

A Priest's Retirement: The Labor of Love Continues

By Doug Lippincott

King Ferry — Father Richard Stanton has spent the last 22 years shuttling between Our Lady of the Lake Parish in King Ferry and All Saints Parish in Lansing, and though he officially retired yesterday, June 26, the Rochester native may still call the rectory here his home for a few more years.

Due to Father Stanton's retirement and the retirement of Father John Hayes at Aurora, the Diocese of Rochester is reorganizing the string of churches that lie on the east side of Cayuga Lake. All Saints will be under the wing of St. Catherine's in Ithaca, while a new team will have responsibility for Our Lady of the Lake, St. Patrick's, St. Michael's in Union Springs and St. Joseph's in Cayuga.

It sounds like a good plan. It also sounds like a lot of work.

"I told the diocese I would be willing to stay on and help," said Father Stanton during a recent interview at his rectory. "I'm not sure what will happen, but that's what I'd really like to do."

And how long would he consider remaining in King Ferry?

Pointing out a rectory window to the cemetery behind the church, Father Stanton said with a smile, "I'd like to be buried right out there."

None of the residents of King Ferry would mind if the diocese elects to keep Father Stanton stationed in the small village in southern Cayuga County.

"We'll all miss him if he leaves," said Ellen Mahaney, a life long resident of the village who has served as volunteer business manager of both Our Lady of the Lake and All Saints for many years. "It would be like having a friend you've known for 20 years move away." Father Stanton has been more than a priest to a lot of us — he's been a friend.

Father Stanton came to King Ferry in 1962 after serving as assistant pastor at churches in Auburn, Elmira, Palmyra, Rochester, Coldwater and Wayland.

Father Stanton, who had always preferred working in small parishes rather than larger ones, had little trouble adjusting to the rural life in King Ferry and Lansing. Even the harsh winters, which sometimes make driving a car between King Ferry and Lansing comparable to negotiating a sled down an Olympic bobsled run, were routine to him.

"The first winter I was here, people kept telling me, 'Oh, Father, wait till you see how much snow we get here,'" he recalled. "Wayland traditionally gets a lot of snow so I thought the winters here were going to be really bad. But they were never as severe as they were in Wayland."

While Father Stanton prefers working in a small parish, he concedes one has to be a jack-of-all-trades to keep the church running on an even keel.

"In a large parish, a priest often has a secretary, business manager and janitor to assist him," he explained. "But here, you do it all."

Indeed. In a small parish, not only does the priest say mass, hear confession and officiate at weddings and baptisms, but he also must balance the budget, keep the books and "be able to explain why the grass hasn't been cut in the cemetery," Father Stanton said.

"When I was in the seminary, I took a course that dealt with accounting, finance and the like. We called it sacred arithmetic," recalled Stanton, who has to juggle the books of two parishes.

"I don't know what I'd do without Ellen Mahaney," he said. "She's been a Godsend."

In addition to the help and guidance Father Stanton has given members of the two parishes over the years, Father Stanton has also made significant contributions to the lives of many others in the area communities.

From 1962-82, he served as Catholic chaplain at the South Lansing Center, a school for delinquent girls. But Father



Father Stanton, center, with Dave Lipfert of All Saints, and Mrs. Mahaney of Our Lady of the Lake.

Stanton was more than just a religious symbol to the girls. He was a friend, a confidant, somebody they could trust.

"In the summertime, I would take many of the girls out in my boat and have them up to the rectory for a cookout," Father Stanton said. "During the course of a summer, I'd have 60 girls come out. And not just the Catholics. Anyone who was willing to eat my hotdogs was welcome."

"And in all those years they came out to the house," he said, "there were never any incidents, nothing was ever stolen or anything like that. And I think that's because they knew I trusted them."

About a half dozen of the girls still stay in contact with Father Stanton through Christmas cards and the like.

He recently got a card from a girl who now lives in Arizona. "She said that after I retire, I could come out there and stay as long as I want," he said.

Father Stanton has long recognized the problems priests face when they retire; and he, along with others, has urged the diocese to consider the construction of a retirement home for priests.

"Retirement for a priest is entirely

different from retirement for someone who worked for a company," he said. "If you retire from a company, you just stop going to work there. You still have a home and a family to go to. But we don't."

Like other priests facing retirement, Father Stanton has received offers to stay with priests in other areas.

"Priests don't really retire," he said. "We still say Mass. Basically, we retire from the administrative duties."

If Father Stanton does leave King Ferry, he'd like to live somewhere he could help out in other parishes as needed. He'd also like to spend some time traveling in his new mobile home.

"I haven't had a chance to use it much," he said. "I took it on a shakedown cruise to Gettysburg last fall, but most of the time it sits out in back of the rectory."

Not that they would begrudge Father Stanton some vacation time, but the parishioners in King Ferry hope his mobile home never leaves the back of the rectory for very long.

Writer Lippincott is a parishioner at Our Lady of the Lake Parish in King Ferry.

Record of Clergy Assignments of 1984

The following list indicates the status of members of the ordained clergy as appointed by Bishop Matthew H. Clark and recorded by the diocesan Office of Personnel.

RETIREES

Father Charles B. Connell from pastor of St. Philip Neri, residence 43 Gebhardt Road, Penfield, N.Y. 14526.

Father Paul Gibbons from associate of St. Ann's Church, Hornell, residence 31 Erie Ave. Hornell, N.Y. 14843.

Father John S. Hayes from pastor of St. Patrick, Aurora — St. Michael, Union Springs, residence 1310 W. Church St., Elmira, N.Y. 14905.

Father Albert J. Horr from pastor of St. Mary Magdalen, Wolcott, residence Box 98, Wolcott, N.Y. 14590.

Father Bernard V. Kuchman from pastor of St. Michael, Montezuma — St. John, Port Byron, residence 220 Coldwater Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.

Father Elmer A. McNamara from pastor St. Bridget, East Bloomfield — St. Joseph, West Bloomfield, residence St. Mark's rectory, Kendall, N.Y., 14476.

Father John A. Murphy from pastor of St. Lawrence, residence 222 Dodge Ave., Corning, N.Y. 14830.

Father Bartholomew J. O'Brien from pastor of Church of St. Mary Our Mother, Horseheads, residence 103 A Biltmore Dr., Horseheads, N.Y. 14845.

Father Richard G. Stanton from pastor of Our Lady of the Lake, King Ferry — All Saints, Lansing, residence 615 Lansing Station Road, Lansing, N.Y. 14882.

Father Lawrence Sansom from associate pastor, Our Lady of Good Counsel, residence 5 Manchester Road, Schneectady, N.Y. 12304.

PASTORS

Msgr John Duffy, from pastor of St. Francis, Phelps, to pastor of St. Philip Neri.

Father William J. Flynn, from chancellor, to pastor of St. Bridget, East Bloomfield — St. Joseph, West Bloomfield, effective Sept. 18, 1984.

Father Frank Falletta, from associate pastor of St. Michael, Newark, to pastor, St. Lawrence, Rochester.

Father Andrew Grzela, from associate pastor of St. Stanislaus, to pastor.

Father Joseph Jankowiak, from pastor of St. Stanislaus, to pastor of St. Mary Our Mother, Horseheads.

Father Jeremiah P. Moynihan, from administrator of St. Ignatius, Hornell, to pastor, in addition to duties as chaplain at St. James Mercy Hospital.

Father Michael F. Conboy, from pastor of St. Patrick, Seneca Falls, to pastor of St. Margaret Mary, and director of Diocesan Intern Program.

Father Gerard Hafner, from associate of St. Boniface, to pastor of St. Pius X, Van Eatten — St. Benedict, Odessa.

Father Ronald Harley, from associate of St. Mary of the Lake, Ontario, to pastor of St. Pius V, Cohocton — Sacred Heart of Jesus, Perkinsville.

Father Eugene Sweeney, from pastor of St. Pius V, Cohocton — Sacred Heart of Jesus, Perkinsville, to pastor of St. Patrick, Seneca Falls.

Diocesan Appointments



Father William V. Spilly, from coordinator of justice and peace for the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry, to pastor of St. Joseph's, Cayuga; St. Michael's, Union Springs; St. Patrick's, Aurora; Our Lady of the Lake, King Ferry; and coordinator of Cayuga East.

Father Robert Smith, from pastor of St. Margaret Mary, Rochester, to pastor of St. Mary Magdalen, Wolcott.

ADMINISTRATORS

Father John Dillon, from associate at St. Mary's, Waterloo, to administrator of the Church of the Epiphany, Sodus — St. Rose of Lima, Sodus Point.

Father Robert Downs, from associate at St. Mary of the Lake, Watkins Glen, to administrator St. Michael, Montezuma — St. John, Port Byron.

ASSOCIATE PASTORS

Father Paul Tomasso, from assistant in internship at St. Stephen, Geneva, to associate, St. John of Rochester, Fairport.

Father George Heyman, from assistant in internship at St. Pius X, Rochester, to associate at Blessed Sacrament, Rochester.

Father Matthew Kawiak, from associate at St. James, Rochester, to associate at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Rochester.

Father George Gauthier, from pastor of St. Joseph, Cayuga, to associate at St. Philip Neri, Rochester.

Father Patrick Seelman, TOR, from associate at St. Vincent DePaul, Corning, to associate at St. Stephen, Geneva.

Father Daniel Fink, OFM Conv, to associate at St. Hyacinth, Auburn.

Father Richard Beligotti, from associate at St. Thomas More, Rochester, to associate at St. Michael, Newark.

Father William Darling, from chaplain at SUNY Geneseo, to associate at St. Thomas More, Rochester.

Father Dennis Bonsignore, from associate at St. Mary Our Mother, Horseheads, to associate at St. Vincent DePaul, Corning.

Father Mark Miller, from associate at St. Philip Neri, to associate at St. James, Rochester.

Father Anthony Mugavero, from assistant in internship at Immaculate Conception, Ithaca, to associate at St. Mary of the Lake, Ontario.

SPECIAL WORKERS

Father Peter T. Bayer, from director of Pastoral Planning and Management, to chancellor and director of the Division of Support Ministries.

Father John DeSocio, from associate pastor at St. Charles

Borromeo, Rochester, to chaplain at Ithaca College.

Father Kevin McKenna, from canon law studies in Rome, to vice chancellor, with residence at Holy Family rectory.

Father Charles Manning, from chaplain at Bishop Kearney High School, to chaplain at SUNY Geneseo.

Father John Forni, from associate pastor at Blessed Sacrament, to chaplain at Cornell University.

Father Edward Dillon, from associate pastor at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, to chaplain at Monroe County Jail, with residence at St. Augustine rectory.

Father William Holberton, from part-time chaplain at the motherhouse of the Sisters of Mercy, to part-time chaplain to the staff at Bishop Kearney High School.

Father Richard Thibeau, SVD, from the SVD Community, Conesus, to part-time chaplain at the motherhouse of the Sisters of Mercy.

DEACON INTERNS

Rev. Mr. Alexander Bradshaw to Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Brockport.

Rev. Mr. Stanley Kacprzak to St. Margaret Mary, Rochester.

Rev. Mr. Patrick Sullivan to St. Andrew, Rochester.

PRIEST INTERNS

(Newly Ordained)

Father Frank DiSano, from St. Michael, Newark, to St. Pius Tenth, Chili.

Father Richard Farrell, from St. Pius Tenth, Chili, to St. Charles Borromeo, Rochester.

Father Scott Kubinski, from St. Charles Borromeo, Rochester, to St. Boniface, Rochester.

Father Robert Bourcy, from St. John of Rochester, Fairport, to Immaculate Conception, Ithaca.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Father Thomas Streb from active ministry.

SABBATICALS

Father Robert Collins to Notre Dame Institute for Clergy Education.

PERMANENT DEACONS

Deacon Peter Battisti to St. Anne, Palmyra.

Deacon Charles Bix to St. Bridget, East Bloomfield — St. Joseph, West Bloomfield.

Deacon John Boburka to St. Patrick, Owego.

Deacon Thomas J. Driscoll to St. Louis, Pittsford.

Deacon John M. Giugno to St. Theodore, Gates.

Deacon Joseph P. Holleran to Ministry among Young Adults, based in Blessed Sacrament, Rochester.

Deacon Richard E. Mahaney to St. Rita, Webster.

Deacon Fernando V. Ona to independent ministry; resourcing the pastoral care of the indigent sick and the terminally ill.

Deacon Michael J. Pehler, to Permanent Diaconate Program and St. Francis Xavier, Rochester.

Deacon John E. Zierle to St. Pius Tenth, Chili.

Deacon Robert Solan to Our Lady of Mercy, Rochester.

Deacon Victor Yanaitis to St. Paul of the Cross, Honeoye Falls.