

# Abortion survivor to speak at RTL meeting

ROCHESTER — Gianna Jessen, who survived her mother's attempt to abort her, is scheduled to speak here April 4 at a luncheon for the New York State Right to Life Committee's annual convention.

The convention — which will mark the New York committee's 25th anniversary — will take place in Rochester April 4 at the Genesee Plaza Holiday Inn, 120 E. Main St. Hours for the meeting are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

While in Rochester, Jessen also will speak at 6:30 p.m. April 5 at St. Joseph's Church, 43 Gebhardt Road, Penfield. The parish presentation will be a special program for youths and their parents.

Jessen, 14, survived a saline abortion performed on her mother in California in 1977. She was born breathing, but was left to die. A nurse saved the child, however, and she was raised by

an adoptive family. Geraldine Oftedahl of Rochester, chairperson of the state Right to Life Committee, noted that Jessen and her adoptive mother, Diana DePaul, have dedicated their lives to traveling around the country speaking to groups about abortion. "I think they are home (in California) only four or five days a month," she observed.

Oftedahl said she invited Jessen to speak after checking with national Right to Life officials. "It seemed to be something a little different on the convention program," she said.

In addition to Jessen's address, the Right to Life convention will include a variety of workshops and speakers. The keynote address is to be delivered by Bishop Edward Head of the Diocese of Buffalo.

Among those leading workshops are: Christopher Smith, a Republican

congressman from New Jersey and co-chairman of the Congressional Pro-Life Caucus, who will discuss legislative developments on abortion and euthanasia; Suzanne Schnittman, head of Feminists for Life of Western New York, who will lead a session on pro-life feminism; and Mary Ellen Bork, wife of former U.S. Supreme Court nominee Robert Bork, who will talk about abortion and the media.

Other workshops will focus on such topics as Planned Parenthood, euthanasia and Christian responses to abortion.

"The goal of every (convention) program is to provide current, accurate information on different aspects of the issues, and to do so with speakers who are credible," Oftedahl said.

In conjunction with the convention, the Catholic Physicians' Guild and the St. Thomas More Lawyers' Guild will

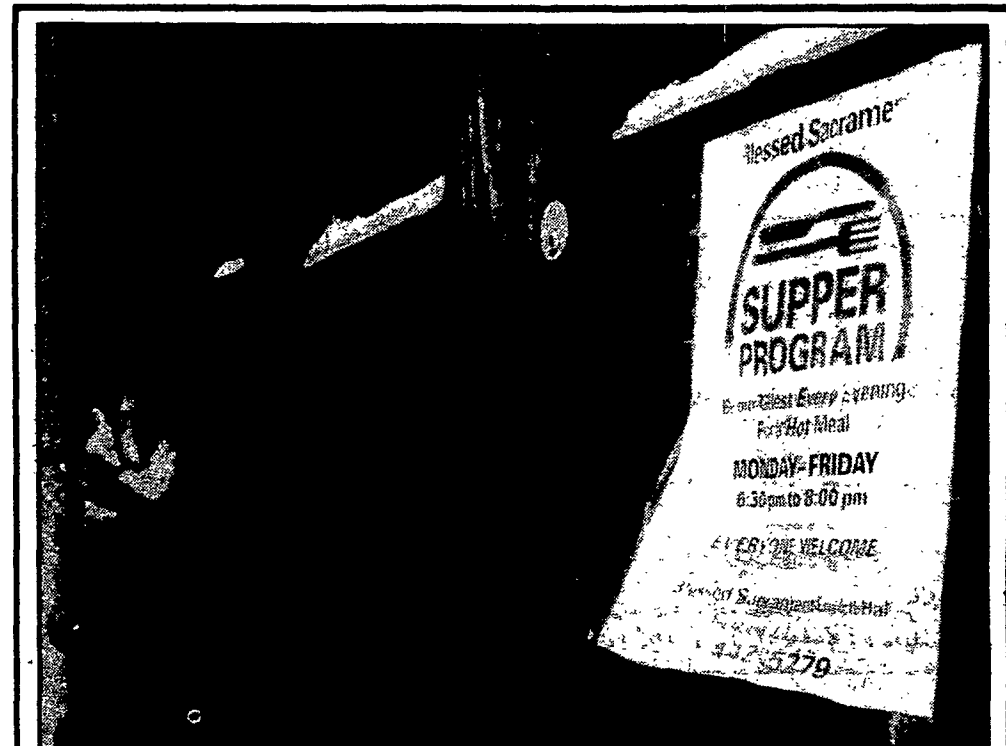
present an April free panel discussion on the topic "Euthanasia: Getting Away With Murder." The discussion will take place 8:30-9:45 p.m. at the Holiday Inn.

**EDITORS' NOTE.** Advance registration for the convention and luncheon is \$40 per person or \$25 per student. Without the luncheon, registration is \$22 per person, \$17 per student. Registration at the door will cost an extra \$5.

For advance registration, write to: Rochester Area Right to Life, 675 Ling Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14612. Checks should be made payable to Rochester Area Right to Life: Convention. The deadline for advance registration is March 30.

Additional information on the convention also may be obtained by calling 716/621-4690. For information about the talk at St. Joseph's Parish, call Bob or Amy Dorsheid at 716/586-3956.

— Lee Strong



Babette G. Augustin/Photo editor

## Many seek shelter; few brave elements to obtain free meals

The severe snow storm that struck the area last week helped fill to capacity such homeless shelters as Rochester's Francis Hospitality Center and St. Joseph's House of Hospitality. But unlike this man, few people were willing to battle their way through the harsh weather March 12 to the supper program at Blessed Sacrament Parish.

## Meeting to feature former death-row inmate

ROCHESTER — An innocent man who escaped execution by 15 hours and a two-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee are to be among the featured speakers at a conference being sponsored by the Rochester Area Coalition Against the Death Penalty. The theme for the March 26-27 event is "Capital Punishment: A Matter of Life and Death."

Joseph Green Brown (Shabaka) is scheduled to be the luncheon speaker at Temple B'rith Kodesh, 2131 Elmwood Ave, March 27. Shabaka spent 14 years on death row in Florida for a crime he did not commit. His speech is scheduled to begin at approximately 11:45 a.m.

Also slated to speak at the conference is Joseph Ingle, former director of the Southern Coalition on Jails and Prisons. Twice nominated for the Nobel Peace prize for his work with death-row inmates, he will speak March 26, at 7:30 p.m. at Temple B'rith Kodesh.

The conference itself will run from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the temple. In addition to the speakers, the conference will include a number of workshops focusing on the death penalty.

Fee for the conference is \$5 for the general public and \$2 for students and senior citizens.

For more information, call 716/288-1244.

## Snow storm forces rescheduling of lecture by Dr. Quill

Due to the snow storm that struck Rochester March 11, St. Mary's Parish has rescheduled the Downtown Community Forum lecture Dr. Timothy Quill originally was to have delivered March 12.

The new date and time for the lecture are Tuesday, March 31, at 5 p.m. The presentation will take place at the parish, 15 St. Mary's Place.

Dr. Quill's topic is "Death and Dig-

nity: Exploring End of Life Decisions." The associate chief of medicine at Rochester's Genesee Hospital, Dr. Quill gained national attention for helping a dying patient commit suicide. He wrote about his actions in the March, 1991, edition of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

A Monroe County grand jury later cleared Dr. Quill of all charges of criminal wrongdoing.

## Fr. Stravinskis to address school principals

PENFIELD — Father Peter Stravinskis, a noted national advocate for Catholic education, will speak on "The Future of Catholic Schools," Thursday, March 26, at 7:30 p.m., in St. Joseph's School, 39 Gebhardt Road.

Father Stravinskis' speech will focus on Catholic schools, their history of success, their importance to the church and the nation, and measures that can be taken to ensure their future.

A priest of the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J., Father Stravinskis has written regularly for the *National Catholic Register* and has edited the *Catholic Answer*. In 1977, he wrote *Catholic Edu-*

*cation: A New Dawn*, and has since appeared on such radio and television shows as the "Larry King Show."

Father Stravinskis' presentation is sponsored by the Rochester Chapter of the New York State Federation of Catholic School Parents, and by the Catholic School Administrators of New York State. It will serve as the keynote address for an all-day principals' workshop March 27 at the Gateway Conference Center in Henrietta.

The lecture is free and will be followed by a reception. For information, call Sister Carol Cimino at 518/273-1205.

## Shults lectures to feature noted expert on spirituality

ROCHESTER — Elizabeth Dreyer, author of books on grace and medieval women mystics, will be the featured lecturer at St. Bernard's Institute's 18th annual Otto A. Shults Lectures in Spirituality on April 9. The lectures will take place in Strong Auditorium, 1100 S. Goodman St.

Dreyer speech at 1:30 p.m. is entitled "Medieval Women Mystics and Contemporary Spirituality." She will also speak at 8 p.m. on "The Spirituality of Everyday Life."

A graduate of Marquette University

in Milwaukee, Wisc., with a doctorate in historical theology, Dreyer wrote *Passionate Women: Two Medieval Mystics* in 1989, and *Manifestations of Grace* in 1990. She has also written numerous articles on spirituality.

Dreyer is currently on the faculty of Washington Theological Union in Silver Springs, Md.

Although both lectures are free and open to the public, those planning to attend are asked to notify St. Bernard's Institute, 1100 S. Goodman St., Rochester, 14620, by April 2.



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