

# Marchers seek taxes on the rich to fix budget

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Nearly 60 people Thursday, March 19, marched to the New York Department of State, 189 Water St., to present a representative of Gov. Mario M. Cuomo with petitions and postcards protesting proposed state budget cuts.

The march followed a 5 p.m. rally at the Church of St. Luke and St. Simon Cyrene, 17 S. Fitzhugh St. The rally was organized by the Ad Hoc Coalition for Budget and Tax Equity, which includes among its members Catholic Family Center, 50 Chestnut St., as well as several community organizations, churches and unions.

Brian Kane, director of the CFC's Justice and Peace Department, noted that more than 43,000 people signed the petitions and postcards dropped off at the state office.

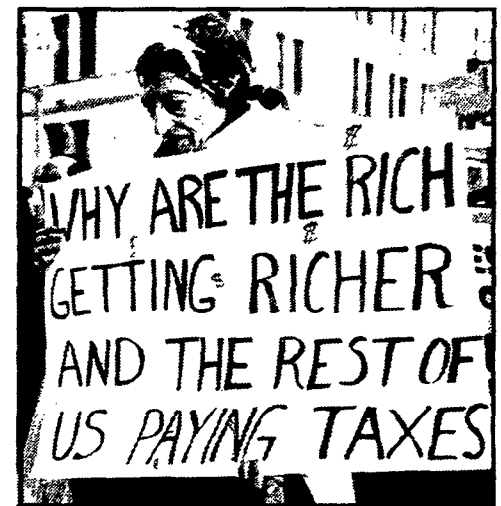
In addition to calling for the social programs to remain intact, the post cards — collected by Catholic Family Center — also contained the following statement:

"I also support ending the deferment of payments to nonpublic schools providing mandated services."

This statement referred to the state's practice of falling behind on its payments to reimburse Catholic and other nonpublic schools for educational services that schools must provide under state law.



Babette G. Augustin/Photo editor  
Leora Brown marches from the Church of St. Luke and St. Simon Cyrene to the New York Department of State March 19 to present petitions and postcards protesting proposed state budget cuts.



Kellie Mc Cann/Photo intern  
Irene O'Neill, a member of Metro-Act, was among the approximately 60 people who attended the rally organized by the Ad Hoc Coalition for Budget and Tax Equity.

the poor!"

Kane, likewise, criticized policies that continually slash governmental services to the underprivileged.

"Why do people today still have to become destitute before we help them?," he asked rhetorically.

A statement released by the ad hoc coalition read:

"The Governor's budget includes massive cuts to programs for the poor and most vulnerable in our state — women, children, the disabled, elderly, jobless and others. It eliminates thousands of jobs in the state work force, not to mention those lost by the ripple effect of such an action. The budget thrusts more responsibility on local governments, many of whom are not equipped to handle it."

The solution to the continuing state-budget crisis offered by Kane and other speakers was three-fold:

- Institute higher taxes on the wealthiest 5 percent of New Yorkers who can afford to pay;
- Close corporate tax loopholes;
- Respond to economic changes by creating new sales taxes for services.

The rally was the most recent example in a statewide effort by New York's Catholic bishops to ally themselves with other groups and organizations affected by the state's continuing budget crisis.

In conjunction with such agencies as Catholic Family Center, the bishops have been lobbying the legislature over the last two years to reform the state's tax system to increase governmental revenue, rather than continue to balance the state budget through cuts in social services.

## 1992-93 enrollment nearly doubles at St. Josaphat's

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — School principals in the Northeast Quadrant expressed satisfaction with registration numbers for 1992-93, but the saga of school closings in the quadrant this year has taken an ironic twist.

Amid three 1992 closings in the quadrant, neighboring St. Josaphat's — an Eastern Rite Ukrainian Catholic school outside the Diocese of Rochester's jurisdiction — saw its elementary school enrollment for 1992-93 nearly double. According to Father Philip Bumbar, pastor, the school enrolled 90 students in 1991-92, but will have about 170 for 1992-93.

Many of those new students now attend the three Northeast Quadrant schools that will close this June — St. Cecelia's and St. Thomas the Apostle, both in Irondequoit, and St. Stanislaus in the city.

Father Bumbar said school parents from St. Thomas the Apostle, in particular, chose to enroll their students at St. Josaphat's.

Among those parents was Barry Sullivan, who — as leader of the Catholic School Committee — earlier this year led hundreds of quadrant parents in a failed effort to stem the closings.

Sullivan estimated that nearly all the newly enrolled students at St. Josaphat's are current students at St. Thomas the Apostle.

"The Northeast has never shown a moment of stability," Sullivan said when asked to comment on his decision to send his offspring to St. Josaphat's.

Since St. Josaphat School operates independently of the diocese, he observed, it — unlike the three schools

closing this June — could not be targeted for closing under any diocesan reorganization plans.

Meanwhile, 1,399 students in grades kindergarten through eight have re-enrolled at the quadrant's remaining five schools for 1992-93, according to Father George Norton, diocesan spokesman. Four pre-K-to-6 programs feed into the quadrant's centralized Northeastern Catholic Junior High in Irondequoit.

The quadrant's K-8 enrollment for 1991-92 was 1,842, and officials hoped to enroll at least 1,660 students for 1992-93, Father Norton said.

Figures for new registrants are not yet available, and tend to fluctuate right up until the fall, Father Norton added. Taken with students enrolled in the quadrant's pre-kindergarten programs, the total current enrollment for the fall of 1992, is 1,617, he said.

Sister Kathleen Carroll, SSJ, principal of St. Margaret Mary's — one of the four remaining pre-K-6 programs — said this year's school closings may have encouraged parents at her school to re-register in larger numbers than they did three years ago. Following that year's registration, the quadrant closed five Catholic schools.

Estimating her 1992-93 re-registration rate at about 98 percent, she pointed out that "three years ago, a noticeable percentage left to go to public schools."

This year, however, parents seemed to fear future school closings less than they did before, she said, attributing the exodus three years ago to "apprehension" about the quadrant's future.

"Parents are taking responsibility, realizing that they are the ones who are going to keep schools open," Sister Carroll said.

The signed petitions were gathered as part of the Albany-based Fiscal Policy Institute's statewide effort.

Several speakers at the March 19 rally condemned the proposed budget cuts. Among them was Leora Brown, a disabled mother on welfare who broke down in tears on the podium explaining her problems related to poverty.

"People don't understand how hard it is being poor," she cried. "I think that we should tax the rich and save

### Irish thespian to perform

ROCHESTER — Irish actor and director Chris O'Neill will perform *Frankly Brendan*, a play based on the short stories of Frank O'Connor and Brendan Behan. The performance is scheduled for 8 p.m. March 30 in St. John Fisher College's Basil Hall, 3690 East Avenue.

For information, contact Dave Halligan at 716/334-3345.

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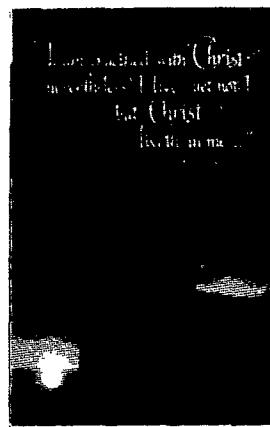
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