

200 march to support city library

Members of Rochester's Polish community turned out for the 60th annual Pulaski Day Celebration on Sunday, Oct. 11, and to support keeping open the General Pulaski Community Library, 1151 Hudson Ave. The march was sponsored by the Polonia Civic Centre. Marchers walked along Hudson Avenue from Polish Falcon Hall to St. Stanislaus Kostka Church, 1124 Hudson Ave. The Rochester Public Library's Board of Trustees has proposed closing the library, a Polish cultural center, under a proposal to build a new library on Joseph Avenue near Avenue D. The Rochester City Council granted the library a reprieve at its Oct. 6 meeting. According to Stephen Lesniak, assistant director of the city's branch libraries, the facility will now remain open until June, 1993. The library's status after that date is still under consideration.



Walter Pawlak (right) and Norman Rodgers, members of the American Legion Pulaski Post 782, reflect during a speech at the General Pulaski Community Library Oct. 11. The two men were among the 200 people who attended the annual celebration honoring the life of Polish-born Revolutionary War General Casimir Pulaski.

Babette G. Augustin/Photo editor

Task force calls on church to root out racism

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — The Diocese of Rochester acknowledges the existence of racism in "its policies, practices and experiences," in a document issued this week by the 13-member Task Force on Societal Injustice.

Dated Sept. 28, the document was released to the *Catholic Courier* on Oct. 9. Written in both English and Spanish, the report was scheduled to be released publicly on Thursday, Oct. 15.

Included with the document was a statement on "racial polarization," issued recently by the Urban League of Rochester.

In the diocesan document, the task force calls on diocesan offices, agencies, schools and parishes to examine their operations for racist tendencies.

In particular, five areas are cited as exemplifying racism in the church and in the diocese, according to the task force. Bishop Matthew H. Clark appointed the task force to examine racism in the diocese in the wake of the Los Angeles riots last May.

The task force cites five examples of church racism in its report:

- The universal church's authority and power "remains within the domain and experience of Anglo-European culture," a fact which has local consequences.

- Insensitivity and ignorance of cultures, histories and experiences of other races in the church and society.

- An "imbalance" in the racial and ethnic makeup of the church's leadership and its employees.

- "The feeling expressed by Catholics of non-European descent of being excluded as full and equal members of the Church community."

- The church's failure to call forth and/or prepare ministers representative of the diversity of the church's membership.

In an interview with the *Catholic Courier* on Monday, Oct. 12, Bishop

Clark said he believed the task force was not necessarily accusing the diocese of consciously excluding non-white groups. Rather, the task force looked at the largely white population that works for the diocese and came to its own conclusions, he said.

"Looking at the faces of people they see at all those levels of services, I think they saw that there is not fully and fairly represented the colors and cultures that make up our local church," he said.

In addition to releasing the five-page document, the diocese announced that a newly-formed Pastoral Center team will issue a bi-monthly letter listing methods of implementing the document's ideas throughout the diocese.

By issuing the bi-monthly letter, the diocese will ensure that the new document "won't have a two-week life," commented Father Peter C. Clifford, task force convener and diocesan director of parish support ministries.

The task force will again meet on March 3, 1993, to review the progress of the proposal's implementations, said Kathleen Cannon, a task force member and diocesan director of urban services.

Although he cautioned against expecting immediate dramatic changes, Bishop Clark said that he was confident that some substantial changes would take place in diocesan operations within the next six months.

In addition to the bi-monthly letter, the document contains a number of practical suggestions for eliminating institutional racism.

The document focuses on three areas for improvement — employment and business practices; education and awareness; and community building. Some of the task force suggestions were as follows:

- In employment and business practices, the task force urges all institutions in the diocese to analyze staff hiring patterns; devise employment plans that will integrate staff within a

specific timetable; and require manager accountability in hiring practices.

The Pastoral Center, 1150 Buffalo Road, was encouraged to develop a plan for the placement of pastors and staff in urban areas with "special cultural training requirements."

All diocesan institutions are also encouraged to use minority and women-owned businesses.

- In the area of education and awareness, diocesan institutions are encouraged to include multicultural awareness seminars for all new employees, and to integrate multicultural awareness in certification programs, educational programs, and various workshops.

Meanwhile, the Pastoral Center and

various departments are urged to develop the educational tools necessary to implement these proposals.

Parishes, schools, diocesan divisions and agencies all should develop cultural awareness programs, the section concluded.

- And in the area of community building, the task force proposed the development of culturally diverse liturgies through the use of art, music, language and environment. Such liturgies should be publicized through a calendar of events, the task force wrote.

Links between urban, rural and suburban parishes should also be established, the task force urges, while youth ministry programs should also foster multicultural awareness.

Southeast Quad to survey parents

ROCHESTER — During the next two weeks, school parents in the Southeast Quadrant will receive surveys seeking input on the current proposal to establish a centralized junior high.

The survey will also target a representative sample of quadrant parishioners who do not have children in southeast Catholic schools, according to Michael Perrotta, chairman of the southeast board's planning committee.

Perrotta said the board decided to commission the survey after holding two meetings for school parents in September. The survey will be carried out by William Swagler, of Swagler Associates, Perrotta said. He added that Constance Wilder, a public-relations expert, will help Swagler analyze the data.

After compiling information gathered from questionnaires given to parents at the meetings, the board discovered that "97 percent" of the responses came from parents at two schools — St. Joseph's, Penfield, and Seton Catholic, according to Perrotta.

Seton Catholic's primary school is located at Rochester's St. Thomas More

Parish, and its intermediate and junior high schools are located at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Brighton. The proposed centralized junior high would be located at the current site of those two schools.

The board contends that it needs a more representative sampling of opinion from the quadrant's parishioners than that afforded by the data taken at the parents' meetings last month, Perrotta said. The board, for example, wants to know how parents of children in religious education programs feel about the proposal, he said.

In September, the board announced its desire to establish a centralized junior high for the quadrant in September, 1993, but the proposal met vehement opposition from school parents at two public meetings.

In addition to data gathered from the meetings and the survey to be mailed out over the next two weeks, the board will send the proposal to Bishop Matthew H. Clark. He is expected to issue his final decision on the board's recommendation in December.

— Rob Cullivan