

# Haitian Refugees Due but Plans Incomplete

By John Dash

The heat is on.

Despite the fact that Haitian refugees were expected in Rochester almost momentarily last week, the

## Focus Rites

Focus on the Eucharist devotions will open with evening prayer and rosary, 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 2, at Holy Name of Jesus Church, St. Martin's Way. Father Charles Adams, OFM, will celebrate the 8 p.m. Mass. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament will follow. The public is invited to the rites.

Cuban/Haitian Emergency Refugee Committee still had many questions unanswered and a great deal of work to do.

All of that was on top of the fact that the committee had been working for more than a year for the arrival of those Haitians.

As of early last week, it was expected that Haitians now detained in Ray Brook Federal Penitentiary would arrive in groups of five, week by week, until a total of 40 had been received in this area.

Uncertainty as to whether any Haitians would arrive, however, was due to the fact that the refugees themselves were given the option of what

area they wished to settle in while awaiting adjudication on their status in this country.

The situation is this: after nearly a year in federal detention up and down the east coast and in Puerto Rico, the Haitian refugees were ordered released so that they would have at least a month of relative freedom before they were summoned to an Immigration and Naturalization Service court to determine their eligibility for legal refugee status in the U.S.

The committee here, principally through Church World Service and Catholic Charities, assured the federal

government that 40 sponsors would shelter the Haitians until the time of those hearings.

As of last week, local Charities, with the backing of the United States Catholic Conference, was theoretically ready for 40 Haitians detained at Ray Brook near Saranac Lake.

Individual sponsors, however, were yet to be notified. They had been signed up earlier through the efforts of the diocesan Office of Black Ministries and the evangelical coalition, United Church Ministry.

In addition, it was uncertain whether the 20

volunteers from the American Civil Liberties Union who had agreed to act as attorneys for the Haitians in the exclusionary hearings would be allowed to so serve. Coupled with that problem was a question of providing training for those lawyers in the intricacies of immigration law.

Despite these uncertainties, however, some positive information was also circulated last week.

According to Angelina Boella, the USCC will foot the bill for each refugee under Catholic egis for four months. That translates to \$600 a month per refugee. In addition, the USCC has taken out an insurance policy

covering all the refugees' medical expenses.

The committee was also asked last week to write in protest of the continuing detention of 53 Haitians and four Afghans in the Brooklyn Naval Yard.

That group of refugees, because they had filed a separate suit, were not eligible for release in the judicial order which freed the other refugees.

Maurice Tierney, executive director of Charities and convener of the committee, asked any interested persons to write to federal legislators, the secretary of state and the president, "manifesting your displeasure."

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