

Schools superintendent to stress long view

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Appointed last week as superintendent of diocesan Catholic schools, Timothy W. Dwyer plans to promote long-term goals in an effort to put the schools on a firmer footing.

"In my experience, Catholic schools have focused on a one-year-at-a-time mentality," Dwyer said during a May 21 press conference at Corpus Christi School, 546 Oxford St. "I think we need to switch gears and focus on three-to-five-year development plans."

Sister Mary Ann Binsack, RSM, introduced Dwyer, who will assume the superintendent's position Aug. 3. Sister Binsack, director of diocesan Faith Development Ministry, has served as acting superintendent since Brother Brian Walsh, CFC, left the position in September, 1991.

The 38-year-old Dwyer has worked as both director of education and superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Gaylord, Mich., since 1986.

Noting his support for the quadrant reorganization process that has taken place in Monroe County over the last



Timothy W. Dwyer

few years, Dwyer pointed out that he had overseen the establishment of consolidated schools for two groups of parishes in the Gaylord diocese.

Dwyer acknowledged parent and parishioner opposition to the Rochester diocese's quadrant system, along with the school closings it engendered. He explained that when he begins his new

job in August, he will work on building consensus among parents and school supporters through face-to-face meetings.

"I'll do whatever I can to make the quadrant and cluster systems successful," he said. "I think the worst is behind us."

When asked about some parents' desire for a cap on tuition increases in diocesan schools, Dwyer replied that such requests were "unrealistic" because schools exist in an inflationary economy. He stressed, however, that tuition increases can be phased in gradually through long-range budgetary planning, and that financial assistance should be available for parents.

In a time when Catholic schools are competing against other ministries for parishes' limited financial resources, Dwyer also emphasized that he would encourage pastors to support Catholic education.

"We need to market the clergy as aggressively as the parents," Dwyer said.

He added that he would point out to pastors the importance of Catholic schools in forming children's beliefs.

"A lot of church documents have come out saying (Catholic) schools are

most effective in passing on the faith," he noted.

Selling the schools to the public will also be a priority for Dwyer, who coordinated a diocesan-wide campaign in Michigan utilizing newspapers, television, radio and billboard advertising.

Dwyer also stressed the need for Catholic schools to conduct fundraising events and to develop sponsorship funding from businesses.

Dwyer's resume indicates an extensive background in education and administration. He holds a master's of business administration from Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, a master's degree in educational administration from Michigan State University and a bachelor's in business education/mathematics from the same university.

Dwyer has held various positions as a teacher and as a principal in Michigan since the mid-1970s. He currently serves as chairman of both the Michigan Catholic Conference Education Committee and the marketing committee of the Michigan Non-public Schools Board of Directors. He also is vice-chairman of the Michigan Non-Public School Accrediting Association.

Diocese announces new director of social ministry

GATES — John J. Balinsky, the former executive secretary of the Council of Catholic Charities Directors of the New York State Catholic Conference, has been appointed director of diocesan Social Ministry.

Father John M. Mulligan, vicar general and Pastoral Center moderator, announced Balinsky's appointment on Thursday, May 28, at the Pastoral Center, 1150 Buffalo Road.

Balinsky will assume his new position July 1. He succeeds Paul T. Pickering, who has served as interim social

ministry director since Nov. 11, 1991. Pickering took over as interim director after the resignation of Father John A. Firpo in early November.

Balinsky currently serves as executive director of the Albany, N.Y.-based Du Lac Community Development Corp., a not-for-profit corporation supporting inter-faith efforts to combat drug use. He previously worked for the state's Catholic Conference, where he was a leader in public policy advocacy and program development.

Balinsky also directed Syracuse

Catholic Charities from 1977 to 1984. During his tenure, the agency's annual budget grew from \$3.5 million to \$8 million.

As the diocese's social ministry director, he will staff the boards and direct the social ministry staff, operating a \$12.9 million budget.

In addition to the three diocesan offices operated under the auspices of diocesan Social Ministry — Catholic Family Center, Southern Tier Office of Social Ministry and the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry — Balinsky will oversee social ministry's several programs. Those programs include the

Campaign for Human Development, Operation Breadbox, Respect Life, and the Bishop Sheen Ecumenical Housing Foundation.

A 1967 graduate of the University of Notre Dame, Balinsky holds a master's degree of public administration in urban affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton, N.J.

"Internal reorganization, funding in a slow economy and developing relationships with civic, community and parish leaders are among the challenges Jack will face initially," Father Mulligan said in a statement.

St. Thomas School supporters petition the Vatican on closing

IRONDEQUOIT — A school board meeting slated for Monday, June 1, promises to open yet another chapter in the school parents' struggle with the diocese over reorganization of the Northeast Quadrant.

At the meeting — scheduled for 7:30 p.m. in the St. Thomas the Apostle School hall — the board will publicly reveal information as to its efforts to keep the school open, according to Barry Sullivan, school board president.

The board thus far has attempted to deal privately with the diocese, Sullivan said, but "we've gotten absolutely nowhere with them."

As part of their presentations at the meeting, Sullivan said, he and other school supporters plan to question the budget and enrollment figures the diocese used to justify closing schools in the quadrant.

Along with St. Cecilia, also in Irondequoit, and St. Stanislaus in Rochester, St. Thomas the Apostle School, 41 Colebrook Drive, is scheduled to close in June as a result of reorganization within the quadrant.

School supporters of the school filed a petition with the Vatican in February, contending that Bishop Matthew H. Clark had abused his discretionary authority in ordering that St. Thomas School be closed.

Sullivan explained that St. Thomas' supporters are being aided in their

efforts by the St. Joseph Foundation, a not-for-profit agency in Texas that counsels Catholics seeking to vindicate their rights with the church.

On Tuesday, May 26, Charles M. Wilson, executive director of the St. Joseph Foundation, explained the petition's claims in a telephone interview with the *Catholic Courier*.

According to Wilson, the petition contends that the quadrant is essentially a "pious foundation" under church law. Such a foundation can be established by a person or a group of people for a particular purpose, he said, and can be characterized by "a flow of funds." Wilson noted that St. Thomas supporters are arguing that the Northeast Quadrant meets these qualifications.

Furthermore, under church laws for such a foundation, the bishop would be considered the overseer of parish property, not the owner, Wilson claims. Hence, the petition contends that the parish — not the bishop — should decide whether the school should remain open, he said.

Father George Norton, diocesan spokesman, said that the Vatican's Congregation for Christian Education has asked the diocese for background materials on the question. He said the diocese is preparing materials to be sent to the Vatican congregation.

— Rob Cullivan

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June 19-21 **THE ART OF STORY LISTENING** — Stories reveal to us that our lives make sense. In other words, they console us. Good stories not only tell us the truth, but tell it in a way that we can receive it gently and allow it to work in us. Conducted by Sr. Rose Hoover, r.c.

June 26-28 **RELATIONAL WOMEN RETREAT** **Dependent-Co-dependent-Interdependent** — A weekend retreat encouraging us to look at ourselves and our relationships, to explore possibilities for personal growth and realization of a deeper, freer sense of love. Conducted by: Lois Caputo, Mary Sullivan, r.c., and Margie Mayk, r.c.

All events are open to men and women of all faiths

For further information and reservations please call

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