



Brian Critch/Photo Intern

Kevin McShea, a client at the Francis Hospitality Center, sits in the temporary section of the new shelter.

Diocese sets TGA goal, abolishes quota system

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Bishop Matthew H. Clark announced Monday, Oct. 14, that the 1991 Thanks Giving Appeal goal will be \$4.345 million.

He also announced the elimination of compulsory parish quotas.

The TGA is the Diocese of Rochester's chief source of funding. Appeal proceeds represent 64 percent of the 1991-92 diocesan budget of \$6.762 million.

Income from investments, along with fees charged for some diocesan services, will account for \$2.417 million — or 36 percent — of the diocesan budget.

The now-defunct quota system required each parish in the diocese to meet a mandatory goal. For the appeal's first 10 years, parishes failing to meet their TGA quotas were expected to make up the differences from other parish revenues.

In 1990, that system was modified, requiring parishes to raise only 85 percent of their quotas.

"The elimination of the quota system will allow us to focus on the theme of stewardship in our annual appeal as we remember that God gives each of us talents and energies, and invites us to use them in the service of one another," Bishop Clark said at the press conference.

Bishop Clark acknowledged that the quota system had been unpopular since the appeal was established in 1981 as a replacement for parish taxation.

"To my knowledge," Bishop Clark said, "we now become the first diocese in the country to depend almost entirely upon charitable gifts to fund our annual operating budget."

Under the new system, each parish will be assigned a "fair-share" goal, but will not be subject to any kind of penalty if it falls short of the goal, Bishop Clark said.

The in-hall portion of the appeal will take place the weekends of Oct. 19-20 and

26-27, and Nov. 2-3.

After that point, the diocesan development office will follow up on the appeal throughout the winter and spring of 1992, attempting to reach individuals who did not contribute during earlier phases.

In follow-up efforts to the 1990-91 TGA, about 8,000 individuals contributed \$250,000 to \$270,000, according to Mark Seeberg, diocesan director of development. These contributions enabled the diocese to exceed its 1990-91 TGA goal of \$4.1 million, he said.

Seeberg said the theme for the 1991 campaign — "Joining Hands To Do God's Work" — relates to changes in the appeal's process and focus.

Bishop Clark said the theme "reminds us that we are joined together as a diocesan family — priests, religious and laity — to carry on God's work for the needy and poor, the education of our youth, and the faith development of our people."

Although eliminating the quota system is the only major change in the 1991-92 appeal, this year's TGA will expand on one of last year's modifications.

In 1990, the development office added a leadership-gift phase to the campaign. Conducted prior to the parish-run phase, the leadership component consisted of personal contact between volunteers and about 550 individuals capable of giving large gifts. The 1990 effort netted \$335,000, according to Mary Consler, director of special gifts for the diocese.

This year's expanded leadership phase began Sept. 17, Consler said. About 1,000 potential donors will be approached, she said, toward a goal of \$500,000. As of Oct. 11, 1991, the diocese had received \$200,000 in pledges through this effort, Consler said.

Seeberg noted that the leadership campaign and follow-up efforts essentially make the TGA a year-round operation and culminate a three-year effort to restructure the appeal.

Parishes wait, watch on demand for shelter

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Since the early 1980s, increasing numbers of homeless people have sought refuge each winter at shelters operated by Catholic and Protestant churches.

This winter, however, two of the three shelters run by city Catholic parishes will not open.

Last spring, Blessed Sacrament Parish, 534 Oxford St., and St. Bridget's Parish, 175 St. Bridget's Drive, closed their overnight facilities, which for the past decade have housed homeless people between the months of November and April.

Corpus Christi's Dimitri House, the city's third parish-run shelter, will continue operating this winter, according to its staff.

In theory, at least, the shelters at Blessed Sacrament and St. Bridget's were made obsolete this June by the opening of the Francis Hospitality Center, 547 Joseph Ave.

Operated year-round by the Catholic Family Center, the new 24-hour facility was designed to attack the root causes of homelessness and to relieve the overburdened parish shelter network.

Run by a staff of 10 full- and part-time professionals, the Francis Center offers such services as daily meals, counseling, literacy training and health screening.

Seven of the facility's 30 beds are located in an emergency overnight room. They may be occupied for periods up to 30 days by individuals who have lost their homes for such reasons as a fire, eviction or domestic dispute, according to Mary McGuire, director of the Department of Homeless and Housing Services at CFC.

Recently released convicts looking for apartments have also used the beds, McGuire said, noting that many of the guests are referred to her by the Monroe County Department of Social Services.

Clients who need more extensive assistance can live in one of the 23 "transitional" rooms provided for long-term guests, she said.

Twenty-five of the 30 beds now are occupied, according to McGuire, who said 127 clients have passed through the doors at Francis Center since it opened in June.

But those numbers have raised concern among some observers that the facility will be filled to capacity before winter's cold prompts even more homeless people to seek shelter. As a result, McGuire speculated, at least one of the former parish

shelters may be forced to reopen later this fall.

"I think we're going to have to wait and see," she said. "I think there might be a concern. Blessed Sacrament may consider opening later in the winter."

McGuire's concerns echoed those of Richard Sadowski, director of the former overnight shelter at Blessed Sacrament.

"It took a while for Francis Center to get to capacity," he said. "They have had some success. ... Once the word spreads, the more success they will have. They should be able to handle the situation."

Sadowski said Blessed Sacrament will "wait and see" what happens on the streets before considering reopening its shelter.

Linda Rosier, former director of the shelter at St. Bridget's, said the large number of clients at the Francis Center strongly suggests a continuing need for the shelter at Blessed Sacrament.

"Honestly speaking, I feel that Blessed Sacrament may have to reopen," said Rosier, who now works as a case manager at Francis Center.

In any event, both Blessed Sacrament and St. Bridget's will continue to offer free hot meals on weekdays, just as they did during shelter operation, program directors said.

Blessed Sacrament Parish is spending \$10,000 to renovate its basement kitchen facilities for the hot meal program, Sadowski said. He noted that the parish has applied to the City of Rochester for a grant that would reimburse the parish for as much as half of the renovation cost.

He said as many as 60 people ate at Blessed Sacrament each night last winter. Due to the closing earlier this year of the supper program at Corpus Christi Parish, that number may double, Sadowski said.

Organizers at St. Bridget's hope to begin a hot meal program Nov. 11, according to Rosier.

"(We're) looking at a lot more families that may have a roof over their head but not enough to eat," she said.

EDITORS' NOTE: The Francis Center is seeking overnight volunteers and "mentors" — people who will serve as friends to clients making a transition from homelessness to a more stable lifestyle. Call 716/454-4236.

Blessed Sacrament needs volunteers for its kitchen. Call Richard Sadowski at 716/288-4780.

St. Bridget's needs volunteers for its meal program. Call 716/546-8846.



St. Jude Thaddeus

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NOVENA to St. Jude October 20 - 28

St. Jude's Church
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Rochester, New York 14606

Mass and Novena Prayers each morning at 9:00 a.m. and each evening at 7:30 p.m. All are invited by Father John J. Steger, Pastor, to attend and pray to the Patron of Hopeless Cases and Impossible Causes.

CONDUCTING THE NOVENA

Rev. Bonaventure Stefun, OFM Cap. Anointing of the sick, Thursday, October 24th during both services. Main Celebrant of the Mass of Solemn Closing on the Feast of St. Jude, October 28th will be Bishop Dennis W. Hickey. Followed by a Coffee Hour in the Parish Hall.