

Candidate's dinner raises tempers, money

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Surrounded by admirers and members of the Republican Party, Oliver North was curious about all the fuss being raised outside the Mapledale Party House's VIP lounge Thursday evening, Sept. 27.

He turned to Rush Limbaugh, the bellicose national radio commentator who served as master of ceremonies at the \$75-a-plate dinner for John Manning Regan Jr., Republican congressional candidate running against Democratic incumbent Louise Slaughter.

"What's going on out there?" North asked Limbaugh about the approximately 150 protesters outside on both sides of the street running by the party house.

"They're having a \$5-a-plate counter dinner to protest your savage policies in Nicaragua!" Limbaugh said, pointing his finger at North to emphasize his point.

"You mean the policy that got them democracy?" North replied rhetorically, smiling as those around him joined in the laughter.

The counter-dinner — which featured rice and beans — protested North's policies. It also raised funds for victims of the Contra war in Nicaragua and for the homeless served by St. Joseph's House of Hospitality on South Clinton Avenue.

Regan's fundraising dinner was targeted by an unlikely combination of pro-choice and peace groups — including St. Joseph's House and the social-justice committee at Nazareth College — that opposed the congressional candidate's pro-life stance and his endorsement of North.

The former U.S. Marine Lieutenant Colonel and member of the Reagan administration's National Security Council was seen by the protesters as a criminal who undermined the U.S. Constitution through his role in the Iran-Contra scandal.

In the mid-1980s, North set up deals intended to gain the release of Iran's U.S.



From left, Clayton Wheatley, Shealeen Meaney and Alex Ott of the State University of New York College at Geneseo review some of the literature distributed at a Sept. 27 protest at the Mapledale Party House in Rochester. More than 15 groups organized a \$5 dinner across the street from the party house to protest the \$75-a-plate dinner to benefit the congressional bid of John Manning Regan Jr.

hostages in exchange for U.S. arms. Money made from the deals was channeled to buy weapons for Nicaragua's Contra forces during a congressional freeze on military aid to the Central American rebels.

North was convicted on three criminal counts related to the affair, but one of his convictions was eventually overturned. The others may also be overturned in light of an appeals court order that the convictions be reviewed since they were linked to testimony North gave the U.S. Congress under a grant of limited immunity.

One World War II naval veteran at the protest argued that North was no hero for his actions during the 1980s.

"To me, we (veterans) put ourselves on the line for something that is being sold out by a lot of guys like Ollie North," said Tom W. Harris, a Henrietta resident.

Harris noted that a friend of his from this area had been killed in 1980 by a death squad connected to the military in Guatemala — whose government is supported by the United States. Harris said his friend, an agronomist, had been helping Indians in Guatemala to become self-

sufficient in agriculture.

Another protester had similar bitter feelings towards North for his role in U.S. policy in Latin America. A parishioner at Corpus Christi and a supporter of Nicaragua's former Sandinista government, Carlos Guzman-McFadden complained that the Contra war pushed Nicaraguans to embrace opposition presidential candidate Violeta Chamorro and reject the leftist Sandinistas in the last election.

Since Chamorro's election, "the poverty has gone up," in Nicaragua, according to Guzman-McFadden, who recently returned from the Latin American nation. "(The Contra war) cost a lot of lives with the (Sandinistas)," said the protester, adding "and (North) sits there with a \$150-a-plate dinner."

Before the dinner, which drew 350 people, Regan explained his choice of North as a speaker. "He stands for a lot of very good family values," Regan said. "He stands for a reasonable ... approach to the Constitution. He stands for a Congress which is under control."

Some of those who attended the Regan dinner also defended the former Marine. "He did what was good for the country and he didn't feel like going through all the red tape in the Congress," said Mary Ptak, a Catholic catechist from the Syracuse diocese, as she watched the protesters outside the Mapledale.

Ptak labeled the protesters "kooks" who were mixing up their issues by protesting North and Regan's pro-life stance at the same time. "(North) doesn't have much to do with the abortion issue," she said, adding that she was pro-life.

The combination of peace and pro-choice protesters helped create an ironic moment when a group of North and Limbaugh supporters counter-protesting the demonstration joined their opponents in yelling pro-choice slogans at a handful of pro-life activists displaying anti-abortion bumper stickers in the Mapledale's parking lot.

The North/Limbaugh supporters noted they disagreed with the other demonstrators except on abortion.

Limbaugh expressed delight at the demonstrators outside who for the most part carried signs insulting him and North.

"I love them all," he said, adding "it's Americana."

Parishes to take part in national 'rescue'

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

People within the Diocese of Rochester will have ample opportunity to participate in a national "Supernatural Rescue Mission," scheduled for Oct. 7-13.

Parishes throughout the diocese have scheduled events for all or part of the weeklong ecumenical effort, which calls for prayer and fasting to end abortion and to bring the nation to conversion.

At the heart of the local effort is the Knights of Columbus Council #178, which distributed 80,000 pamphlets promoting the week.

"We feel it's time to do everything we can to awaken the population of the area to the evil of abortion," noted Bob Brown, deputy grand knight of the council.

In Brown's own home parish, St. Pius X in Rochester, the week will include a rosary service on Oct. 9, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction on Oct. 11, and stations of the cross on Oct. 12. The parish has also slated a series of speakers throughout October to address life issues.

Other parishes — such as St. John of Rochester in Perinton, St. Leo's in Hilton and Holy Rosary, St. Cecilia's and Holy Spirit, all in Rochester — plan to have 24-hour exposition of the Blessed Sacrament throughout the week. St. Michael's, Newark, will have recitation of the rosary before weekday Masses. Immaculate Conception Church in Ithaca will hold an all-night vigil Oct. 6 to start the week off.

In addition, Auburn parishes have combined their efforts at St. Francis of Assisi Church to present hourly rosaries, daily expositions, 7:30 p.m. Masses, and all-night vigils on Oct. 11 and 12. Invitations to participate in the Auburn activities were sent to parishes throughout the Finger Lakes region.

Meanwhile, Brown said, a letter supporting the Supernatural Rescue Mission was sent from Bishop Matthew H. Clark's office. Bishop Clark is also scheduled to conduct a Marian Holy Hour at Sacred Heart Cathedral on Oct. 14, an event many of the groups and individuals supporting the rescue mission are viewing as an end to the week.

The local effort in the Rochester diocese will be echoed nationwide according to John Downs, chairman of the Baltimore-based Movement of Marian Lay Organizations and the originator of the Supernatural Rescue Mission.

"We believe in the grace of God to change hearts and minds," Downs said in a telephone interview with the *Catholic Courier*. "Only if people change will we change the abortion laws."

Previously Downs had been involved with the annual Rosary Congress, a week of prayer and perpetual adoration. Last year, he decided to create an ecumenical effort focusing on abortion, which he sees as one of the most blatant symbols of the evil in the world.

"Abortion is a human sacrifice," Downs said. "We're sacrificing to the god of pleasure and convenience our own children."

The rescue mission is intended to atone for the sin of abortion, Downs explained, and to call for God's intervention.

"We have got to act in faith and trust and sacrifice and ask God to intervene," Downs said. "He won't intervene unless we act. He will intervene proportionate to the number of people who pray and sacrifice."

To increase the number of people involved in the effort, Downs chose to include individuals from other religions. "Every man who lives his life in good conscience, who believes in a personal God, is considered a child of God," he explained. "Every person's prayer means something."

The effort has, in fact, received the endorsement of a number of Protestant groups and individuals, including the

Continued on page 18

Church seeks kitchen director

ROCHESTER — St. Peter's Kitchen is looking for a new director now that its acting director has relinquished the helm to Father David P. Reid, pastor of Ss. Peter's and Paul's Parish, and parishioner Mary DeWitt.

Last week, Brother Robert DiManno, SSCC, finished a one-month interim term as acting director of the kitchen, which serves a midday meal to 200-350 people six days a week.

Father Reid-fired the kitchen's former

director, Nancy Christopher, in August over what Christopher called "philosophical differences" in ministering to the poor. Christopher said she had no further comment on the matter.

Father Reid said the parish has received a number of inquiries regarding the kitchen's directorship, a full-time position, and that a three-member search committee would be formed to examine the resumé's of potential applicants.

— Rob Cullivan