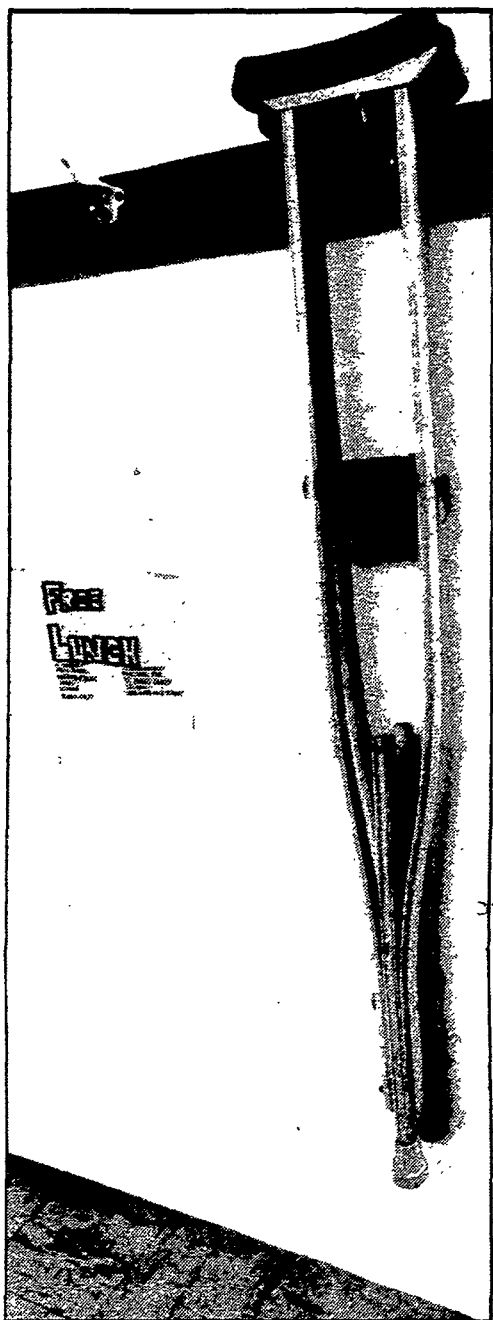


Series to personalize work of annual appeal

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Each Advent for the last 21 years, the *Catholic Courier* has begun publishing a Christmas Appeal series, citing 100 of the "neediest cases" presented to Catholic social ministry agencies and parishes throughout the diocese.

In an effort to more accurately present the way in which the appeal actually works, this year's series will take a



A pair of crutches for those in need hangs outside Adams' office.

different approach.

Instead of recounting the stories of these "neediest cases" as in the past, this year's series will focus on a family or individual who was aided by monies from previous appeals and the various agencies that distribute assistance.

Because the old format listed 100 anonymous beneficiaries — frequently identified as Mr. X or The Y Family — some donors developed an incorrect impression of how their money was distributed, said Karen M. Franz, editor in chief/assistant general manager of the *Catholic Courier*.

"(The Christmas Appeal series) was, to a degree, misleading to people insofar as some of the readers were saying, 'Send my money to number 26,' when, in actuality, it didn't work that way," she said.

Franz said the *Courier* had attempted to dispel this mistaken impression by publishing a disclaimer alongside the 100 cases, explaining that the cases were representative — and in some cases, composites — of the thousands of individuals and families seeking help from social ministries. Nonetheless, the impression persisted, she said.

Judy Taylor, resource programs coordinator for the diocesan Division of Social Ministry, said 1989 appeal contributions in excess of \$65,000 had assisted in more than 30,000 — not just 100 — cases, through cash vouchers distributed to needy people throughout the diocese.

Each of the three agencies of diocesan social ministry — the Catholic Family Center, the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry and the Southern Tier Office of Social Ministry — receives 26.3 percent of the appeal's funds to distribute through its various programs.

Another 11 percent of appeal contributions goes to the Bishop Sheen Ecumenical Housing Foundation, Inc., which provides housing assistance for low- and middle-income families. The remaining 10 percent of the appeal's monies is allocated to the diocesan Division of Urban Ministry.

Some of Urban Ministry's share of the funds has been distributed through Rochester parishes that seek aid from the division when needy people knock at rectory doors, Taylor said. This year, she pointed out, diocesan parishes may receive



Babette G. Augustin/Staff photographer
Bernard E. Adams, a human services specialist with the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry, is one of numerous sources of emergency assistance through the Catholic Courier-Social Ministry Christmas Appeal.

Christmas Appeal allocations directly upon request. This policy is designed to respond to the fact that local parishes are frequently the first places needy people turn to for help, Taylor said.

Appeal beneficiaries are people "falling through the cracks of eligibility" for other forms of assistance, Taylor explained.

"Sometimes, the fact that you have a job doesn't mean that you have the money to meet a catastrophe," Taylor remarked. She added that beneficiaries of the Christmas Appeal are quite often living from paycheck to paycheck, and lack enough money for such expenses as utility bills or medical prescriptions.

"An awful lot of people have drained all their resources," Taylor said. "Many of them are without friends and families to

help."

Each of the agencies receiving Christmas Appeal funds will exhaust all other sources of potential help for someone before turning to the appeal's funds, Taylor noted.

"The need is verified and other resources to fill the need are first eliminated," she said, citing the American Red Cross as an example of an agency to which a needy person might be referred in the event of a crisis. In certain cases, Christmas Appeal funds make up a portion, rather than the full amount, of assistance a person or family will receive in an emergency, Taylor continued.

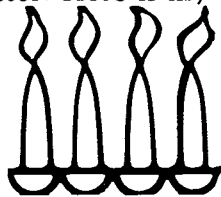
Donors have already begun sending in contributions for this year's appeal, a phenomenon resulting from a direct-mail

Continued on page 14

I want to help the needy of the Diocese of Rochester. Here is my contribution to the 1990 Christmas Appeal.

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