



In with the new

At its annual dinner, the Social Ministry board gave a new award to three activists and retired another accolade by presenting it to a surprised bishop. See page 6.



Second season

Rochester-area boys' and girls' soccer teams are getting ready for the sectional tourney, which should prove to be one of the most exciting ever. See pages 10 and 11.

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World & Nation in Brief from NC News

World

Earthquake spurs aid

People across the United States responded to pleas for donations of money, clothing and blood for survivors of the October 10 earthquake in El Salvador.

As of October 14, reports indicated that as many as 1,000 people had been killed by the earthquake and up to 200,000 left homeless.

Catholic Relief Services, the U.S. bishops' overseas relief and development agency, committed \$50,000 for relief in El Salvador, according to Beth Griffin, spokeswoman.

The agency is working with the Archdiocese of San Salvador, which has established an emergency commission to coordinate humanitarian assistance sent to the church.

Nation

War veterans end fast

Washington — Four U.S. war veterans on a water-only fast to protest U.S. aid to "contra" rebels in Nicaragua ended their fast at midnight on October 17.

But the four men, led by Charles Liteky, a former Catholic chaplain in Vietnam, said they would continue to protest the Reagan administration's policy of military involvement in Nicaragua, which they called a policy "born of lies."

For Liteky, 55, and George Mizo, 40, also a Vietnam veteran, it was the 46th day of the fast since they began Sept. 1. They were joined Sept. 15 by Brian Willson, 45, who was in Vietnam in 1969, and Duncan Murphy, 66, a World War II veteran.

Apology to his people

Seattle — Archbishop Raymond Hunthausen of Seattle apologized to his people October 17 for "whatever I may have unwittingly done or not done to contribute to the pain you feel."

He wrote that many people in his diocese have shared feelings of "pain and confusion" in a letter he mailed to every registered Catholic in the archdiocese and published Oct. 17 in his archdiocesan newspaper, *The Progress*.

The Seattle Archdiocese has been embroiled in controversy since September 4, when the Vatican instructed Archbishop Hunthausen to delegate final decision-making authority in several key areas to his auxiliary, Bishop Donald Wuerl.

Shroud study includes U of R

Phoenix, Ariz. — If Pope John Paul II approves, a team of University of Rochester scientists will test a tiny bit of the Shroud of Turin to determine whether it comes from the time of Jesus.

Two other U.S. labs — the Brookhaven National Laboratory on Long Island, N.Y., and the University of Arizona — were also chosen for the project.

Cardinal Anastasio Ballestrero of Turin, Italy, has announced tentative plans to allow about two square inches of the cloth to be divided among seven labs throughout the world for carbon-14 dating. The tests would establish the age of what is believed by many to be the burial cloth of Jesus.

World Food Day

Speakers decry 'tyranny of indifference'

By Teresa A. Parsons

Organizers didn't have to look overseas this year to describe the human cost of hunger, as they marked World Food Day, October 15.

An estimated 1.5 million New York state residents went hungry in a given month last year — more than 700,000 of them in upstate New York. During the same period, only 46 percent of state residents eligible for federally funded food stamps received them. Twenty-seven percent of children who qualified for free school lunches did not receive them.

Monroe County's infant mortality rate places it among the five worst counties in New York state, according to a statement released earlier this month by the Rochester Area Children's Collaborative.

According to the coalition of civic leaders and child advocates, the infant death rate among blacks in Rochester exceeds that of some Third World countries.

While 30 percent of all children in the city live in poverty, 40 percent of households eligible for food stamps do not receive them. In Rochester and Monroe County, 10,000 residents each month rely on food pantries and community kitchens for food.

"Institutionalized begging" is how Dr. Anna Lou Dehavenon describes such reliance on services designed to meet emergencies. A medical and urban anthropologist and director of research for the Food and Hunger Hotline of New York City, Dr. Dehavenon was one of several speakers featured at World Food Day workshops October 15 at Asbury First Methodist Church in Rochester.

She defines begging as "having to ask for help without having the understanding that you will pay it back." She blames cutbacks in funding for federal, state and local programs for the amount of begging going on in a county with a relatively healthy economy.

During the late 1970s, an economic recession brought record numbers of Americans to the poverty line. At the same time, funds for human-service programs that provide food, health and housing assistance were cut drastically.

To fill the gaps left by budget cuts, volunteers began establishing emergency food cupboards, soup kitchens, shelters and other programs to provide a "safety net" for the hungry, the homeless and the sick.

Those safety-net programs have moved steadily closer to the front lines in the war against poverty. Instead of abating as the country recovered from the recession, the flood of people who rely on such emergency services continues to increase at a rate that sorely tests the stamina and resources of volunteers and under-funded agency staffs.

"We are seeing a lot of single mothers with young children, whose food stamps have run out, turning to food pantries and food cupboards as their primary source of food," said Sheila Levis, outreach coordinator for the Genesee Valley Foodbank Nutrition Project. "We believe this cannot continue. There are federal programs available — although not sufficient — to meet the need."

Not only have budgets been cut, but — in response to allegations of welfare fraud — eligibility guidelines have been stiffened to discourage applicants. "The procedures have become much more harrowing," Dr. Dehavenon said.

In New York City, for instance, public transportation is \$1 per ride. Applicants may have to make several trips to the welfare office just to become certified. They must then return for recertification every month.

"People are not fools. If you have to pay \$2

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Sheila Levis
nutrition outreach coordinator
Genesee Valley Foodbank

to get back and forth several times to get just \$10-worth of food stamps, you're not going to do that," she said.

As currently constructed, Dr. Dehavenon added, the welfare system "will not permit families to stay together" and discourages recipients from helping neighbors and friends. She disputed the lingering perception that families below the poverty line are eager to receive public assistance, and that some even grow rich from welfare fraud.

"We don't realize the extent to which people are mortified at using those benefits," she said. "They are not sitting out there somewhere waiting to grab them. It's a shameful experience."

If they want public-assistance policies to change, volunteers and social service workers should be advocating sufficient funding on the federal as well as the state and local level, according to Dr. Dehavenon. They should also document cases in which the welfare system does not meet its own requirements and organize legal action.

Her words were not welcomed by those in the audience who are already overworked and frustrated. One woman responded that her agency for migrant workers was barely able to feed people, much less coordinate advocacy efforts.

Such was also the case within the religious voluntary agencies of the East Harlem Interfaith Welfare Committee. These agencies offer emergency food and advocate on behalf of their clients with social services. Nevertheless, since 1979, each agency has systematically documented its clients' experiences with work, public-assistance programs, and household food emergencies.

In 1984, five more religious agencies in the Bronx and Brooklyn began talking time to document the same kind of information.

"You need to have the prospect for systemic change to motivate people to take that extra effort," Dr. Dehavenon said.

Since 1981, she has used that documentation to compile an annual report on conditions of hunger, homelessness and poor health in East Harlem, Brooklyn and the Bronx. Because children make up 70 percent of the population that depends on public assistance nationally, Dr. Dehavenon's studies focus on households with children.

Her 1985 report, entitled "The Tyranny of Indifference and the Re-Institutionalization of Hunger, Homelessness and Poor Health," was based on interviews with members of 1,576 households in the three areas.

In the report, she claims, the number of food emergencies (occasions when a household ran

out of food or was in imminent danger of running out) reported by the participating agencies increased from 85 to 1979 to 4,000 in 1985. Destitute families with children applying for benefits went without them for as many as 28 days, although they are by law entitled to expedited food stamps and pre-investigation grants.

Those recipients whose cases were closed waited up to 26 days for them to be reopened. Meanwhile, Human Resources Administration errors were responsible for 27 percent of the cases closed, the report stated.

One man told an interviewer he stole to feed his family after his social-service worker delayed his benefits. "How can you tell a baby to wait?" he asked.

In response to Dr. Dehavenon's findings, the report concludes with recommendations for specific actions at the federal and state level, as well as in New York City.

The report suggests that the federal government should:

- Redress the Reagan administration's shift of funds from domestic social needs to weapons and defense.
- Tie Aid to Families with Dependent Children benefits to the Consumer Price Index.
- Restore cuts in subsidized job and housing programs for low-income households.
- It asks that the state government:
 - Study the real income needs of public-assistance recipients through a field-based study in collaboration with advocacy groups.
 - Increase the income eligibility levels for medically needy persons in the Medicaid program.
 - Establish more programs to provide subsidized housing for low-income households.

Throughout October, the Red Cross, the Genesee Valley Foodbank and the Politics of Food program are offering speakers to interested organizations. For more information, contact Jerry Bennett at (716) 461-9800 or Alison Clarke at (716) 271-4007.

In the Southern Tier last week, an interfaith group known as the Twin Tiers Committee for World Food Day organized a Hunger Awareness Tour for leaders in government, business, labor and media. The tour took participants to 17 sites, including soup kitchens and food pantries.

A four-part lecture series on hunger and its relationship to economic-justice issues begins at Elmira College, Thursday, October 23, and continues on December 3, March 12, and May 7. For more information on the series, contact Kathy Dubel at (607) 734-9784.