

# Father Bayer leaving Pastoral Office posts

By Lee Strong  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Father Peter T. Bayer, chancellor of the Diocese of Rochester and director of diocesan Financial Services (formerly the Division of Support Ministries) will step down from both positions effective Dec. 31.

"I thought after spending 18 years in diocesan administration — and the last seven years as chancellor and director of Support Ministries — that I'd just like to explore some other options," Father Bayer said.

Among those options are military or hospital chaplaincy, a pastorate, or a return to school, he said.

Father John Mulligan, moderator of the pastoral office, noted that the diocese will be searching for a lay person to take Father Bayer's place as the chief financial officer of the diocese.

"I am most grateful for Peter's long and dedicated service," observed Bishop Matthew H. Clark. "He has many friends throughout the diocese, and his extensive work with the parish census program makes him one of our best-known priests."

Under Father Bayer's tenure as the diocese's chief financial officer, the diocesan portfolio has grown to approximately \$24 million.

In addition, Father Bayer has been active in pastoral planning for the diocese since 1973. He helped to implement such programs as the Thanks Giving Appeal — which replaced the old system of parish taxation — and a census program that helped parishes assess the needs of their people and determine ways to address those

needs.

Father Bayer said one of his most important activities was pulling together and staffing the Five Year Financial Planning Process Task Force, and its follow-up group, the Oversight Task Force. The reports of the two groups — released in 1987 and 1988, respectively — since have guided diocesan financial planning and reorganization of the diocesan Pastoral Center.

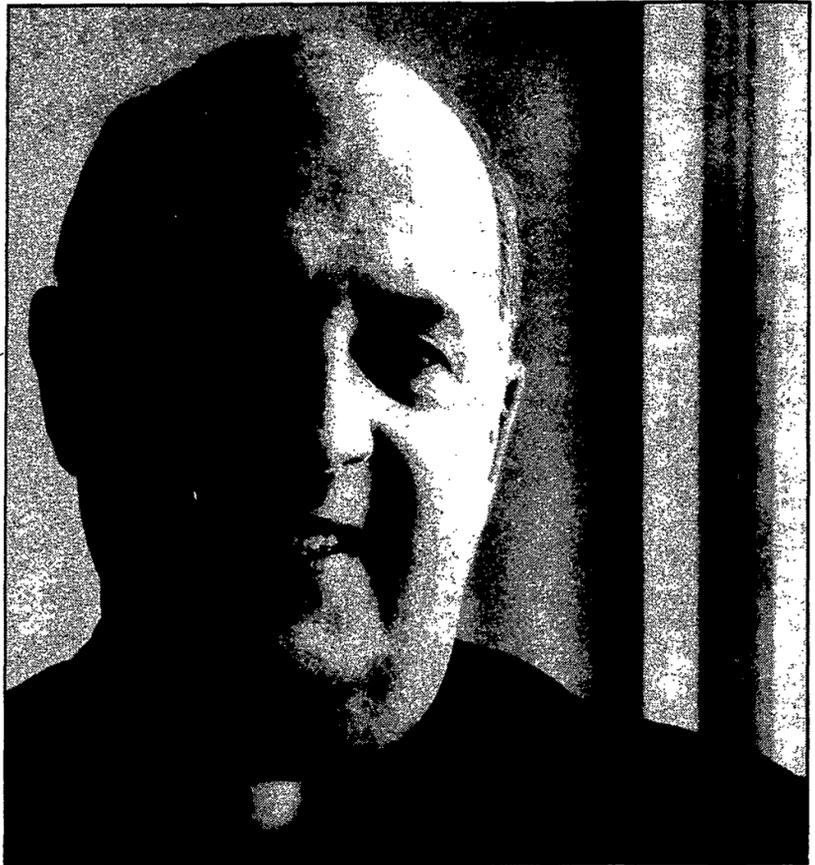
Despite his achievements, Father Bayer noted that upon ordination to the priesthood in 1971, he did not anticipate working in diocesan administration.

He had been working as a pastoral assistant at Rochester's St. Francis Xavier Parish for only a year when destructive floods struck the Southern Tier in July of 1972, in the wake of Hurricane Agnes. Then Bishop Joseph L. Hogan named Father Bayer to oversee relief efforts in the Corning area.

"(The flood) devastated the area," Father Bayer recalled. "It was just terrible."

In Corning, Father Bayer helped to organize an ecumenical group to respond to the flood. Catholic parishes throughout the diocese were urged to adopt individuals and families in the stricken region to help them rebuild their homes. Over a two-year span, he estimated, those parishes donated approximately \$60 million worth of services.

At the suggestion of the Priests' Council, Bishop Hogan created the Office of Pastoral Planning in 1973, and appointed Father Bayer to be its first director.



Babette G. Augustin/Staff photographer  
Father Peter T. Bayer, chancellor of the Diocese of Rochester and director of diocesan Financial Services (formerly the Division of Support Ministries), will step down from both positions effective Dec. 31.

Under Father Bayer the planning office — and later the Division of Support Services — evolved to encompass at one time the diocesan financial, information, data, maintenance and development services. In July of this year, the group was restructured under the title of Financial Services.

The office also oversaw the annual Thanks Giving Appeal, and provided staff support for the Diocesan Building

Commission, Clergy Relief Society, and the now-defunct Diocesan Finance Council.

Assessing Father Bayer's impact on the diocese, Frank Stotz, chairman of the diocesan Finance Committee (which replaced the Finance Council) observed, "In his own way, Peter has made more contributions to the fiscal health of the diocese than people will ever know."

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