

Food Stamp Program Changes

Food stamp recipients in New York State will be the first to feel the impact of changes in welfare programs mandated by the 1981 Omnibus Reconciliation Act approved by Congress this year.

According to W. Burton Richardson, director of Monroe County Social Services, food stamp recipients with earned income will begin to see a slight reduction in their food stamp benefits as a result of the way benefits are computed.

Currently, the first 20 percent of earned income is disregarded in computing eligibility. The percentage dropped to 18 percent on Nov. 1. Although the reduction will be small, \$2 to

\$3 less in food stamps for each household, it's estimated that 2,500 of the 17,000 food stamp households in Monroe County will be affected.

Current food stamp cases will be calculated using the new formula when the household is recertified. Households applying for the first time will have their eligibility determined under the new rules, Richardson explained.

Also, beginning this month, Richardson said, strikers will no longer be eligible for food stamps, unless they were eligible before participating in a strike. Strikers who fall into this category will not see their food stamp benefits increase even though their income is reduced during a strike. The change will have no impact currently in Monroe County, he said.

Cenacle Schedules Renewal

The Cenacle Renewal Center will sponsor its annual Year End Renewal on New Year's Eve. Father David Mura will speak at 9 p.m.; an exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will follow. Father Mura will then celebrate Midnight Eucharist for those attending.

Overnight accommodations with breakfast are available. For reservations and information contact the Cenacle Ministry Office, 693 East Avenue, at 271-8755.

Whalens Return To Mexico

Rochester lay missionaries Dan and Margaret Whalens have returned to their mission in Monterey and Guadalajara, Mexico, where they care for nearly 8,000 people with medical and social assistance.

The Whalens are financed in large measure by contributions from friends and concerned dioceses. The Whalens' diocesan address is 1549 Rochester Road, East Avon, N.Y. 14414.

Insights In Liturgy

By Sister Nancy Burkin, SSSJ



Advent Is a Time Of Waiting

Waiting is a word always associated with Advent. If we listened carefully this past Sunday, there it was again, tucked into the middle of the Isaiah reading, lost perhaps in the imagery of potter and clay but present nevertheless: "No ear has ever heard, no eye ever seen, any God but you doing such deeds for those who wait for him." Perhaps we are tired of the "waiting" concept of Advent and look for something newer and more refreshing and not worn out with over use. Yet one of the central figures of the Advent season is a woman who symbolizes for us the deepness of the mystery that waiting implies.

Waiting in the sense that Isaiah speaks of it on the First Sunday of Advent and as personified in the person of Mary is far from the waiting associated with late buses, routine doctor's appointments and lines at a supermarket checkout stand. This waiting means little or nothing, for we preoccupy ourselves with other things: the morning paper, old magazines, or thoughts of tomorrow or yesterday or whatever comes to mind. The waiting of Isaiah and the waiting of Mary is a dynamic-availability to God

working among and within us. There can be no preoccupation, no old magazines, only total centeredness on God. Waiting as envisioned by the prophet, as lived by Mary, is not a circumstance in which we happen to find ourselves; rather, this waiting is a choice of ours, a choice freely made to be totally open to a God who comes. This choice is not the result of a once-in-a-lifetime decision but a constant effort on our part to allow God to do the unexpected, to do what the eye has not seen, nor ear heard.

The waiting of Advent is an immersion in the mystery of a woman who says, "Let it be done to me as you say," and a harmonizing with the same woman who sings, "The Almighty has done great things for me." It is an allowing of the words of Isaiah to ring true. It is the strengthening of our watchful eye and awaiting ear that we not miss the great deeds done by our God in us, in our friends, in our enemies, in our world.

Advent is the waiting that allows us to become totally available and ready for the God who comes in ways we least expect. Advent is the waiting that allows the world to give birth again and again to the Word made flesh who has pitched his tent among us. May our Advent make us more deeply a waiting Church until he comes.

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