

Pastoral Center Departments . . . What They Do

In an effort to bring to life the annual diocesan financial statement [published in the Courier-Journal 12-31-76], the Bishop's Office has prepared a three-part series showing the various activities run by Pastoral Center departments. In this first part, the work of the Pastoral Ministry, Planning, Urban Ministry, Spanish Apostolate, and Black Ministries will be the topic.

At present Bishop Joseph L. Hogan has available from parish support about \$2 per year for each Catholic.

While correspondence and backup data get major attention in any central organization the fact is that there are specific program activities which are time-consuming, physical, and as anyone might imagine, sometimes disheartening and frequently humorous.

For example, more than a little work went into the setting up of the Diocesan Pastoral Council with its representation by regions, consultative bodies and Bishop Hogan's staff.

About 20 people gave a great amount of effort, about six months each, to bring together volunteers and communicants who set the first priorities for diocesan-wide goals.

The resources they had available helped them get a fair perspective of diocesan needs. It helped them to establish priorities. That result alone would be worth the Office of Pastoral Ministry, but besides that "several pieces of written material (such as Parish Council Guidelines, Central Service Manual, Service Audits for departments) have been prepared for Parish Councils. Training programs in several of the regions were made available to parish councils, staffs and coordinators.

"Problem solving, evaluation and education is always available while we maintain ongoing programs, such as the Parish Council Resource Bureau, the diocesan-wide newsletter, IMPACT, and surveys and studies of pastoral needs," said Father Douglas C. Hoffman, director of the Office of Pastoral Ministry.

Finishing up a program at St. John's Parish in Newark Valley, Father Hoffman said the afternoon meeting to discuss the meaning and goals of a Parish Council had great impact on himself and others in attendance.

For instance, Emile Stuhlmiller, parish Council chairperson said, "We saw first-hand just how we might use the resources of the diocese to vitalize our parish with the help of the Parish Council. Later we sought out ideas by talking with Joseph Smith (diocesan development director) and resource people in religious education and human development. There are so many things that can be done by using the resources of the central offices in establishing goals and priorities which we are beginning to do," she said.



Bishop Hogan and Father Hoffman, director of Pastoral Ministry.



Teaching is part of Spanish Apostolate work.

Working closely with the Office of Pastoral Ministry and open to other needs of parishes in its unique position as a central resource is the Office of Planning, directed by Father Peter T. Bayer.

"Our job is to establish a resource center not only for the collection of hard data from the multiple planning agencies throughout the United States and our own region, but to offer tangible guidelines that will enable the people of our diocese to plan for the future objectively," explained Father Bayer.

"Educating administrators about goal setting has been our primary role during the past few months," he said. "The office is about two years old and has admittedly taken up a major portion of time organizing a program. But the tools of planning are required if the Church is to be effective in a world whose values are changing so radically in such short periods of time."

"Meetings with consultative bodies and diocesan staff to work out mutual areas of concern is part of the nitty-gritty behind being able to offer as much resource information as possible," Father Bayer reports.

"For example, we are sometimes kidded about our planning room on the third floor of the Pastoral Center. The fact is that we have developed a very remarkable visual aid. By breaking down the regions on wall-size maps on which we can impose overlays of information and facts that indicate changes occurring throughout the Diocese, we can offer a tool that gives us all a functional access to information which on paper can appear to be just columns of numbers."

Such questions as these are important: How are the demographic patterns of the diocese shifting? How many Catholics are attending Mass in what areas, and how often? What parishes have educational programs and might be centers of activities for certain areas or regions, and what new factors are influencing potential changes in what regions? How can the Catholic community use this information for the advantage of the Gospel?

From such resource information as this, the Office of Urban Ministry and the Office of Black Ministry have both evolved. The Office of Black Ministry recently hired Father Jerome Robinson, O.P., as director.

The first team ministry in the diocese began this year involving a priest and two nuns. The priest speaks fluent Spanish.

The beginning of specific new programs to tie together the urban structures of the diocese with systems and approaches of ministry that can be effective has been instituted and is in the initial stages.

"How can we bring the healing power of the Church to the individual who is part of the highly compressed social group which is our central city population?" asks Monsignor George Cocuzzi, vicar for Urban Ministry.

"How can a country of Christians be fostered when the energies of the people are consumed simply in trying to survive? We are looking for new ways, new approaches," he says.

"For example, Sister Barbara Fox has been working in the past year to aid the children of minority parents to assimilate into parish schools not in the inner city. She also works with the parishes in their relations with the people of involved parishes," Msgr. Cocuzzi reports.

Recently, parish staffs in the northeastern quadrant of Rochester have banded together with the vicar to devise a plan to make parish clustering and team ministry a reality.

Participating in these conversations with Monsignor Cocuzzi and the others of the northeastern quadrant are members of the Spanish Apostolate Office. This department was initiated as a team effort to reach out to the Spanish speaking population. It is in the process of studying restructuring of its office. The participation in the dialogue with Msgr. Cocuzzi and the others is an investigation of the possibility of incorporating part of its present staff of five Mexican Sisters, two priests and one layperson in the staffs or parishes or other pastoral structures, such as new teams that may be a result of planning in the inner city of Rochester.

The staff as a team strives to minister to some of the 20,000-plus Spanish speaking people in the diocese, offering them the opportunity for Mass, the sacraments, religious education, home visits and counseling. This effort is principally made in areas where parishes for one reason or another have been unable to provide such services.

With the cooperation of various Rochester Spanish-speaking laymen the staff has been able to go to the farmworker living in migrant camps in Wayne, Yates, Livingston and Monroe counties.

The restructuring has provided the occasion for two of the Mexican Sisters working part-time at St. Michael, Newark, and St. Francis, Geneva.

A member of the Staff has also been very active in youth ministry bringing together young people from several parishes of the inner city of Rochester.

NEXT WEEK: Catholic Charities, its various agencies, and the Office of Human Development will be discussed.



Father Robinson, right, is installed as head of Black Ministries. At left is Msgr. George Cocuzzi, vicar for Urban Ministry, and Bishop Hogan stands in center.

Urban School System Run Up the Flagpole

By JOHN DASH

A "top level group of diocesan leaders" have been looking at a proposal that "the diocese, under the direction of the Urban Vicar, take the initiative in establishing, administering and partially funding an urban Catholic school system."

The group, which consists of regional coordinators, heads of the consultative bodies and others met at the Pastoral Office on Feb. 5 to

hear the proposal and to ask questions of Dr. Padraic O'Hare, of the education department who presented the proposal.

O'Hare said last week that the proposal is an attempt to "put organizational flesh" into Bishop Joseph L. Hogan's recent dictum to "arrive at a method of continuing the schools that offer their services to the poor."

"It's an incredibly preliminary

look at an enormously complex and volatile situation," O'Hare said.

He expects those who heard the proposal to give him input and recommendations on the situation. The proposal will then have to be presented to the consultative bodies of the diocese.

Involved in the restructuring would be the 28 parishes in the city of Rochester.

The Proposal reads that it "puts the diocese, in the persons of the bishop and the urban vicar, in the explicit position of taking the initiative in creating a vital form for the urban Catholic school ministry. Every consultation with the people and the leadership of the urban Church must take place, but what is being recommended is an episcopal policy to be urged on the consultative bodies and the people affected.

The proposal further calls for "clustering" of schools, and financing the system through the diocesan development program, parish sharing, solicitation of voluntary donations and Urban Ministry monies.

The proposal states that if Catholic schools will continue to serve the poor "then this program will have to be in place by September, 1978."