

Members See DPC as Serious Responsibility

Nine newly elected members of the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) were interviewed this past week. The first question asked was: "Why did you accept nomination to the DPC?" Mrs. Charlotte Riordan of Auburn responded that "as a member of the Parish Council at Holy Family, I reviewed the proposed DPC Constitution. It seemed vital and alive and I thought it had good potential. I felt it would be exciting to be a part of it."

Her statement capsulizes the reactions of the other elected members interviewed. All were very pleased to be a part of the DPC. However, mixed with this feeling of excitement was some apprehension with what they, as members, could accomplish.

All felt a strong responsibility to represent the needs of the people in the region or the group which elected them. Frank Mockevicius of St. George's Parish in Rochester remarked that "we will always have some pain in our growing as Church, but if the Diocesan Pastoral Council is to be truly consultative it must have input from each region. I see this as my responsibility."

Sister Mary Judith Heberle, Superior General of the Sisters of Mercy, and a member of the DPC elected through the Sisters Council, expressed the hope that "I can assist in establishing tentative goals for the diocese. Because of my past experiences in groups, both local and national, in setting up goals and

objectives, I feel I can facilitate this process. I also hope that I can represent the concerns, hopes and dreams of the religious women in our diocese so we can fully and faithfully contribute to the building of God's Kingdom."

Many members hope to challenge the DPC to expand the diocese's thinking beyond parish boundaries. Mrs. Marilyn Muench of St. John of Rochester Parish in Perinton has been actively involved in programs for adults in the church since 1967. She hopes that she can share this experience in the DPC. "I'm very interested in human development programs and liturgical programs at the adult level, for example, the new form of the Anointing of the Sick," family Eucharistic ministers to nursing homes and the world hunger issue."

Joseph Mercier, of Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Greece, summing up his responsibility stated: "I feel it is part of my duty as a member of the Church to share my insights as a lay person in terms of where the Church is and in what direction it should go. I do not consider the DPC a lay council, but the forum where the Church can be heard in its fullest sense and where our Bishop will listen to the concerns that are expressed."

The responses to "What issues should the Diocesan Pastoral Council address itself to?" varied a great deal. Mrs. Glenna Wickline of Candor in the

Tompkins-Tioga Region feels respond to human development. It's so easy to put money in a collection and feel you've done your Christian duty, but it's harder to respond personally and also work in your own area."

Mrs. Elaine Gotham, of St. Mary's Parish in Canandaigua, would like to see adult education as an issue. "I feel that young married couples and expectant parents need a lot of help." She also sees the Church becoming more involved in social issues "so that we can care for the needs of the people in our own community."

Liturgy is a priority of William Recktenwald of Danville in the Livingston-Steuben Region. "I would like to help the middle-aged parishioner feel more comfortable with liturgical changes. Our area has three churches within five miles and each one presents a different style of liturgy. There is no uniformity for procedures and this is confusing."

Three of the nine members interviewed are visiting parishes in their regions in preparation for the convocation of the DPC on June 13. James Chisholm, of Immaculate Conception Parish in Rochester, stated that "I am getting together with the other two elected members from this region so we can divide up the region and get out to our parishes to see what they feel the issues are." He feels that "we must begin to work on a collectivized level rather than continuing to regard our parishes as individual fiefdoms."

Mrs. Muench and Mrs. Gotham already have divided up the parishes with the other two representatives in their regions. Mrs. Muench has planned to

attend four different parish council meetings. From these meetings she is sure she will have "a better idea of what our concerns should be."



The elected members from each region and the Priests Council and Sisters Council will meet with Father Douglas Hoffman, director of Pastoral

Ministry, and Father Peter Bayer, the diocesan planner, prior to the DPC convocation. Through these meetings they will come to know other elected members and have the opportunity to discuss questions they have about the DPC.

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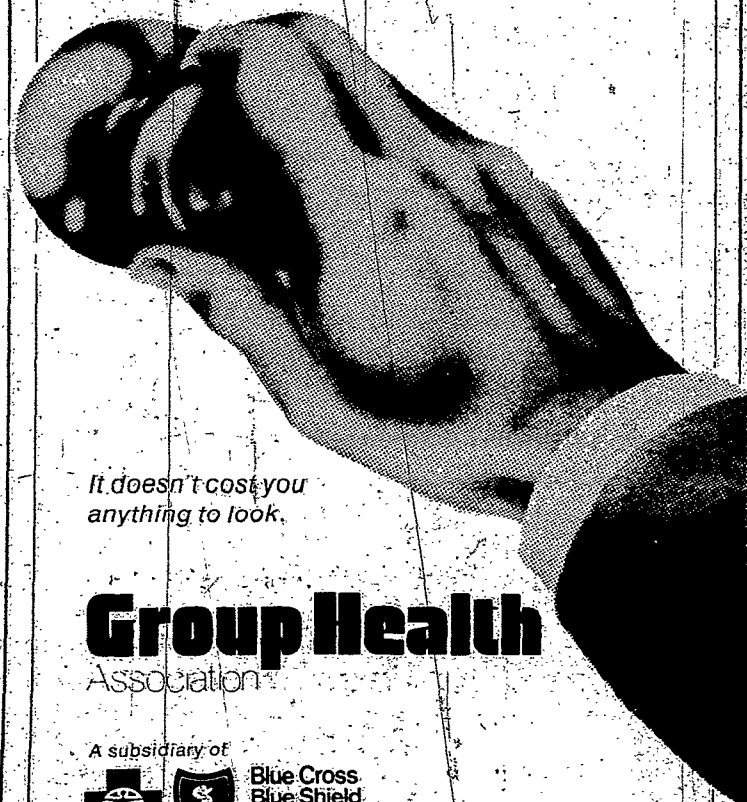
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