

Proposed diocesan newsletter draws mixed reactions

By Teresa A. Parsons

This fall, the diocesan communications office plans to introduce a quarterly newsletter that will replace the publications of individual divisions and departments.

In theory, few people disagree with the concept, which aims to reduce costs and the volume of mail to parishes, while providing a unified source of information.

But in practice, the newsletter poses a communications dilemma for a number of diocesan ministries.

Members of many diocesan divisions and departments will be grateful just to see the end of a moratorium imposed last spring on their newsletters. Included under the ban were Focus, published by the Commission on Young Adult Ministry; Senderos, published by the Spanish Apostolate; Urban Update, published by the Division of Urban Services; and Living Liturgy, published by the Office of Liturgy. Also included were publications from the Ministry to Divorced, Separated, Widowed and Remarried (DSWR), family life, youth ministry, religious education and social ministry.

In the meantime, a committee, which includes representatives from many of the groups affected by the moratorium, has developed a proposal for the diocesan newsletter and is now "at the stage of planning editions," said Father George Norton, diocesan director of communications. "What it's not going to be is a newspaper," he said. "It's not going to be a calendar, either."

"We hope to present a quality publication that has room for input from all diocesan divisions and departments," said Father Norton. "It will be something that provides reference, educational and informational resources for ministerial leaders and the people they serve."

Although it is nameless at present, Father Norton expects that the newsletter will be eight pages in length. Four divisions — General Education, Urban Services, Special Pastoral Ministries and Social Ministry — will be allocated standard columns which will be shared by each division's various departments. The newsletter will include information about upcoming events and "feature material" but not of the type that might appear in other local publications.

"We will evaluate material on the basis of timeliness and its impact on ministry and the wider community," Father Norton said. "We will not be competing by using material that is published elsewhere." Committee members who developed the newsletter proposal will continue to serve as the newsletter's editorial board.

Approximately 5,000 copies will be printed initially and distributed using the mailing lists of each individual publication, minus duplicates. "We have not resolved the exact constituency yet," Father Norton said. "But it should cover everyone who has been receiving any of the other newsletters."

Originally envisioned as a monthly publication, the newsletter has been scaled back to

quarterly because of budget and staff limitations. "I would like to see it more than quarterly," Father Norton said. "There has been some concern about that. But everybody seems willing to give it the best try they can."

Nevertheless, representatives of several ministries, particularly those whose publications served as evangelizing tools doubt that a general diocesan newsletter will serve their needs or even reach their readers.

"The idea of a diocesan newsletter isn't a bad idea. It will be good," said Angie Gallo, who heads the DSWR ministry for the Genesee Valley Office of Social Ministry.

"But there are certain segments that need the other," she said. "A lot of my people aren't in the churches looking for newsletters . . . Three-quarters of them are hurting too much. They're reading Psychology Today and Working Woman. They're not watching programs on poverty because their own kids are going without shoes."

Focus, published by the Commission on Young Adult Ministry, was likewise geared to a group that is neither parish-based nor likely to be interested in general diocesan issues.

"There are quite a few subscribers who wanted the specific kind of articles we had, that were tied to people's particular faith lives," said Karen Rinefierd, a member of the young adult commission as well as the newsletter committee. "These are people who are questioning the Church. It is key that they find a connection between what they read in the Bible and what's happening in their lives."

A cultural barrier would inhibit interest among readers of Senderos, which has been published by the diocesan Spanish Apostolate. Few Hispanic people would page through a di-

ocesan newsletter for an occasional Spanish article, according to Brother Luis Ruberte, director of the Spanish Apostolate.

On the other hand, Senderos' articles, which have ranged from a report of the aftermath of last year's devastating flood in Puerto Rico to schedules of Hispanic events at local parishes, would have little relevance to the readership of a diocesan newsletter, Brother Ruberte said.

"People like the style of Senderos," he explained. "Our last number was late, and we had lots of calls from people waiting to see it. It's the only voice the Spanish have to say what's happening in the community."

Few issues of Senderos are mailed. "Some are hand-delivered and others we put in the parishes," said Brother Ruberte. "Many we give to un-churched people. It's one way of contacting them. We see many people in churches who are there from reading it."

Likewise, Today and Tomorrow, the recently renamed DSWR publication, is distributed primarily at events sponsored by divorced and separated support groups. "It really is much more a calendar than newsletter," Gallo said. "Most of it is information on programs for growth, schedules and dates of events and liturgies."

The diocesan newsletter committee has already granted some exceptions to the moratorium. Newsletters published by the regional offices of social ministry will be allowed to continue independently for the present. Several other newsletters, including Senderos, will be reviewed at the committee's next meeting this month.

One newsletter the committee does not plan to review is Focus. Young adult ministry was

Continued on Page 13

St. John Fisher College Continuing Education

Usher in the Fall with a new
personal challenge

FISHER OFFERS...

- an outstanding faculty
- challenging credit and non-credit programs with 26 majors — days and evenings
- financial aid and counseling
- licensed child care center
- free, well-lighted parking
- recreational facilities



Fall Courses Begin Sept. 2

Call for your

Fall Brochure Today

Continuing Education Office Hours

Monday through Thursday

9:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m.

Friday

9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

St. John Fisher College

3690 East Avenue

Rochester, N. Y. 14618

(716) 385-8317

So much, so close. Come see for yourself.

St. John Fisher College admits students without regard to race, creed, sex, nationality, ethnic origin, age, or handicap.

Why the Robinsons' home is 15 times less likely to be robbed than yours



It's protected by ADT.® And with this special offer, you can purchase ADT's Safewatch® Home Security System for only \$995, or \$29.95 per month*, installed.

Fact: The majority of homes burglarized each year do not have a security system. Fact: With an ADT Security System, the chances of your home being robbed drops dramatically from 1 in 3 to 1 in 50. That's why families like the Robinsons are turning to ADT for reliable, affordable, effective security.

ADT — trusted for over 100 years. Nationwide, ADT has helped protect everything from Fortune 500 companies to thousands of American households. And with a network of local offices, our security specialists can install and service an ADT Security System in your neighborhood.

Simple to operate. Your basic ADT Safewatch System includes magnetic contacts to help protect doors, a dual motion detector that can pick up the movement of a potential intruder, and a smoke detection system that can warn of smoke or fire. All are

simply operated from a control panel with built-in siren and emergency call buttons. All can be linked to a nearby ADT Central Monitoring Station, manned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. (There's a small monthly charge for this service.) ADT Safewatch can even help you qualify for lower rates on your homeowners insurance.

Easy to afford. Now for only \$995, or \$29.95 per month*, installed, with our low-cost monthly purchase plan, it has never been so affordable to protect your family. ADT Safewatch.

*NO DOWN PAYMENT Based on 47 equal monthly payments at 18% annual percentage rate.



ADT SECURITY SYSTEMS
16 Capron St. • 546-6120
Security is ADT.

SPECIAL LIMITED OFFER

Own an ADT Security System for \$995 or \$29.95 per month*, installed, with our low-cost monthly purchase plan.

Mail this coupon, or call (716) 546-6120 for a free home demonstration.

Name _____
(Please Print)

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Home phone () _____ Business phone () _____

I'd like more information on home security. Please send me ADT's free booklet, "Safe at Home."

ADT Security Systems
18 Capron Street
Rochester, New York 14607