

# St. Joseph's

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similar fiscal problems, we can not wait for actions from government to increase payment to hospitals."

According to John J. Renz, vice president for planning and marketing, the hospital experienced a deficit of approximately \$1.1 million in 1988, which marked an improvement over the \$3.43 million deficit recorded in 1987.

During the past four months, St. Joseph's Hospital engaged consultants familiar with hospital operations throughout New York state and the nation to recommend changes.

Dr. James Frisk, St. Joseph's vice president of medical affairs, said "the care that physicians and staff at St. Joseph's provide to patients throughout the 10-county region will continue to be the best available in our area."

Sister Castagnaro agreed that the layoff will not affect the quality of care at the hospital.

"We reviewed our staffing plans with senior officials in the State Health Department," she said. "The health department is confident the staffing levels in patient care areas will maintain the hospital's quality of care."

She added that "for the physicians and staff of St. Joseph's, our challenge is to accept change and dedicate our energy to becoming profitable while maintaining quality."

The staff reduction comes as admissions are beginning to show a marked increase, according to the hospital president.

"In January and February, we increased our admissions over 1989 levels by approx-

imately 10 percent," Sister Castagnaro said. "With a continuation of this increase in admissions, together with this reduction in expenses, St. Joseph's will be profitable in 1990."

Earlier this month, the hospital announced that it will expand its alcohol-rehabilitation unit from 15 to 20 beds. The staff reduction will not affect the move to increase services in that area.

Increased patient services in the rehabilitation unit would generate about \$337,000 in additional revenue, with most of the money coming from Blue Cross and

Medicaid reimbursement.

The Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency has approved the request, which now goes to the State Office of Health Management Systems.

The additional beds would allow St. Joseph's to provide timely care for about 90 more people a year. A significant proportion of the unit's caseload is people who are cross-addicted to alcohol and drugs, principally cocaine.

The unit had occupancy rates of 94 percent in 1988 and 97 percent in 1989.

## GEM

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crusade revealed to the members of GEM that the organization could benefit from a more open structure that would allow diverse groups to participate, he said.

This realization came at the same time GEM was re-examining itself, the Rev. Witmer noted. Under the current GEM constitution, participating groups are required to reassess the body periodically to determine if changes are needed, and if they wish to continue as members.

Currently, GEM membership is limited to such larger denominations as the Episcopal and Roman Catholic dioceses, and the Presbytery of the Genesee Valley.

Community and evangelical churches (such as the Assemblies of God), small ethnic churches (generally black or Hispanic), and denominations with only a few congregations in Rochester (such as orthodox churches) are excluded from membership at this time.

In choosing to open the organization to such groups, GEM is "saying that de-

nominal bodies are not the only expression of the church," the Rev. Witmer said.

The proposed new structure would also allow parishes and individual congregations to join GEM.

A number of details have yet to be worked out before the new structure is put in place, said the Rev. Charles Luckett, pastor of East Rochester's First Presbyterian Church and head of the restructuring task force.

Among those details would be how the organization would be financed, how membership in the assembly and the board would be determined, and the exact distribution of responsibilities between the assembly and the board.

The current president of GEM, Margery Nurnberg — who also serves as director of the Department of Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs of Rochester's Catholic diocese — said the expanded body will allow greater opportunity for dialogue, cooperative social ministry, and joint worship among the represented groups.

"We need all three for true ecumenism," Nurnberg said.

## Prayer

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our lives leaving little or no room for God.

Along with praying and fasting, we give alms more generously and with a deeper responsiveness and openness to others. We give of our money, our time, possessions, service; we give our gifts as a sign of our compassion and suffering with others. We give freely and generously, as God has given to us!

Lent, then, is a season in which we Christians act differently. But do we? Not really, because during Lent we do nothing more than we are meant to do every day as Christ's disciples. And yet, we do act differently. By our prayer, fasting and almsgiving, we consciously make ourselves ready for the great Easter feast, the 50-day celebration of new life, of hope in Jesus Christ, and of hope in us!

## Weekend for scouts set

Scouters from all Councils within the Rochester diocese will take part in Scouter Development from March 23-25 at the Notre Dame Retreat House overlooking Canandaigua Lake.

According to the event's chairman, Duane Pancoast, the program will mark the first time that such a weekend of scouter training, religious retreat and Christian formation has ever taken place at a retreat house.

The cost of the weekend is \$75. Call George Herbert, chairman of the diocesan Catholic committee, 716/392-2429 or 724-7449. Reservations must be made by March 15.

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