

PUBLIC LOVES VOUCHERS; COURT'S DON'T

When the poor are given a real choice in education, they overwhelmingly opt to send their children to Catholic schools. That's what was learned in New York City this fall in a novel program.

Last year, New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani instituted the School Choice Scholarship Foundation. A lottery was established to allow parents of poor children to qualify for \$1,400 in a grant that would permit them to choose the private school of their choice for their children. More than 22,700 applications were filed—more than twice the expected number—and the result was that 70% of the families of the 1,300 winners chose Catholic schools.

Unfortunately, the courts are still throwing up roadblocks to school choice. Just before the school year began, an appeals court in Wisconsin decided that a voucher program in Milwaukee was unconstitutional because it allowed children to use vouchers to attend parochial schools. The decision is now on appeal to Wisconsin's Supreme Court.

There surely will be something to celebrate when the courts finally ratify the sentiments of the court of public opinion. Meanwhile, plans like those in New York City will have to suffice.