

Future of food bank uncertain; Southern Tier agencies seek funds

By Mike Myers

Southern Tier Correspondent

The fate of the Southern Tier Food Bank will be decided during a March 3 meeting of food pantry and soup kitchen representatives. The food bank, which distributes donated food from area food processors to local pantries in the Twin Tiers, has been in trouble since three grants totaling \$46,000 failed to come through.

That \$46,000 would have been almost half of the food bank's 1985-86 budget. Representatives of area pantries, soup kitchens and other organizations that receive food through the bank were told on Feb. 13 that contributions from the pantries and other local organizations would have to make up the budgetary shortfall.

The food bank pays only shipping and storage costs for the food it receives from area processors. The bank then distributes the foodstuffs to such organizations as food pantries, cupboards and soup kitchens in an area extending from Yates County, N.Y., to Tioga County, Pa.

Processors donate foods that are still edible but which for some reason have become unsaleable. For instance, Thomas' and Strochmans bakeries donate baked goods that are a day too old to put on supermarket shelves. Yogurt that has been accidentally mislabeled as to weight winds up at the pantry, since it is cheaper for processors to give it away than to repackage it.

Since 1981, grant money and other resources have enabled the food bank to distribute the food it collects to area agencies without passing on to those agencies any of its overhead costs. The food bank's operating budget from these sources for the period from July 1, 1985, to the end of June, 1986, was \$95,000.

According to Peter Ladley of the Southern Tier Office of Social Ministry, the bank must now charge the agencies it serves. Quoting from a grant application, he says, "For four years, the food bank has prided itself on not sharing the cost of its food banking operations with its member agencies."

But protecting its member agencies from those costs has now become impossible, according to both Ladley and Anthony Barbaro of the Office of Social Ministry in Elmira.

The food bank is sponsored by the Southern Tier Office of Social Ministry, a regional subsidiary of the diocesan office. Ladley said that on March 3, "We need a strong indication that pantries and member agencies will raise a significant part of \$41,865 (the shortfall), and we will expect to receive checks from member agencies at that time." He said pledges will be accepted, but they must be very definite promises.

Many churches and organizations already have responded to the food bank's crisis. The food bank is ahead of schedule on raising the portion of the food bank's budget that is



expected to come from donations. Churches contributing were: St. Mary Our Mother, Horseheads, \$3,000; St. Mary, Corning, \$3,300; Our Lady of Lourdes, Elmira, \$1,000; St. Mary, Watkins Glen, \$1,000; St. Ann's, Hornell, \$1,000; St. Patrick's, Corning, \$250; and Bethany Lutheran Church, Elmira, \$200. Other groups contributing included Seneca Stone Corp., \$2,500, and Broadway Student Activities Fund, \$250.

According to Barbaro, numerous individ-

uals have made contributions, including one person from Mansfield, Pa., who donated \$1,000, and many others, whose donations ranged from \$5 to \$500.

Ladley says he's very positive about the Feb. 13 meeting, at which the pantries were notified of the situation, and expects a solution at the March 3 meeting. But, he says, "If there's a clear indication that the money can't be raised, that's that. It calls into question the future of the food bank."

Ordinary evangelist

Continued from Page 5

to; by our own example, subtly penetrate the environment and not be bashful about letting people know how we feel about our faith," he said. "But at the same time, we're not beating anybody over the head with it."

He believes that kind of undramatic, but consistent witness has had a powerful influence on his marriage and his children as well.

"Because of those experiences, we became much more aware of our relationship with God and with each other and the importance of working at both those relationships," he

said of his marriage. "I don't think boundaries of Cohan's personal life, affecting not only his own relationship with Christ, but also relationships with family, friends, colleagues — everyone with whom he comes in contact.

That doesn't mean it has been easy. "I think that our work environment is one of the most difficult environments to penetrate and to spread Christ's word," Cohan said. But thanks to the support of a few like-minded co-workers, he's been able to open up about faith and what it means in his life.

"We've talked a little bit about just trying

otherwise we would have nearly as strong and as deep a relationship as we do, and I really don't think we would have shared our faith with each other."

By subtly reflecting that shared faith at home, Cohan believes he and his wife, Ann, were able to translate their enthusiasm about renewal to their children without turning them off. "I think Ann and I realized the importance of being level about these things and not going overboard, not trying to be somebody that we're really not," he said.

As a Catholic who's lived about half of his life on each side of the Vatican II renewal, Cohan has a balanced view of its effect on the Church. "I don't think our parish would be nearly as alive without things like Cursillo, Marriage Encounter and charismatic renewal ... part of these experiences is getting involved in church activities, and in other social and community activities, as an expression of your faith."

Compared to the faith his parents practiced, Cohan's lies closer to the surface. "My father and mother were both Irish Catholics ... He had a tremendous amount of faith that things would always work out if only he practiced his faith. He never talked about it a lot," Cohan said.

Both his parents reflected their faith in their devotion to family. "There was always this very close-knit focus on the family ... to keep the family together and practicing the faith," he said. "As I look back I can see

that they really completely gave of themselves to us. You can't just forget something like that."

Because Cohan's is now a much smaller family spread over greater distances and also because of the impact of renewal, he shares his own faith with what his parents might have considered outsiders — friends and even casual acquaintances.

"I think the renewal process has helped us recognize the importance of spreading your faith even to people you don't know, of maybe taking that extra step to know somebody and to talk with him about God or Christianity," he said.

As positive as renewal has been for Cohan, he's nonetheless aware that existing movements don't touch all the needs of people within the Church.

"I think we continually need to focus on our young people, to help them develop Christian attitudes and care and concern for other people without jamming it down their throats," he observed. "One of the good things that's happening now are the Teen Seminars ... which are really tremendous for families to get involved in."

As his own mother has aged, Cohan has also observed a social and spiritual void in the Church for seniors. "There are a lot of people out there that can't get out, can't get to church. We really need more of an apostolate than what the Church has now for those people."

CHD Awards Funds To Community Projects

Five projects selected by the Campaign for Human Development (CHD) will receive more than \$28,000 in diocesan funding this year. The awards were announced by Father John A. Firpo, director of the diocesan Division of Social Ministry.

Funds are raised through the Campaign for Human Development Collection taken up in diocesan churches the second Sunday after Easter. Several committees from around the diocese review and recommend projects for funding.

Awards will go to the following:

Displaced Homemakers Center, Tompkins County — \$9,180 for Minority Advocacy Project which organizes low-income, minority women on the issue of unemployment.

Community Unified Today, Geneva — \$7,464 for Project CASHED, which helps

low-income and minority residents of the community to acquire and rehabilitate substandard property and which funds new construction projects.

Ibero-American Action League, Rochester — \$7,420 for the After School Academy of the Arts which uses the arts to educate low-income Hispanic youths about themselves and their community to help them develop self confidence and stay in school.

Northeast Block Alliance, Rochester — \$3,000 for the Clean Sweep Janitorial Service project, a community-owned and operated janitorial service that will offer jobs and training.

Group 14621 Community Association, Inc., Rochester — for an energy conservation education program that will train residents how to weatherize their homes

Sisters of Mercy offer workshop on cultural pluralism

A workshop on prayer and ritual titled, "Did Jesus Really Mean All People?" will be held at the Sisters of Mercy Motherhouse, 1437 Blossom Rd., Rochester, on Saturday, March 8, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Finger Lakes Widowed

Persons who are widowed are cordially invited to the monthly breakfast to be held Saturday, March 1, at 9 a.m. at the Sheraton Canandaigua Inn, 770 South Main Street. Widowed persons from anywhere in the region are encouraged to attend the informal meeting. Call Carl at the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry, (315)789-2686.

Sponsored by the Cultural Pluralism Task Force, the workshop will be presented by Sister Pat Kozak, a Sister of St. Joseph from Cleveland, Ohio. She will discuss the scriptural challenge of hospitality to strangers, in family, community, and worship. The event is free and open to the public. Participants are asked to bring a brown bag lunch, but beverages will be provided. A half-unit of Continuing Education credit for participation in the full day will be given to anyone wishing it through the Diocese of Rochester, Office of Continuing Education. The fee for this CE credit is \$5. For further information and registration, call (716)288-2710.



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