

et cetera

TGA

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how TGA funds were spent by the diocese. Sullivan also pointed to an revised TGA brochure and a revamped appeal workers' manual as other improvements in communicating with the people of the diocese during the 1988 effort. Both the brochure and the manual listed programs funded through appeal money.

"I think our presentation this year was much more professional," Sullivan said. "We cleared up a lot of education things that TGA workers and donors didn't fully understand before."

In an improvement in TGA office operations, donors received quicker responses to their contributions. By Dec. 31, every individual who gave to the 1988 appeal was mailed an acknowledgment of the pledge. In previous years, the acknowledgement was not sent until the pledged money was actually received by the diocese. "We think it's important to thank our donors in a much more professional, responsive manner for the pledged amount," Sullivan said.

Father James Moynihan, appeal coordinator,

noted that in addition to communications from the TGA office, communication efforts by pastors were pivotal in the success of the campaign. "I think pastors are doing a good job of communicating what's going on," he said.

Father Moynihan also praised the volunteers who worked with the appeal, and the contributors who responded this year. "I attribute much of our success to the 64,000 people in our diocese who are interested in participating in the work of the diocese," he said.

According to Charles Hetterich, appeal vice chairman, a number of the improvements in the 1988 appeal were partly due simply to the fact that this was Sullivan's second campaign as director. "You could see he was dealing from experience and with confidence," he noted. "He had another year to build on."

"I think I feel more confident in the job as I get to know the system and the key people within the diocese," Sullivan acknowledged.

Sullivan said that he is already planning ways to improve the TGA for 1989. He will be spending more time in parishes, recruiting and training volunteers. He is also developing a plan to recruit pastors as regional coordinators for the appeal. Each of these pastors will serve as a liaison between the TGA office and parishes in

their regions. "I will be meeting with them within regions on a year-round basis to explain new initiatives and changes that we are making in the TGA process," he said.

Father Moynihan approved of the greater efforts to work with and communicate with pastors. "We have to give them as much assistance as possible," he said. "We have to answer their questions."

The priest also said that a key part of the 1989 appeal will be a new videotape. "The more videotape we get, the better it will be," he remarked.

Father Moynihan predicted that the forthcoming presentation will be an improvement on the 1988 edition. The team that produced the 1988 videotape — award-winning writer Lou Buttino and filmmaker Thom Marini — have agreed to work on the new videotape. Because plans for the film are already being discussed, Buttino will have more time to write the script than the three weeks he had last summer.

In addition, the 1989 videotape project will be part of an effort to produce an hour-long documentary about the diocese for the Development Office. Production of this documentary is scheduled to begin this month, with a target completion date of June, 1989. The documentary will be shown in parishes to such groups as parish councils and finance committees. In the fall, a condensed version of the documentary will be used during the TGA.

Both video presentations will include interviews with people who have been helped by TGA funding. The 1988 videotape relied instead on interviews with diocesan personnel explaining how TGA funding supports their programs. "The new video will have personal witnesses, people who have seen and had personal

impact in their lives because of the TGA," Sullivan explained.

While speaking with satisfaction about the success of the 1988 TGA and with optimism about the 1989 effort, appeal officials are beginning to voice a concern about the decline in the number of prospective donors as one area of concern. Furthermore, they note that although the number of pledges is up from the 55,240 of 1985 — the only year the appeal failed to meet its target — even if this year's figure reaches the predicted 64,000 pledges it will fall far short of the 77,663 recorded in 1981.

"That's an area of concern of mine — my donor base is eroding," Sullivan said. He pointed out that the TGA has managed to meet its goal because the donors who do give have increased their gifts from \$41.83 in 1981 to an average of more than \$65 this year. But in the future, the declining numbers of potential donors may cause problems. "We're going to end up with a smaller number of people having to pick up the responsibility for supporting parishes and the diocese."

Sullivan said that he was puzzled by the decline. "Where did they go?" he asked. "Did they leave town? Did they move to a new parish and never registered? Did they pass away?"

Father Peter Bayer, chancellor of the Diocese of Rochester, suggested that part of the decline may simply be due to the number of changes in pastorates since the TGA began in 1981. New pastors, he said, frequently go through the parish registers and eliminate the names of people who have moved or passed away. He added that TGA office would be responsible for analyzing the donor base figures and determining what was causing the decline.

Sullivan said that at this time, he did not know how to determine where the parishioners have gone. This is an problem that appeal officials will be looking at more closely in the future, he said.

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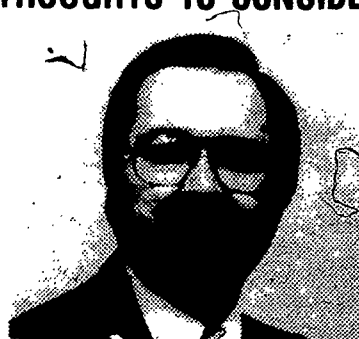
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