

Council Endorses Gay Civil Rights

By John Dash

For the second time in four years, the Diocesan Sisters Council has endorsed a statement promoting civil rights for homosexuals.

The council, meeting last Saturday, voted 21 to 3 with one abstention, to add its name to a statement published by the Catholic Coalition for Gay Civil Rights, a project of New Ways Ministry of Mt. Rainier, Md.

The statement says, in part, "We urge Catholic leaders in particular to take the lead in describing and defending the civil rights of gay persons . . . we strongly support protective legislation on all levels of society that guarantee gay persons the same basic human and civil rights enjoyed by all other groups, including rights relative to housing and accommodations . . ."

Other groups which have already signed the statement are the National Assembly of Women Religious, National Assembly of Religious Brothers, Association of Chicago Priests, National Coalition of American Nuns, Paulist Social Action Committee, Passionist Social Concern Center, N.J.; Thomas Merton Center, Pittsburgh; and the Quixote Center.

The sisters also gave unanimous consent to a motion by Sister Barbara Moore, RSM, president, to draft a letter to the people of Atlanta, Ga.

That letter, to be sent to the mayor of Atlanta, will communicate the council's "prayerful support" for the people of that city where 20 black children have been murdered.

"We are one with you in your pain and loss, and pray you will be delivered in this tragic time," the letter says.

Acting on a request from Bishop Matthew H. Clark, the

council also approved a schedule for establishing the office of the Vicar for Religious.

The sisters' schedule calls for publishing notices on the employment opportunity by March 31; completing resume reviews by April 30; beginning interviews May 1; sending recommendations to the bishop by May 31, at which time the bishop will conduct his own interviews.

The council hopes that the team will be hired by July 1 and the office will formally begin work Sept. 1.

The persons hired will be paid according to the diocesan salary scale, and have office expenses, transportation, secretarial services and an expense account.

The job notice will be published by religious congregations, the diocesan personnel department, the Canon Law Society of America, the National Vicars Service, and directors of personnel for other dioceses.

In other council action, the sisters were urged again to encourage writing letters to U.S. leaders on the question of military aid to El Salvador, and also to write letters on the "possible and impending" cuts in the food stamp and nutrition programs.


Both items were brought to the council by Sister Anne Urquhart, chairman of the social concerns committee. She called the proposed cuts in the food stamp program "systematic starvation."

The sisters also discussed their role in sponsoring controversial speakers in public forums. The question was aired by Sister Felicitas Welles, MSH, who noted that there appears to be a disparity of value when the council endorses a speaker whose views differ from those of the magisterium of the Church.

The council agreed to

discuss the matter further, but to make no resolution on the subject at present.

EL SALVADOR PANEL
A panel of speakers representing a wide spectrum of views, including members of the Rochester Peace and Justice Education Center and the diocesan International Justice and Peace Commission, will present a program on El Salvador at 8 p.m., Wednesday, April 1, at Temple, Brith Kodosh, 2131 Elmwood Ave.



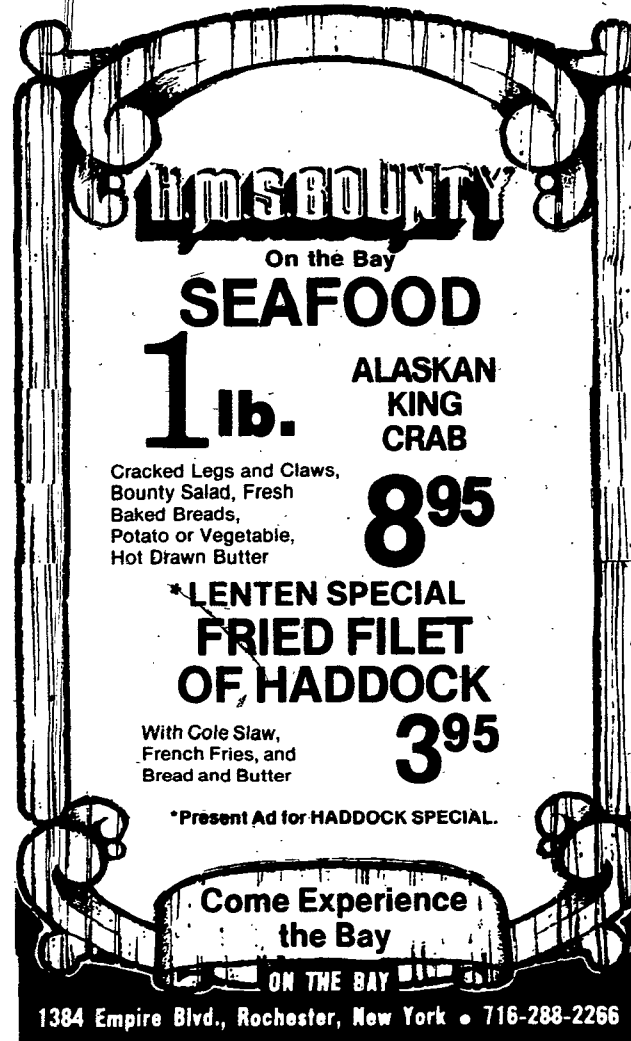
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Memorial Mass Planned

The Catholic Women's Club will celebrate their annual Memorial Mass for deceased members at noon on Sunday, March 29, at St. John the Evangelist Church in Greece. Committee members making plans for the celebration are, seated, from left, chairperson Margaret Seward and Ethel Flannery; standing, Carol Seward and Eleanor Kaiser. Mass will be followed by brunch at Ridgmont Country Club. Reservations at \$7 per person must be made by contacting the club before March 23.

Faith and Family

St. Joseph's Day

