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Parish models

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is provided by diocesan experiments with permanent parish clusters — the first of which was the Cayuga Team Ministry.

In June, 1984, four parishes — St. Joseph's, Cayuga; St. Patrick's, Aurora; St. Michael's, Union Springs; and Our Lady of the Lake, King Ferry — were united under a ministry team consisting of Father William Spilly, Mercy Sister Brigid Quinn, and Deacon John Prave. Although the experience has been positive, the cluster's geography and character, as well as certain practical problems, have challenged each team member, Prave noted.

The distance between the parishes forces the three staff members to spend a great deal of time traveling back and forth. In fact, Sister Quinn estimated that she put 25,000 miles on her car in the last year.

A second problem was maintaining the individuality of the parishes. "One of the things the team and the parish councils have to be aware of is that the (parishes) identities and individuality not be lost," Prave noted. St. Michael's and St. Joseph's have ties to nearby Auburn; St. Patrick's is in a college town (Wells College); and Our Lady of the Lake is in a farming community. Each has its own history and identity, and the team has had to be careful to respect the differences.

"We've been very attentive to make sure that there's considerable dialogue about whatever we do," Prave noted.

A third problem is that Father Spilly, as the only priest, has to say all the Masses. At first

the team attempted to maintain each parish's weekend Mass schedule, but it soon became obvious that seven Masses were too many for one priest.

Fortunately, Prave recalled, the parishes themselves resolved the problem. The parish councils each agreed that the existing number of Masses was too heavy a load for one priest, and suggested that the number be reduced. The team settled on four Masses, using a rotating schedule to determine which parishes would have Masses on Saturday and which would have them on Sunday.

The parishioners' willingness to sacrifice is a sign of one of the positive developments resulting from the new structure, Prave said.

"I've seen (that clustering) has involved more of the laity taking responsibility for the Church as a church," Prave said. "That's one of the hopes that came out of Vatican II."

The change has also led to a new understanding of the roles of the priest and the laity, Prave added. "People have realized you can't go to Father for everything. More than changing the role of the priest, however, it's been more a change of the role of the laity — with lay people becoming more active."

According to Sister Quinn, the change has also forced the team members to re-evaluate their own concept of parish operations. "It's kind of a mental thing," she said. "You have to be flexible, really listening to the needs of the people and being willing to make changes and to give up some of the things you did before."

Parish staff members may at first struggle to adjust to a loss of duties and power, but in the long run it is better for the parish, Sister

Quinn noted. "Lay people will be empowered to do things and (staff members) can move on to do something new."

Father George Wiant, pastor of the Northern Cayuga Cluster, likewise witnessed growing responsibility of lay people since his cluster was created in 1985. This change is taking place not only in the three parishes of the cluster — St. John's Port Byron; St. Joseph's, Weedsport; and St. Patrick's, Cato — but in the Church as a whole, he said.

"It's the spirit working in the Church now, and the spirit is calling forth a greater involvement of the people," Father Wiant observed. "The Church is becoming less clergy-oriented and more a community of ministers sharing their faith and community."

Father Louis Vasile, pastor of the diocese's newest cluster — the Catholic Communities of St. Gregory, Marion, and St. Anne's, Palmyra — sees the current experiments in clustering

as models for the future. These experiments involve not only the raising up of lay leadership, but a re-evaluation of priesthood as well.

"The priest right now is still living between the expectations of 40 or 50 years ago and an emerging model of the priesthood," Father Vasile said. "The priest (of the future) will be more pastoral and sacramental, but it's going to take more effort on an intimate or long-term level."

He also predicted that diocesan — and national — experiments in alternative structures will serve as a model for the Church as a whole.

"I think when you run short of those who are supposed to be ministers, you'll move on to the model of the baptized being the ministers of the community," Father Vasile said.

"It's not negative at all," he concluded. "It's evolutionary. We're moving toward the perfect Christ, which sees everybody working side by side rather than head over shoulders."

Xerox vice president to speak at Fisher commencement

A. Barry Rand, group vice president of the Xerox Corporation and president of the company's U.S. Marketing Group, will be the featured speaker at St. John Fisher College's commencement on Sunday, May 22. Ceremonies will begin at 1 p.m.

Prior to his address, Rand will be one of three candidates receiving honorary degrees during the college's 34th commencement. Rand will receive an honorary doctorate of law. In addition, Father Walter H. Principe, CSB, will receive a doctor of humane letters degree, and Martin Birmingham will be honored with a doctor of laws degree.

Rand, who currently heads the direct sales and service of Xerox products and systems to major accounts, has held a variety of sales and marketing positions since joining the company in 1968.

Father Principe, an internationally recog-

nized theologian and historian, is currently a senior fellow of history and theology at the Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies in Toronto. A native of Rochester, Principe, 65, is a 1940 graduate of Aquinas Institute.

Birmingham, regional chairman of Marine Midland Bank, has been a member of Fisher's board of trustees since 1972. An active participant in fund drives for the college's Lavery Library and Student Life Center, he is a long-time supporter of St. John Fisher.

Birmingham, is an alumnus of the Graduate School of Credit and Financial Management at Dartmouth College. He is also a graduate of Columbia University's Executive Management Program. He joined Marine Midland in 1954, and was named president in 1973. He has held his present position since 1987.

Commencement exercises set for St. Bernard's Institute

St. Bernard's Institute will award degrees to 28 candidates during commencement exercises, which will take place in the auditorium of Colgate Rochester Divinity School, 1100 S. Goodman St., Rochester on Friday, May 6, at 7:30 p.m. Bishop Matthew H. Clark, chancellor of St. Bernard's, will preside at the seventh-annual event.

An honorary doctorate of divinity will be conferred on Sandra Schneiders, associate professor of New Testament and spirituality at



the Jesuit School of Theology, Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, California. Dr. Schneiders will deliver the commencement address, "Spiritual Maturity: Cause and Effect of the Vocation to Ministry." The honorary degree will be presented to Dr. Schneiders in recognition of her many years of distinguished teaching at the Jesuit School of Theology, her leadership in articulating the role of lay and religious women in the Church, and her scholarly publications in New Testament studies.

According to Father Sebastian Falcone, president-dean of St. Bernard's, this year's class marks the largest graduating class since the institute relocated to South Goodman Street.

Annual carnival returning to Cardinal Mooney High

After a one-year hiatus, the annual carnival will return to Cardinal Mooney High School — come rain or shine — on May 12, 13 and 14.

This year's carnival will feature 15 rides provided by Martin Shows, as well as plenty of food, booths and parking.

The carnival will open at 5 p.m. on Thursday, May 13, and Friday, May 14. On Saturday, May 15, the fun will begin at 1 p.m. Special ride tickets for children can be purchased on the carnival grounds.

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