

# DPC Goals: Parish Councils Lead List

By JOHN DASH

When the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) held its first convocation last June, it set as its first priority for the diocese "to establish active and representative parish councils operating in accordance with diocesan guidelines in 85 per cent of the parishes of the diocese."

Framers of that resolution, technically called a "goal," gathered at Becket Hall recently to discuss the impact of their work and its effectiveness for the next convocation, slated in September.

Mrs. Nancy Werner, liaison member between the DPC and the Southeast Region, said that she is "very pleased" with the councils' action in giving the goal top priority. "The council brought all its experiences of involvement," she said, "it recognized that parish councils are important elements in that involvement."

James Chisholm noted that the term "active" was a source of debate in the goal-setting group. Chisholm, who is a representative from the Southwest region and who is on the Executive Committee of the council, noted that the original statement read "effective."

The term was changed, he said, because the group considered "effectiveness" of a parish council to be an unmeasurable.

Mrs. Helen Mura questioned the percentage in the goal. Representing the Northwest region, Mrs. Mura noted that discussion with her contacts revealed puzzlement over the figure.

"People don't recognize that there are parishes where there cannot be a parish council," she said. Samuel Giambra, representing the Southeast Region, and Chisholm agreed, saying that the group settled on 85 per cent as a "reasonable number."

## How DPC Ranked Goal Statements

	A High Priority	B Middle Priority	C Low Priority	Rank Order
<b>SOCIAL MISSION</b> To devise and set in motion in 80% of the parishes, Human Development programs that fully utilize community resources to meet local needs.	42	7	1	2
To design and establish resource centers in two rural areas to respond to problems of migrants and the rural poor.	36	18	2	7
To establish a diocesan office to advocate and activate the principles of peace and justice through political processes.	18	18	14	18
To establish voluntary, inter-parochial committees to identify and respond to neighborhood issues.	11	15	24	24
To broaden the scope of the diocesan Ecumenical Office to engage in cooperative efforts in fulfilling the social mission of the church.	20	17	13	12
To establish a program for medical/moral decision-making for the diocese of Rochester by 1977.	20	15	15	12
<b>PASTORAL ORGANIZATION</b> To establish active and representative parish councils operating in accordance with diocesan guidelines, in 85% of the parishes of the diocese.	43	6	1	1
To establish active and representative regional conferences that facilitate inter-parish planning and programming.	18	24	8	18
To establish the Diocesan Pastoral Council as an effective consultative body according to its constitution.	35	9	6	6
To establish regional centers for the non-metropolitan areas to increase availability of diocesan personnel for consultant services and training programs.	40	7	3	3
To design and implement diocesan guidelines for parish councils, in 90% of the parishes.				

(Overlaps substantially with first above, discarded in prioritizing process).



Photo montage by John Dash

Members of the DPC's pastoral organization group include

(left to right) Mrs. Helen Mura, Mrs. Nancy Werner, Samuel Giambra and James Chisholm.

Examples of such communities, according to the pastoral office, are downtown transient parishes, some parishes headed by pastors nearing retirement, and other parishes headed by pastors who do not feel they have the time to get councils started.

The pastoral office cautioned, however, that the examples cited represent reasons why there is not today a 100 per cent figure. The ideal is 100 per cent, although that is physically unattainable because of a lack of present resources.

The group therefore settled on 85 per cent as a "realistic number," the office said.

The group, working under the title of Pastoral Organization, last June actually developed three goals as a package. The remaining two read: "To establish active and representative regional conferences that facilitate inter-parish planning and programming" (ranked 18 in a list of 27 priorities by the DPC); and "To establish the diocesan pastoral council as an effective consultative body according to its constitution."

The last was ranked sixth and developed from a suggestion by Dr. Felix Lopez, a management psychologist who is developing the goal-setting process for the diocese.

A fourth goal, which Mrs. Mura calls "my baby," is the group's attempt to increase diocesan services outside the metropolitan

area "To establish regional centers for the non-metropolitan areas to increase availability of diocesan personnel for consultant services and training programs."

It seems to Mrs. Mura that "all facilities, resources, diocesan offices, including the Bishops, are centered in Monroe County and the Rochester area — and not giving enough to non-metropolitan areas." The goal drew a rank of three from the DPC.

Mrs. Werner concurred in Mrs. Mura's assessment, saying that there must be "an increase in programs for these areas."

Mrs. Mura stressed the practicality of such placement.

Father Peter Bayer, diocesan planning director, citing the recently strengthened authorizations of the regional coordinators, said that the coordinator's function is precisely to represent the bishop.

Chisholm and Mrs. Mura countered that the use of diocesan services is in direct relation to their availability. Mrs. Mura cited, in particular, access to the marriage tribunal.

The whole concept of Pastoral Organization with regionalism, the development of parish councils and diocesan consultative bodies still causes some discomfort for some members of the team.

Mrs. Werner, who says she was raised in the "traditional" faith, nevertheless sees such development as "basically at the bishop's own request; he would like to have the feelings of the lay people." She recognizes that if "you just sit back and say 'let Father do it,' you're not making a contribution."

Chisholm, who also confesses to a "traditional" upbringing, noted, "I sense what we are embarking on is to relate to needs of the people. The Church today is just not going to exist unless people's needs are articulated and reorganization (of the Church) is done around those needs."

Giambra is pleased with the recent upsurge in lay activity in the Church.

Father Bayer noted that the reorganization "really flows from Scripture."

He says that Baptism gives each church member a share in the responsibility for the Church as a whole.

Pastoral organization members are now eliciting reactions from their constituencies reactions to both the goals and the priorities as a prelude to the September convocation.

Other members of the team are Father Douglas Hoffman, Mrs. Charlotte Riordan, Sister Louise Weber, Paul Conley, Thomas Kochan and Mrs. Marian Geiser. Facilitators for the goal-setting session were Sister Mary Jane Mitchell and Dr. Lopez.

## Social Mission: Mixed Emotions

By JOHN DASH

At times the Diocesan Pastoral Council's social mission group seems elated and at other times disappointed. The group was charged during the June convocation to prepare goals relating to the social mission of the Church for voting by the entire council.

The DPC placed the group's proposal to establish Human Development programs second only to the establishment of parish councils in diocesan priority.

But the groups' proposal to set up an office promoting Peace and Justice came in 24th on the priorities list.

Elmira's Harry Seebach noted, however, that the present goals are "not set in concrete." Understanding this, he noted, the group will come to a better understanding of the needs of the diocese. The liaison member from the Chemung-Schuyler Region likened the goal-setting process to "a tray of rings. Some like one stone, someone else another. There's enough there for everyone."

The entire council ranked the establishment of Human Development programs in parishes second only to the establishment of parish councils in diocesan priority.

J. Raymond Hensler noted that his group "thought that was extremely important because it reflects the growing awareness that the (Human Development) program should be one of the major thrusts of the diocese."

The sentiment is shared by Mrs. Rose Means who thinks "Human Development programs are the best way to serve our mission."

Father Sebastian Falcone, the convocation's keynote speaker and facilitator for the social mission group (although not a member of the DPC), was "personally pleased" with the council's acceptance of the Human Development goal. "I really feel it is meeting a need as it now exists," he said.

Lorraine Cappellino, however, considers the whole proposal "redundant and stupid."

Hensler, representing the Southeast Region, further commented that he sees a need to incorporate an ecumenical dimension into the goal.

He has a feeling that "these kinds of activities cannot be effective without other faith groups," he said. He further feels that ecumenical "talk" is "going nowhere" and that community action programs may provide a base for ecumenism.

A specific goal which reads "to

broaden the scope of the diocesan Ecumenical Office to engage in cooperative efforts in fulfilling the social mission of the Church," was ranked 12th in diocesan priority by the council.

Another of the group's proposals, to establish a diocesan office "to advocate and activate the principles of peace and justice through political processes," was the subject of much discussion between Ms. Cappellino and Mrs. Means.

Had she known that the council's mood was generally unfavorable to the proposal, Ms. Cappellino, who is representing the "New Role of Women in Church and Society" as an episcopal appointee, would "have spoken more forcefully" for the establishment of such an office.

She plans to pursue the topic in the September convocation because she feels "it's a strong point for the DPC to pick up the ball and carry it through." She also expressed misgivings over a process under way to create such an office through other channels.

Mrs. Means felt the political implications of the work of such an office gave the reason the council gave the rating of 18 to the priority.

Father Falcone, on the other hand, says that the language used in framing the goal was the chief reason for its low rating.

He considers the proposal "one of the tactical mistakes" of his group in that it employed "technical language" which didn't convey an "effective job description" for the proposed office.

One of the lowest ranked proposals (24) also came from the social mission group: "To establish voluntary, inter-parochial committees to identify and respond to neighborhood issues." It is the one issue that several group members had the most difficulty in framing in the prioritizing process.

Father Falcone said the council's reaction "really underlines the need for ongoing education in the process of making proposals." Specifically, he said the proposal's failure was due to the fact that "regionalism hasn't really been bought."

"We think parochially," he said. "People can think 'parish' and 'diocese' but not 'region'."

"Everybody's into protecting his own turf," Ms. Cappellino said. She noted that she wanted some specific mention made of the distinction between Central City and Inner City. Mrs. Means countered, "We worked on that. If you talk about the Inner City you're leaving poor country folks out."

Hensler acknowledged the proposal was "not clearly stated and didn't come to a good focus."