

STOSM to house resource center

By Lee Strong
Staff writer

ELMIRA — In conjunction with the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry and with support from the Diocese of Rochester, the Southern Tier Office of Social Ministry has created a Worker Ownership Resource Center.

George Melas-Kyriazi was hired as full-time director of the project, effective Dec. 16, 1991. He will work out of the center office, located at STOSM, 160 High St.

The Campaign for Human Development has awarded the project a \$70,000 grant for the center's first year of operation. The diocese has matched that amount, earmarking nearly \$49,000 — largely, Thanks Giving Appeal funds — and \$21,000 in employee time, office space and services for the effort.

In addition, Melas-Kyriazi said, the diocese has pledged to create a \$50,000 loan to help fund the second year of the projected five-year project.

The project is designed to help low-income and unemployed individuals develop worker-owned cooperative businesses in the 10 counties comprising the Finger Lakes and Southern Tier regions of the diocese, according to Melas-Kyriazi, who holds a master's degree in management from Yale University.

The goal of the project, he explained, is to help people "develop economic possibilities for themselves. The ultimate idea is to develop a situation where they can derive decent incomes in a good working condition."

The project will initially consist of

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small group meetings during which participants will explore business options. Members will study small businesses already in operation, meet with business professionals for advice, and become familiar with available financial and support resources, Melas-Kyriazi explained.

Six groups have already begun meeting, looking at such possibilities as opening a laundromat; beginning a baking cooperative; starting a used baby clothes and furniture store; and creating a small home repair business.

The project traces its roots back to meetings held in 1985 during the drafting of the U.S. Catholic Bishop's 1986 pastoral letter on economics, titled *Economic Justice for All*, noted Kathy Dubel, STOSM's director of Justice and Peace.

Dubel and STOSM began to develop the project following those discussions, enlisting the participation of FLOSM in 1989. STOSM applied for diocesan and CHD funding in 1991, when the project proposal had been sufficiently developed.

Meetings with worker groups have actually been going on since January, 1991, when Dubel began working with a group of five women in Elmira. The group hopes to open a store in March of this year, but is still in the process of deciding between opening a food store or a used baby clothing and furniture store.

Other people have met with the group, but ultimately left, noted Marietta White, who has been involved with the group since it began.

"A lot of people come and go because they're not willing to put the effort into this," observed White, a parishioner of Elmira's St. Peter and Paul Parish. "Something like this takes a lot of effort."

White — currently unemployed due to a disability, but with a background in sales and management — said the market-research approach taken over the past year had helped the group examine its possibilities carefully. She noted, for example, that the group had originally hoped to open a health-food store, but that the nearly \$80,000 start-up cost and the lack of readily available resources led them to examine more practical options.

Her own goal, White said, is "owning my own business, and being able to set my own destiny."

Marilyn Skebey, a single mother limited in her job options due to disability, has also been part of the group since its beginning.

"I was getting caught in feeling sorry for myself," recalled Skebey, a parishioner at St. Patrick's in Elmira. "Now I have something to look forward to."

DIOCESAN APPOINTMENTS

Bishop Matthew H. Clark has announced the following diocesan appointments:

Father Timothy T. Brown from parochial vicar to temporary administrator at Holy Cross Church, Rochester, effective during the Jan. 1-June 30, 1992, sabbatical of the pastor, Father Thomas H. Wheeland, at the Marianella Pastoral Centre in Dublin, Ireland.

Father John D. Dillon from sabbatical at McGill University in Montreal to sabbatical assistance minister at Holy Cross Church, Rochester, effective Jan. 1-June 30, 1992.

Father John V. Forni from priest chaplain on the campus ministry team at the Cornell Catholic Community, Ithaca, to temporary administrator of St. John the Evangelist Church, Clyde, and St. Patrick Church, Savannah, effective during the Jan. 1-June 30, 1992, sabbatical of the pastor, Father Thomas F. Nellis at St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Tex.

Father Paul J. Freemesser from Army reserve chaplain on active duty at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio to sabbatical assistance minister at St. Patrick Church, Elmira, effective Jan. 1-June 30, 1992.

Sister Sheila Geraghty, RSM, from social ministry coordinator to temporary administrator at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Brighton, effective during the Jan. 1-June 30, 1992, sabbatical of the pastor, Father John L. O'Connor at the Marianella Pastoral Centre in Dublin, Ireland.

Sister St. Luke Hardy, SSJ, from pastoral associate to temporary administrator at St. Augustine Church, Rochester, effective Jan. 1-June 30, 1992.

Father Mark A. Miller from sabbatical assistance minister at St. Helen Church, Gates, to temporary administrator at St. Mary of the Lake Church, Ontario, effective during the Jan. 1-June 30, 1992, sabbatical of the pastor, Father Robert G. Kreckel, at The Center for International Resources (CIRIMEX) in Guadalajara, Mexico, and the Instituto de Estudios de America Latina (I.D.E.A.L.) in Cuernavaca.

Father Charles L. McCarthy, from temporary administrator of St. Pius Tenth Church in Chili, to retirement, effective Jan. 1, 1992.

Father Robert P. Ring from pastor at St. Augustine Church, Rochester, to diocesan Priests' Personnel Director, effective Jan. 1, 1992.

Father Robert J. Schrader from diocesan Priests' Personnel Director to sabbatical at the Institute of Theology and Spirituality at Mission Santa Barbara, Calif., effective Jan. 1-June 30, 1992.

Sister Mary Jean Smith, SSJ, from social ministry coordinator to temporary administrator at St. Patrick Church, Elmira, effective during the Jan. 1-June 30, 1992, sabbatical of the pastor, Father Daniel F. Holland, at the American College of the Catholic University of Louvain in Leuven, Belgium.

Addendum

The illustrator's credit inadvertently was omitted from the *Catholic Courier* of Dec. 26. That issue's page-one illustration was by Matthew Morgaine.

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