

## **Red Balloons**

**By Joseph Schaefer**

The liturgy committee met frequently to brainstorm creative ideas for liturgy celebrations at St. John's parish community. In 1974 we hit upon the brilliant idea of festooning the exterior of the Wilde Lake Interfaith Center on the Feast of Pentecost with red balloons. A half dozen parishioners volunteered to prepare; I acquired a helium tank and someone bought a box of large red balloons and spools of string. On Saturday afternoon the crew assembled and prepared the balloons. About seven in the morning on Pentecost Sunday, we assembled again and took our trophies to the roof of the Interfaith Center and attached them to all the outstanding pipes, protrusions and fixtures on the roof... about 75 balloons in all on long strings.

What we did not count on was the wind - a steady 10 mph with gusts up to about 20 mph. Instead of rising gloriously into the Pentecost morning sky, the balloons simply blew over the side and down into the courtyard by the front doors. Not one stood up into the sky as we had pictured. Our disappointment was great, but it was soon exceeded by the delight of the children who arrived with their families for mass and were greeted by the tethered balloons bouncing on the ground, prizes they were able to remove and take home. And another great Pentecost liturgy which brought many smiles and stories to tell for parishioners at St. John's.