



# CATHOLIC COURIER

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## Parishes, agencies seek means to combat effects of persevering recession

Newspaper headlines and the stories on television and radio newscasts continue to proclaim that the nation is in a recession.

Indeed, President Bush spent a portion of his Jan. 28 State of the Union speech discussing the nation's current economic distress. Using rhetoric similar to what he once aimed at Saddam Hussein, the chief executive warned that the recession "will not stand."

But the recession does, indeed, stand in New York state. Its effects can be felt in the rising unemployment rate — now almost 8 percent, according to the state labor department.

And every region in the state, including the 12 counties that constitute the Diocese of Rochester, experienced flat or declining availability of non-farm jobs between November and December of 1991, the labor department reported.

Yet facts and figures don't begin to tell the whole

Study says middle class shrinking into poverty

Area's jobless rate up

U.S. debt problem a harbinger for the worse

DROP IN EMPLOYMENT

Gloomy budget

story, according to Norm White, a volunteer family support counselor in Elmira with the Rochester diocese's Southern Tier Office of Social Ministry.

Commenting on families suffering unemployment and underemployment, White mused that his office serves to diffuse the tensions such conditions generate.

"At least we can offer a place for people to vent," he said.

As long as the recession refuses to withdraw from the nation's economic landscape, White and other volunteers and staff members at Catholic institutions will be found on the front lines battling the downturn's effects.

Amid such battles, the church frequently plays the role of nurse to the financially wounded, feeding the unemployed and the working poor at parish soup

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By Rob Cullivan

Unemployment at 5 1/2% - near high

RISE IN DEMANDS ON CHURCH SUPPORT

Welfare caseload breaks records

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