

Bishop Suggests 3 Steps to Assist Needy in Diocese

My dear brother priests,

As your Bishop I share with you a ministerial responsibility for an attentive pastoral response to the needs of people for whom daily life is a question of constant economic struggle. For the past four months there has been a national debate about the need for cutbacks with regard to human services and new methods of funding and structuring programs to help those who have a legitimate demand for economic or program support. The exact cuts are not clear yet, but we can conclude that their effects will be deep. The federal budget restrictions will be followed by cutbacks in service at the state and local levels. Many people of all ages may be hurt and need new help from our parishes or diocesan agencies.

I am hopeful that we can prepare carefully to offer whatever help we are capable of. Certainly some parishes may be strained to their limits by persons who now must turn to us for assistance. Collectively we should examine ways, perhaps very small, that we can provide effective help after the example of the Good Samaritan. Specifically, I want to suggest three steps which I think will promote a special alertness during the coming year.

First, I would ask that parish staffs, human development committees, and parish councils reflect on ways in which the local Church might offer some response to new needs. Discussion with neighborhood agencies, other churches, and informed leadership may be helpful in this process. I have asked that our diocesan agencies be prepared to support you in this type of discussion. As a hopeful people, we need creative thinking and planning so that we can fulfill our vocation to bring the practical love of Christ to new social situations.

Second, I am concerned about the new support that certain parish staffs may need. Urban and rural parishes may face a sharp increase in requests for help. Other more affluent parishes may be able to mobilize special resources in response. All need to be well informed about the services that the Diocese or social agencies have organized to help. As pastor, consider delegating a person or persons for the period of one year to promote appropriate ways of responding to immediate needs or sharing resources with poorer parishes. I will make my staff available to support these people.

Third, I note that all levels of leadership profess a genuine concern for the real needs of people. Pastors and lay leaders of a parish have a unique knowledge of genuine needs. For the sake of our Church and for the sake of our Nation, please reflect on the proper role of the Church in dialoguing with our political leaders about these needs.

I make these requests to stimulate creative thinking and adequate preparation. It is important that we prepare now for future needs. Anxious waiting followed by surprise at the demands that come to us does not fulfill our call to stewardship. I appreciate your concern and your support in this effort. I have listed below staff members whom I have asked to assume particular responsibility for this effort. I have chosen to share this letter with pastors and also in the Courier-Journal so that all will be informed.

Your Brother in Christ,

Matthew H. Clark

Most Reverend Matthew H. Clark, DD
Bishop of Rochester

The following are names and addresses of staff members asked by Bishop Clark to assume responsibility for this program. In Monroe and Livingston Counties: Ms. Carol Schwartz, Tim McGowan, 750 W. Main St., Rochester, N.Y. 14611, (716) 328-6400.

In Seneca, Cayuga, Yates, Ontario, Wayne Counties: Father William Spilly, Sister Anne Urquhart, 4 Palmyra St., Shortsville, N.Y. 14548, (716) 289-3050.

In the Southern Tier: Father Neil Miller, Ms. Giovina Caroscio, 160 High St., Elmira, N.Y. 14901, (607) 734-9784.



SENIOR MATINEE MOVIE — "Life with Father," 1:30 p.m., Thursday, June 18, George Eastman House, 900 East Ave.

CLASSIC FILMS — "Top Hat," 2 and 8 p.m., Tuesday, June 23, Rochester Museum & Science Center, 657 East Ave.

BAND CONCERT — Monroe County Parks Band Concert, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m., Sunday, June 21, Maplewood Rose Garden.

NOONTIME CONCERT — Rochester Telephone concert, Cornerstone Park. Nancie Kennedy and John Wiesenthal. Noon.

LIBRARY FILM — "5,000 Fingers of Dr. T," 7 p.m., June 18, Lowden Point Branch Library.

JAZZ RECITAL — Eastman School Jazz Faculty Recital. Gene Bertocini, guitar; Mike Moore, double bass. 8 p.m., Thursday, June 25, Kilbourn Hall. Free.

Rexville Church

Continued from Page 1
night was through, parishioners removed anything they could through the church's side entrances. The stations, statues, and anything that wasn't attached was taken to the rectory.

The church's new oak altar wouldn't fit through the side door. The following day parishioners related what occurred with wonderment and gratitude. Two firemen, they said, grabbed the altar and ran it down the main aisle and out the front door, right through the fire.

Kevin O'Brien, parish council president and one of those who helped remove what they could, commented the next morning that it was a "short night last night," as they had had a meeting the previous night until 10:30 p.m., planning the parish's annual first-Sunday-of-August fund-raising event.

He praised the help they received, and recounted the frustration at seeing the problems the fire departments had, which included a pump failure very early. When the fire got into the space between the roof and ceiling, it spread rapidly.

O'Brien glanced toward the hulk and said, "It was one of the prettiest churches I've ever been in... it certainly has a lot of history..."

As for the future, he said: "We can't be without a church."

Built in 1877 at a cost of \$9,000, the 100-foot-long church sat 700 persons. It replaced a church which had burned after only three years' use. A parish hall which stood across the street from the church also was lost to fire in 1943. The building, once a school, was an indication of the parish's past, when the church actually was too small. Leonard said that his father, as a boy, had to sit in the aisle for Mass, as there wasn't enough room in the pews.

Now about 300 persons attend one of two weekend Masses at the church, Father Thomas Burr, pastor, said. The church's size has been a vexing problem for the parish, as the universal agreement that it cost too much to heat was met with a stronger commitment never to change what everyone describes as a beautiful church.

Father Burr called the fire a "heart-breaking thing," noting, like many parishioners, his "state of shock."

He also noted the recent improvements to the church, estimating that more than \$20,000 has been spent on the building during the past 10 years.

A parish council meeting was called for Wednesday evening to talk about the parish's next step. It is expected that weekend Masses will be offered in the fire hall.

Father Burr stated the conviction that was general among those at the scene: "We'll rebuild."

PEARL

Continued from Page 1
course, "Character Building," is taught.

Grades in the quarter credit course are not used in determining honor roll status, nor are they recorded in the district's student records.

Sister Roberta Tierney, SSND, diocesan director of Education, last week offered the opinion that released time religious courses deserve to be given academic credit because the courses are academic in nature.

"There is academic content in them. They are not ex-

periential, 'conversion-type' sessions. They involve research, instruction and structured learning," she said. She opined that "academic credit ought to be given for instruction that is of an academic nature."

PEARL membership includes the Genesee Lodge B'nai B'rith, the Genesee Valley Presbytery, the Genesee Valley Civil Liberties Organization, the Jewish Community Federation, Rochester United for Separation of Church and State and the Rochester Chapter of the Council of Jewish Women.

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Centering on Service	13
Child	11
Classified	15
Cuddy	5
Editorial	14
Hohman	14
Liturgy	10
Opinion	14
Parish News	13
Pope	7
Shamon	9
Sisters Reflect	4
Southern Tier	9

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