Kashmiri Muslims, and others, who were there to protest Indian nuclearization of South Asia and demand freedom for their people. This protest did not get as much coverage in the media as you might have expected under normal circumstances, so it is appropriate to take note of it here.

The demonstration was led by Sikh youth in the New York area and the President of the Richmond Hill (N.Y.) Gurdwara. The demonstrators shouted slogans against Indian nuclear-weapons development. They also shouted slogans like "India stop genocide" as well as slogans for Sikh independence.

In a flyer circulated at the demonstration, the organizers wrote that "Vajpayee's government is responsible for plunging South Asia into a nuclear arms race. They are taking India towards a bloody confrontation with neighboring countries that could involve the entire world."

India has recently deployed its Agni and Prithvi missiles in Punjab, Khalistan. Some of these missiles are capable of reaching parts of the United States. This deployment greatly increases the likelihood of war in South Asia, a war we now know can easily become nuclear.

The Indian government has also practiced genocide against the minorities it rules. It has murdered over 250,000 Sikhs since 1984,

more than 200,000 Christians in Nagaland since 1947, almost 60,000 Muslims in Kashmir since 1988, and ten of thousands of Assamese, Manipuris, Tamils, Dalits, and others. The government paid thousands of cash bounties to police officers who killed Sikhs!

This is why the organizers wrote that "the Indian government's main mission is Hindu, Hindi, Hindustan. There is no room for Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, or Christians. A religiously intolerant government can never be democratic."

While India pursues this undemocratic, imperialist objective, it takes the average Indian worker three days' pay just to buy a box of Corn Flakes. Half the population of the country lives below the international poverty line, which is substantially lower than the U.S. poverty line. Yet America officially supports this repressive, hegemonic country. We must be a beacon for freedom in South Asia.

Mr. Speaker, the United States must codify the sanctions now in place against India. We must stop providing aid to this repressive regime. And finally, we must put this Congress on record in support of a free and fair plebiscite in Punjab, Khalistan and in Kashmir—the latter in accord with India's 50-year-old promise to the United Nations.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Dr. Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, for bringing this event to my attention. I would also like to insert the Burning Punjab article on the demonstration and the flyer from that event into the RECORD for the information of my colleagues. I hope that this information will help make it clear to us all just what kind of country India really is.

[From the Burning Punjab News, Sept. 26, 1998]

SIKHS AND OTHERS HOLD LARGE PROTEST AGAINST INDIAN PRIME MINISTER'S UN VISIT (By Atam Inder Singh)

NEW YORK.—A large numbers of Sikhs came to the United Nations in New York on Thursday to protest the appearance of Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. In addition, Kashmiri Muslims and other victims of Indian tyranny protested simultaneously. Protestors distributed a large number of flyers to passers-by. They shouted slogans of "India stop genocide," and "Raj Kare Ga Khalsa", as well as slogans against Indian nuclear weapons development. Agni and Prithvi missiles have been deployed in Punjab. The flyer pointed out that "Vajpayee is the leader of the BJP, the militant Hindu fanatic party in India, and is the head of a repressive, fascist government that oppresses its minorities and is unfriendly to the United States." The flyer said that "Vajpayee's government is responsible for plunging South Asia into a nuclear arms race. They are taking India towards a bloody confrontation with neighboring countries that could involve the entire world," it said. The flyer took note of the deployment of Agni and Prithvi missiles in Punjab, of its support of the nuclear efforts of rogue states like Iraq, and of the murders of large numbers of minorities living under Indian rule. The Indian government has eliminated large numbers of Sikhs since 1984, over 200,000 Christians in Nagaland since 1947, almost 60,000 Kashmiri Muslims since 1988, and tens of thousands of Assamese, Tamils, Manipuris, Dalits, and others. "The Indian Government's main agenda is Hindu, Hindi, Hindustan," the flyer said. "There is no room for Muslims,

Sikhs, Buddhists, or Christians. A religiously intolerant government can never be democratic," it said. "On behalf of the Sikh Nation, I salute the organizers of this demonstration, especially Gurpreet Singh and the President of the Richmond Hill Gurdwara, Mr. Balwinder Singh Cheema," said Gurmit Singh Aulakh, President of the Council of Khalistan, the organization that leads the peaceful, democratic, nonviolent struggle to free the Sikh Nation. "This effort was mostly done by the educated Sikh youth," he added.

PROTEST AGAINST NUCLEAR ARMS BUILDUP

The American Sikh community and its supporters are gathering at the United Nations on September 24th 1998, to protest the visit of the Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Mr. Vajpayee is the leader of the BJP, the militant Hindu nationalist party in India, and is the head of a repressive, fascist government that oppresses its minorities and is unfriendly to the United States:

Mr. Vajpayee's government is responsible for plunging Southeast Asia into a Nuclear arms race. They are taking India towards a bloody confrontation with neighboring countries that could involve the entire world. Earlier this year, two members of the BJP publicly called for Pakistan to become part of India.

The Indian government has deployed its Agni and Prithvi missiles in Punjab, Khalistan greatly increasing the likelihood of war and putting the lives of Sikhs and other minorities at risk.

Indian has provided heavy water to Iran and is now working closely with Saddam Hussein's regime in Iraq. India votes against the United States at the United Nations more often than any other country except Castro's Cuba. India publicly supported the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

The Indian government's main agenda is "Hindu, Hinda, Hindustan (India)". There is no room for Muslims, Sikhs, Buddhists, for Christians. A religiously intolerant government can never be democratic.

The government made every effort to disrupt the first meeting of the Punjab People's Commission, which was set up to investigate human-rights violations at Punjab. They cancelled the reservation the commission had for meeting space and tried to influence other facilities not to grant them space. The People's Commission issued citations to 90 police officers and now has received 3,000 more cases. The Indian government has spent over 20 million Rupees in legal fees to protect the police officers that have carried out these atrocities.

On July 23, Indian police arrested human-rights activist Jaspal Singh Dhillion and his attorney on a false charge. Dhillion worked with Jaswant Singh Khaira on his report which showed that the police abducted, tortured, and murdered tens of thousands of Sikh youth, then declared their bodies "unidentified" and cremated them, a policy the Indian Supreme Court called "worse than a genocide."

In August, it was reported that death squads from the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) are going into villages in the Faridkot district of Punjab and murdering villagers.

To date, Amnesty International and other Human Rights organizations have been denied access to Punjab to witness for themselves the atrocities that the Sikhs are suffering.

Please join us and raise your voice to condemn Nuclear India and support human rights for Sikhs and all minorities in India.