

Diocese discusses minority-hiring practices

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Diocesan officials are discussing the establishment of practices that would encourage the hiring and retention of minority employees.

Meeting Tuesday, Jan. 30, with Father John M. Mulligan, vicar general and moderator of the Pastoral Office, officials from the diocesan Department of Personnel Services, Urban Services, Ministry to Vietnamese and Asian-Pacific Catholics, as well as the offices of Black Ministries and of the Spanish Apostolate discussed the development of such practices.

Further discussion of the issue is scheduled for a Feb. 20 meeting.

The Jan. 30 meeting was prompted by criticism — especially as voiced during the Dec. 14, 1991, Black Catholic Day of Reflection — of the diocese's record on hiring minorities.

While speaking to that gathering at St. Monica's Church in Rochester, Bishop Matthew H. Clark fielded several critical questions from participants angry that the Pastoral Center employs only one African-American.

But Kathleen Cannon, director of Urban Services, noted that the Jan. 30 meeting with Father Mulligan was intended to go beyond hopes for more minority workers at the Pastoral Center. Diocesan officials who sought the meeting also want to see the diocese actively work to promote multi-cultural awareness among the Pastoral Center's existing staff.

"The people present seemed to feel that you have to develop a welcoming environment that is culturally sensitive and inclusive," she said.

Jacquelyn Dobson, executive director of Black Ministries, pointed out that — in addition to hiring more minorities — the diocese needs to educate its current employees on racism's effects.

"We don't really accomplish any-

thing by having 10 new blacks here, or 10 new Hispanics here," Dobson said. "We need to be making people aware of their own racism."

Sue Staropoli, diocesan director of personnel services, said her former employer, East House Corp., made the kind of efforts Dobson seeks from the diocese.

Staropoli said she once served on a cultural-awareness committee for East House Corp. Charged with finding ways to recruit and retain minority employees, the committee eventually brought in an outside group to con-

duct a multi-cultural seminar for the corporation's staff, she said.

Father Mulligan said he would consider the kind of staff training that Staropoli and other officials suggest. He pointed out, however, that he and other diocesan officials attending the meeting didn't see any swift solutions to the minority-hiring problem.

"I think the feeling was that this isn't going to be easy, that we're not going to change it overnight," Father Mulligan commented.

In addition to the desire to increase multi-cultural awareness among dio-

cesan employees, Ha Nguyen, coordinator of Ministry to Vietnamese and Asian-Pacific Catholics, said she hopes the diocese will reconsider its hiring criteria for certain positions.

Many Asian Catholics have years of experience as volunteers with various Catholic ministries, but do not qualify for certain positions because they lack college degrees, Nguyen said.

She suggested that the diocese re-examine the qualifications it demands for certain jobs to determine whether those positions could be filled by applicants without degrees.



SUCCESSFUL WALK-THROUGH — Sister Diane Edwards, SSJ, (left) a sixth-grade teacher at Christ the King School in Irondequoit, fields questions from the Ruiz family during a Feb. 6 'walk-through.' Approximately 550 people attended the event, which was sponsored by the Northeast Quadrant Catholic Community Schools. The open house allowed parents and students to visit with teachers and ask questions. Ida Iveliz Ruiz (far right) currently attends St. Stanislaus School, which is slated to close this June. The other members of the Ruiz family are (left to right) Enrique, holding young Enrique, Milazio and Mari Cruz. Other quadrant schools participating in the daylong 'walk-throughs' were St. Ambrose, St. Andrew's and St. Margaret Mary's.

Erik Kunkel/Photo intern

Bishop Clark names Father McKenna new chancellor

ROCHESTER — Bishop Matthew H. Clark has appointed Father Kevin McKenna as chancellor of the Diocese of Rochester. The appointment was effective Feb. 7, 1992.

Father McKenna replaces Father Peter Bayer, who left the post as chancellor on Dec. 31, 1991.

As chancellor, Father McKenna will oversee diocesan records — including personnel files and the diocesan archives; serve as a canon law consultant for the diocese and Bishop Clark; work as the diocese's legal representative on a number of diocesan corporate boards; and will function as the diocese's official notary, countersigning all official legal documents.

"I'm certainly excited about the possibilities and the opportunities,"

Father McKenna said. "You always like to see opportunities for growth — personal growth and growth within the diocesan structure."

Father McKenna noted that in the coming year he will concentrate on better organizing diocesan records and helping to encourage the growth and greater use of diocesan archives. The priest said he will also seek ways to make people more aware of canon and civil laws affecting their ministries.

Canon law, Father McKenna added, has been a part of the church for so long, and has been developed through experience, that it can help provide guidance for dealing with legal and ministerial concerns.

"Many issues (the church faces today) have all been faced before in one

way or another," he explained.

Father McKenna earned a doctorate in canon law from St. Paul's University in Ottawa, Ontario, in 1990, and a licentiate in canon law from Rome's Gregorian Institute in 1984. He also has a master's degree in theology and a master's of divinity from St. Bernard's Seminary in Rochester.

Ordained a priest in 1977, Father McKenna served as priest intern at St. Margaret Mary Parish (1977-79) and as assistant pastor of St. Pius X Parish

(1979-82), before going to Rome for his canon law studies.

Father McKenna also served as the diocese's vice chancellor from 1984-88. He has served as the canonical consultant to Bishop Clark from 1990-91, and has worked as the diocesan director of legal services since 1991.

Father McKenna will continue to serve in that capacity, and as a judge for the diocesan tribunal.

— Lee Strong

Schools should have superintendent by July

ROCHESTER — Diocesan schools are slated to have a permanent superintendent by July 1, according to Father George Norton, diocesan public information officer.

Sister Mary Ann Binsack, RSM, diocesan director of Faith Development Ministry — which oversees diocesan schools — has served as acting superintendent since Brother Brian Walsh, CFC, resigned his position in September, 1991.

Twenty-five candidates applied for

the superintendent position, including one applicant from within the diocese. Eleven of the candidates were from out of state, while 14 came from within New York, Father Norton said.

A five-member superintendent search committee, chaired by attorney Peter J. Spinelli, will recommend five or six candidates to Bishop Matthew H. Clark by mid-February, Father Norton said.

Interviews should take place in mid-March and finish in April, he added.

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