

Laity task force presents results of study to pastoral council

By Teresa A. Parsons

Lay people's struggle for identity in the Church was a common theme on the agenda of last Saturday's Diocesan Pastoral Council meeting.

Members began their day-long gathering at St. Theresa's Church in Rochester by working on a new mission statement for the consultative group, whose members represent lay people, religious and clergy alike.

Many council members concluded the day by participating in the diocese's final listening session in preparation for the October, 1987, synod on the laity. Jointly, these members reflected on their mission as lay people in the Church and in the world.

During the meeting, members of the council's Task Force on the Laity presented a statement entitled "A Theology of the Laity," which DPC members approved by a 24:2 vote.

When the task force on the laity was commissioned three years ago, none of its nearly 20 members anticipated that their task would take so long, nor that their numbers would dwindle to less than half a dozen. Neither did they expect that in the meantime Pope John Paul II would call the world's bishops together for a synod on the laity in 1987.

But the timing turned out to be fortuitous, according to Gloria Uterino and Deirdre Hetzler, the task force members who wrote and presented the statement to the DPC.

"We were not even thinking of the synod when we began," Hetzler said. "But we are sensitive to the fact that the emerging laity are perceived as a threat. That is very, very unfortunate."

"Our thrust is on the oneness of us all as Church. It's not to say that we're all the same; it is to say that we all have the same call," she added. "We had a clear sense of that internally, but it was hard to articulate."

Along with the 10-page document, council members approved two task force recommendations: that the diocese maintain and increase its efforts at highlighting the concepts of the priesthood of all believers and

the ministry of all the baptized; and that the task-force statement be included among the responses being sent from the diocese to the Secretariat on the Laity in Washington, in preparation for the synod in October.

What the task force's statement defined in theological terms, DPC members and others defined through experience, gathering immediately after the council meeting for the final listening session. Organized by Deacon Claude Lester, the three sessions were planned to gather material for use later this spring at a Washington briefing session for synod delegates from the United States.

The nearly 25 people who attended the listening session repeated a now-familiar call for recognition of the potential for holiness and spirituality in the lives of lay people, broader opportunities for women in ministry, and more involvement of lay people in what one speaker termed "the

workings of the Church."

"We're all different, but all equally capable of ministering," said Margie Hart of St. Paul's in Webster. "God can use anyone, if we are willing and if Rome is willing."

As diocesan officials wound up their efforts to prepare for the worldwide synod of bishops, Bishop Matthew H. Clark announced that his proposal for a diocesan synod is likely to be on hold for awhile longer.

During the Bishop's Forum portion of the DPC meeting, Bishop Clark explained that the Priest's Council had recommended against calling a diocesan synod at present. Instead, the priests suggested that strengthening diocesan consultative bodies — which routinely deal with many of the same issues the synod would consider — should be made a priority.

When they met jointly in November,

members of the Priests' Council, Diocesan Pastoral Council and Diocesan Sisters' Council explored one option for strengthening their role in the diocese. At that meeting, representatives from the Diocese of Saginaw outlined their experience with a single consultative body.

DPC chairman Ronald Jodoin said that he and other members of the Joint Executive Council, which includes representatives of all three groups, hope to meet with diocesan division directors in May to discuss and clarify their various roles in decision making.

In the meantime, DPC members spent an hour on Saturday trying to redefine their own role in a new mission statement. Members of the executive committee will meet later this month to refine their ideas into a rough draft. They hope to have the draft ready for consideration at the DPC's next meeting May 2.

Representative raises issue of bingo, alcohol sales

Parishes that depend on games of chance and serve alcoholic beverages at their festivals were the subject of what one Diocesan Pastoral Council member apologetically termed a "zinger" raised during the Bishop's Forum portion of last Saturday's meeting.

But the zinger apparently found a ready mark, as Bishop Matthew H. Clark encouraged the council to give the issue further study.

Howard Enkling, a representative from the Tompkins/Tioga Region, questioned whether parishes contribute to the human cost of alcoholism and compulsive gambling by serving alcohol, and offering

bingo and other games of chance at festivals and fund raisers.

"That's a question in my mind for a number of reasons," Bishop Clark responded. "What do we say to people addicted to such things? And what do we say about stewardship?"

Regardless of the propriety of such activities, Edwina Hannon, a North Region representative, pointed out that parishes, schools and, in turn, the diocese would be financially drained without bingo and festival fund raisers.

Hannon, a parishioner at St. Theresa's Church, which hosted the DPC meeting, observed that half of her parish's budget is derived from weekly bingo games. "It is

a life-support system for parishes," she said.

Others pointed to the therapeutic and social values of card games and bingo.

"That many places depend heavily on bingo is beyond dispute," Bishop Clark said. "That is reality. But is that the best expression of reality?"

"I'm not pitting myself against anything at this point," he added. "But if there are others in this body interested in pursuing this issue, I am."

DPC chairman Ronald Jodoin said he and other members of the executive committee would consider adding the issue to the agenda for the DPC's next meeting in May.

Sanctuary

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One instance might be if someone was acutely ill and treatment was not available in his or her own country, he said.

"Even though the person is physically present in the United States, they are still in the posture of someone at a point of entry, asking to come in," Ingham explained.

Moran said she left El Salvador four years ago, after spending 32 months in Ilapango, a women's prison in San Salvador.

Previously, she had worked during the day as a statistician for the Ministry of Education. At night, she attended the University of El Salvador until the army closed it in 1980. She hoped to become a professor at the university, and to help her brothers and sisters with their education.

Moran was arrested in September, 1980, while brushing her hair in a shopping center restroom, she said. She said that two men in civilian clothing told her they were taking her into custody because she had stayed in the restroom too long.

"They accused me of suspicions of being a terrorist," she said. "They must have thought I took so long because I was probably setting a bomb in there."

While she was in prison, Moran said, she was tortured both physically and psychologically. "My right hand took more than one year to recover from burns made

with acid," she said. "I suffered from nervous problems, probably from the electric shocks and the continuous death threats against me and my family."

Moran said she was never brought to trial, but she was released in June, 1983, as part of a government amnesty program. She said that following her release, death squads twice visited her home, giving her ample motivation to leave the country.

Since she arrived in the United States, Moran has lived in various places, including California and New York City. She said she hopes to spend the next year telling Rochesterians about the continuing repression in El Salvador. She plans also to talk about the plight of refugees and displaced persons in the United States and other countries. Her first public talk is scheduled for Wednesday, April 8, at 7:30 p.m. in the Asbury First United Methodist Church, Rochester.

Yet by speaking out, Moran said, she may jeopardize some members of her family. Her father and several of her 10 brothers and sisters remain in El Salvador. Six of her siblings are living in the United States — some illegally, she added.

Moran doesn't believe her own legal status would preclude the possibility that INS officers might arrest her, if for no other reason than that she looks Hispanic.

"According to what I know, I could be arrested at any time, even if I had a green card (resident alien status)," she said. "The INS has arrested people without knowing their status."

Holy Cross priests, brothers celebrate 150th anniversary

Holy Cross priests and brothers all over the world celebrated their community's 150th anniversary on Sunday, March 1. On that day in 1837, two groups of men agreed to live and work together as a religious community dedicated to education and parish renewal in the diocese of LeMans, France.

Father Basile A. Moreau directed both groups — the Brothers of St. Joseph, a community of laymen founded in 1820 by Father Jacques Dujarie, and the Auxiliary Priests of LeMans, an association of diocesan priests who preached at parish missions. Since then,

the congregation has grown to include more than 1,900 members who serve in countries throughout North and South America, Europe, Asia and Africa.

In Rochester, Holy Cross priests and brothers operate Cardinal Mooney High School in Greece. Holy Cross brothers and priests also staff and direct more than 25 secondary schools and work in more than 50 parishes on five continents.

Throughout the U.S., the community founded and is still associated with six colleges and universities. The oldest is the University of Notre Dame, founded in 1842.

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