

Regions get new education superintendent

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Sister Kathleen Murphy, OSF, has taken to heart the Boy Scout motto, "Be prepared."

A lover of long walks, Sister Murphy travels with sneakers and socks in her car just in case she gets a chance to go for a stroll.

She may well find ample opportunities both to drive and to walk in her new job. Sister Murphy is the diocesan Division of Education's newly appointed district superintendent for schools outside Monroe County, an area encompassing the scenic Finger Lakes and Southern Tier regions of the diocese.

In that capacity, Sister Murphy intends to spend a lot of time on the road. "I'll be out in the field. I really see the need for on-site supervision," she said, estimating that she will spend 50 percent of her time visiting the 21 schools in her region, or meeting with principals and faculty on site and in regional gatherings.

A Buffalo native, Sister Murphy comes to the Rochester diocese with 30-years experience in Catholic education — 20 of them as a principal. She was the principal at Nativity of Our Lord School in Orchard Park when she learned that the Diocese of Rochester was restructuring its education division, creating three superintendent positions — two for Monroe County and one for the other 11 counties of the diocese.

Even though she loved Buffalo, Sister Murphy said she applied for the Rochester position because, "I felt I was ready for a new challenge. As a principal for a number of years, I felt that the challenge I wanted was to minister to other principals to make their service more effective."

Sister Murphy was also excited about the education-office restructuring being done in Rochester, particularly the new superintendent positions. "(Buffalo) doesn't have the structure that Rochester has just devised, and I'll be on the ground floor of that development," she said.

Rochester, she observed, is further along in the process of dealing with the problems being faced by Catholic schools — including declining enrollments, increasing expenses, and decreasing numbers of women religious available to teach. She noted, however, that Rochester is a smaller diocese, making necessary changes easier to enact.

"What I see in Rochester that Buffalo can't have because of its size and structure is the personal touch," Sister Murphy said. "It's not that (Buffalo) doesn't want it, but the structure prevents it. I see the concept of (Rochester's) district superintendent as exciting because it will allow me to get out in the field, to be in personal contact."

In addition to her duties as district superintendent, Sister Murphy will also be responsible for the education division's justice-and-peace program and for staff development. With respect to education in justice and peace issues, she will use what she calls the "infusion" method. "It's not like adding to the curriculum; it's infusing justice and peace concepts into what's there," she explained, adding that justice and peace are simply "Gospel concepts."

As for staff development, Sister Murphy said that educating administrators — and through them, faculty members — in the meaning of Catholic education is an especially important task because of the increasing number of lay people working in Catholic schools. These lay people have been trained in graduate schools that don't "emphasize the Catholic Gospel teachings of Jesus Christ," she said, noting that her goal is to have "the Gospels permeate



Sister Kathleen Murphy, OSF, brings 30 years experience in Catholic education to the Rochester diocese. Linda Dow Hayes/Catholic Courier

the schools and infuse the schools with Gospel values.

"We're charged with passing on the faith to the next generation," Sister Murphy said. "I'd rather form the child, than to be applying the bandages later."

Having been in Rochester only since Aug. 14, Sister Murphy acknowledged that she did not know the diocese — or its problems — well. At this point, for example, she has only a general awareness of the process already

underway to develop well-integrated catechetical plans for her district. This fall, she plans to attend the cluster meetings to learn more and "to be helpful in the process as it develops."

Sister Murphy will also make meeting with school administrators a "top priority" in the next few months. "I'm actually getting anxious to get out there." After all, the sneakers are waiting in her car.

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Black bishop to give 1989 Dahlberg talk

Retired Bishop Leontine Turpeau Current Kelly, resident bishop of the United Methodist Church to the San Francisco area from 1984-88, will deliver the annual Edwin T. Dahlberg Ecumenical Lecture at Colgate Rochester Divinity School/Bexley Hall/Crozer Theological Seminary, on Thursday, Sept. 7, at 7:30 p.m.

Bishop Kelly is currently a visiting professor of evangelism and witness at the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, Calif. The bishop will lecture on "Spirituality For Our Time."

The recipient of frequent awards and

Volunteers are needed to write for blind people

Volunteers are needed to transcribe the printed word into Braille. Upon completion of training, volunteers become certified by The Library of Congress to provide Brailled materials to meet the needs of the blind community.

Braille classes will begin Sept. 12-14.

honors, Bishop Kelly was recently named one of 50 "black role models" by *USA Today*. A renowned speaker and Christian interpreter nationwide, she is a frequent challenger of church and community.

The Divinity School presents the Dahlberg lecture each year near the beginning of the school year. In addition to honoring the 1917 alumnus — a renowned ecumenist and pacifist — the lecture provides a forum for discussion of Christian unity and issues of world peace.

The lecture is free and open to the public.

One class per week and at least two hours of homework per day are required. Classes will be held at three locations: First Baptist Church of Rochester (716/461-0267); First Presbyterian Church, East Rochester (425-2603); and Spencerport Volunteer Ambulance Building (392-3593).

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