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Resurgence Churches Taking Roles As Community Centers

By John Dash
Photos by Terrance J. Brennan

"There's a lot of good news to be told" about churches in downtown Rochester, not the least of which is their resurgence in recent years as centers for both the spiritual and material well-being of their communicants. Bishop Joseph L. Hogan said recently.

The retired Bishop of Rochester is in a special position to comment on the scene: He works as a staffer in one such downtown church, Old St. Mary's. "Actually, I'm Sister Sheila's slave," he jokingly remarked, referring to Sister Sheila Walsh, SSJ, pastoral assistant.

Since September, the bishop has taken an active role in St. Mary's ministry to the senior citizens who call the parish home.

He is also a close observer of the ministries carried out at Corpus Christi Church and has words of high praise for its pastor, Father James Callan. Diocesans will recall, the bishop remarked, that Father Callan's assignment followed a controversy in which he publicly asserted a commitment to voluntary poverty.

And, the bishop also has great esteem for the work being done at Ss. Peter and Paul Church. Among the ministries there is the unusually successful soup kitchen which will celebrate its first anniversary Feb. 8. In addition, he cited a new venture shortly to open up, a day-care center under the direction of Sister Janet Mary Coseo.

According to Lee Hough, chief ladle-wielder at the soup kitchen last Wednesday, more than 1,200 people are being served each week. "And that's not counting the refills. We have 70 to 90 refills a day, six days a week," she said.

A year ago, the kitchen was serving, on the average, 15 meals a day. On each of the two most recent holidays, she said, the kitchen served 600 meals, many of them sent out to the elderly and shut-ins in the neighborhood.

The operation, she said, is "entirely non-profit. For funds and food we are totally dependent on donations."

And the way those donations roll in, is "a tremendous faith-boost," she said.

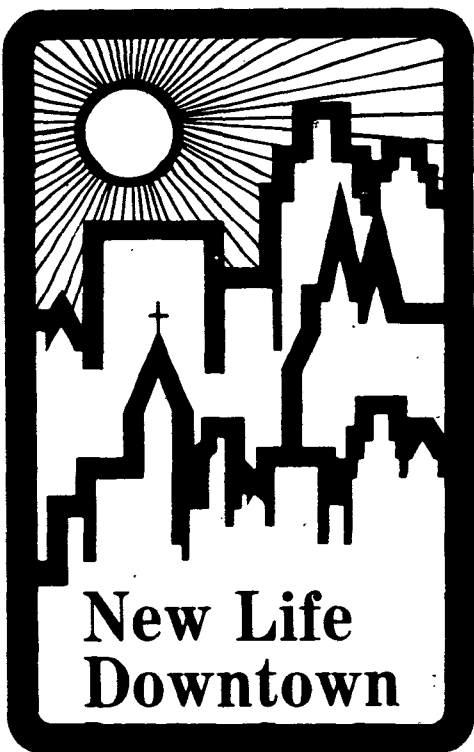
leafing through her notebook and finding the names of such donors as Genesee Valley Regional Food Bank, Dandrea's Party House, St. Augustine's Parish, St. Monica's Parish, Corpus Christi Parish, Rosetta Food Supply, among the many.

She also had words of praise for the other volunteers who staff the kitchen. She said that there is always a need for more such help.

On a typical day at St. Mary's, Bishop Hogan is likely, among his other duties, to escort a parishioner in the "Third Age," as he prefers to call it, to visit a hospitalized friend; to visit and bring Holy Communion to elderly shut-ins, and either to lead a group discussion on current trends in theology or to celebrate Mass with Third Ageders at downtown's Midtown Manor.

The geography of St. Mary's, he said, "is wide as the universe." By the industrial and commercial development of downtown, with its concomitant road-building.

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(This is one in a series of occasional reports on downtown churches and their ministries.)



Bishop Hogan explores a point of theology with residents of Midtown Manor during a regularly scheduled course on changes in the Church.

Jan. 22, 1973

10 Years Later, The Struggle Goes On



Bishop Clark

Fetology has confirmed more and more clearly in these 10 years that indeed life does exist in intricate detail and individuality from the time of conception. What we lack as a people is not the knowledge that life exists in the womb, but we lack the courageous reverence for that life.

Much has been written in recent months about the forthcoming pastoral letter of the U.S. bishops which will examine the issue of nuclear warfare. Though this document is still in draft form, I wish to point out a particular passage which bears on another vital issue of our age.

"At the center of the Church's teaching on peace, and at the center of all Catholic social

teaching is the dignity of the human person. The human person is the clearest reflection of the presence of God in the world. All of the Church's work in pursuit of both justice and peace is designed to protect and promote the dignity of every person."

My concern today is for unborn life. Jan. 22 is the 10th anniversary of the Supreme

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Cardinal Cooke

(This should be) a time of prayer and reparation and of rededication to the principle of the sanctity of human life . . . as a result of these disastrous decisions, the lives of more than 15 million human beings have been destroyed.

Washington (NC) — The 10th anniversary of Supreme Court abortion decisions can be an opportunity for members of the pro-life movement "to unite our ef-

orts to restore the maximum degree of legal protection possible for every human being at

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Prayer Vigil, D.C. Trip Set

A five-hour prayer vigil has been planned by pro-life groups in Rochester to commemorate the anniversary of the Jan. 22, 1973, Supreme Court decision liberalizing abortion.

"We want to put the emphasis strictly on prayer," said Gerri Oftedahl, director of Rochester Right to Life which is sponsoring the vigil along with People Concerned with Life.

Clergymen from various faiths will lead the prayers in a service planned by Carol Leary, chairman of the Right to Life Social Action Committee.

Meanwhile, the Geneva Area Right to Life group has scheduled a bus trip to Washington, D.C., for the 10th annual March for Life there Saturday. The bus will leave St. Francis Church, 110 Exchange St. in Geneva, at 10

p.m., Friday, Jan. 21, and return Saturday, Jan. 22, about midnight.

Further information is available from Vada Holmes (716) 526-6834, or Kathy Peters (315) 539-8006.

The public is invited to the prayer vigil which will begin at 7 p.m., Friday, Jan. 21, at Brighton Reformed Church, 805 Blossom Road. After Rev. Russell Pater of Brighton Reformed leads an opening prayer, other clergymen will lead prayers every half-hour.

7:00 p.m., Rev. Michael Merrill of Parma Free Methodist.

7:30 — Father Patrick Magnier, Our Lady of Victory Church.

8:00 — Rev. Daniel Williams, pastor of West End Baptist.

8:30 — Bishop Dennis W. Hickey, pastor, St. Thomas More Church.

9:00 — Rev. James Vanderlaan, pastor, Webster Christian Reformed Church.

9:30 — Father Stephen Kraus, St. Anne's.

10:00 — Rev. L. Dayton Reynolds, pastor, New Covenant Fellowship.

10:30 — Father Salem Faddoul, St. Nicholas Church.

11:00 — Rev. James Walters, associate pastor, Perinton Community.

11:30 — Father Dennis Bonsignori, St. Ambrose.

Ms. Oftedahl emphasized that the public is invited for any or all of the five-hour service. Refreshments will be available.