

Diocesan Catholics lobby reps in Albany on church, social issues

ROCHESTER — More than 100 Catholics across the diocese were slated to join hundreds more from around the state to lobby legislators during Public Policy Day in Albany on Tuesday, Jan. 14.

Sponsored by the New York State Catholic Conference, the lobbyists primarily consist of Catholics who are active in parish and diocesan social ministries. Representatives from Catholic health agencies, hospitals and schools will also be on hand.

Bishop Matthew H. Clark was scheduled to lead a delegation of lobbyists from Rochester — including Kevin Hennessy, justice and peace director for the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry — in a meeting with Clarence D. Rappleyea Jr., Assembly Republican leader. The delegation was scheduled to discuss issues ranging from abortion to health services with the Republican leader.

Other Catholics will meet with their respective assembly representatives to lobby for the following objectives, as outlined by the NYSCC:

- Increased funding for such programs as Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Home Relief and Supplemental Social Security Income.
- A law requiring notification of parents of minors seeking abortions.
- An end to state Medicaid-funding for abortions.
- Enactment of universal access to health care.
- Keeping the death penalty off the state law books.
- Reform of the state budget process.
- Reinstatement of "sufficient" funding for mandated services aid.
- Establishment of vouchers for low-income parents who want to choose a school other than the local public school for their children.
- Maintenance of existing preventive services for children-at-risk of homelessness, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy and delinquency.

Michael Novak, noted theologian and author, will be the keynote speaker at the conference's luncheon.

— Rob Cullivan

Peace advocate to speak at Corning church Jan. 21

CORNING — Author, educator and peace advocate Abuja (Father) Elias Chacour will speak at the First United Methodist Church, located at the corner of First and Cedar Streets, on Tuesday, Jan. 21, at 7:30 p.m.

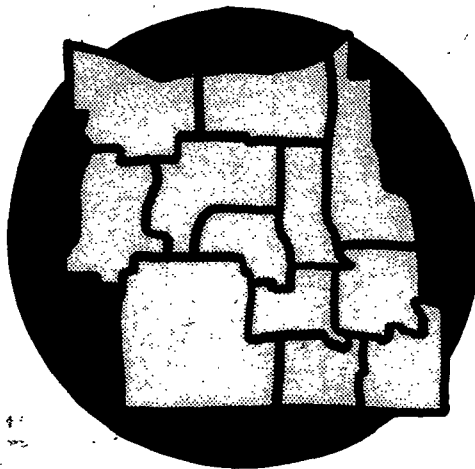
Father Chacour grew up in a Palestinian-Christian family of the Eastern Byzantine Church, a group of Melkite Christians in communion with Rome. Years after becoming a refugee, he became an Israeli citizen when the state of Israel was created in 1948.

After graduating from St. Sulpice and Sorbonne University in Paris, he was ordained a priest in Nazareth on July 24, 1956. Father Chacour later became the first Palestinian to graduate from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, where he studied the Bible and Talmud.

Father Chacour visited Beirut in 1975, when he was kidnapped by the Palestine Liberation Organization and taken to a refugee camp.

He has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize several times. He wrote *Blood Brothers*, which has been translated into 10 languages, and most recently authored a second book, entitled *We Belong to the Land*.

The program is open to people of all faiths.



NEW SEMINARIAN — Francis G. Fusare, son of Frank N. and Mary Theresa Fusare of Elmira, recently began his studies at St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, Md.



VISITING PASTOR — Father William M. Hart, pastor of Holy Trinity Church in Webster, regularly visits with first graders at the parish school. Last fall, when this picture was taken, he spoke to students about their guardian angels.

Pro-life groups, parishes plan buses for annual march Jan. 22

Organizers sending buses to the 19th annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. Jan. 22, are hoping that numbers will be up this year compared to those in 1991.

Last year's march commemorating the United States Supreme Court's 1973 decision in the case of *Roe vs. Wade* — effectively legalizing abortion in the United States — drew an estimated 50,000 participants. Observers estimated that previous marches had attracted approximately 75,000 people.

Organizers across the diocese cited the successful life chain campaign on Oct. 6, 1991 — which drew thousands of participants to chains in Rochester, Hornell, Canandaigua and Geneva — as one reason why this year's March for Life could surpass last year's event.

"We had such good success with the life chain, that this year we've scheduled two buses," noted Don Peters, who estimated that 450 people took part in the Geneva life chain. Peters is coordinating buses from St. Mary's Church, 25 Center St., Waterloo.

The war in the Persian Gulf may have kept some people from participating in last year's march, said Gail Hall, coordinator of the bus leaving from Elmira Jan. 21. The Chemung County Right to Life is sponsoring the bus.

Hall said people appeared to be more concerned with the early stages of the air attack against Iraq, which began on Jan. 16, 1991.

"It will definitely be better than last year because of the war last year," Hall predicted.

St. Margaret Mary's Church, 174 Pennsylvania Ave., Apalachin, will send one bus to the march. In Rochester, two or possibly three buses will leave from St. Jude's Church, 4100 Lyell Road, on Jan. 21. St. Thomas the Apostle, 4536 St. Paul Blvd., Rochester, and St. John of Rochester, 18 Wickford Way, Fairport, are also sending buses to the march.

In addition to the march, the commemoration of the Supreme Court decision in Washington, D.C. will include Masses, workshops, rallies and visits to Congressional offices.

EDITORS' NOTE: For information about buses to the 1992 March for Life, call 716/586-3956 (St. Jude's); 716/342-3216 (St. Thomas the Apostle); 716/223-1251 (St. John of Rochester); 315/539-8860 (St. Mary's in Waterloo); 607/732-3169 (Elmira); and 607/625-4868 (St. Margaret Mary's in Apalachin.)

— Lee Strong

Finger Lakes group slates homelessness conference

GENEVA — The Homeless Task Force of Wayne, Ontario, Seneca and Yates counties is sponsoring a conference on homelessness in the Finger Lakes region on Friday, Jan. 24, from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Titled "Homelessness in the Finger Lakes: Building a Community Response," the conference is set for the Geneva Presbyterian Church, 24 Park Place.

The keynote speaker for the conference will be Shelly Nortz of the New York State Coalition for the Homeless. In addition to the speech by Nortz, the conference will include workshops on meeting housing emergencies, community needs assessments, single parents in housing crises and housing models that work.

A legislative panel featuring federal representatives and state legislators will also take place.

Cost for the day is \$6, which includes lunch and conference materials. To register, write Kevin Hennessy at the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry, 110 Exchange St., Geneva, N.Y. 14456, or call 315/789-2686.

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