

Support group formed for widowed, divorced

GATES — Holy Ghost Church, 220 Coldwater Road, recently formed Bittersweet, a support group for widows, widowers, separated and divorced individuals. The organization is open to all parishes and meets in the church basement from 2-4 p.m. on the second and fourth Sundays of each month.

According to a press release from the group, Bittersweet provides an atmosphere in which people may exchange ideas and share feelings with others who have "been there." The group emphasizes support, and is not a social group.

The following speakers and topics are slated over the next six months:

- Jan. 24 — Richard Morales, "Self Worth/Self Esteem."
- Feb. 14 — Sister Anne Marie Maloy, RSM, to be announced.
- Feb. 28 — John Herriman, "Is Your Lawyer Your Friend?"
- March 14 — Angela Gallo, "Healing and Its Many Forms."
- March 28 — Father Bob Werth, TBA.
- April 11 — Easter Sunday, no meeting.
- April 25 — Deacon J. Gregory Doyle, TBA.
- May 9 — Rosalie Muschal Reinhardt, TBA.
- May 23 — Sister Margie Mayk, r.c., TBA.
- June 13 — Arlene Raiser, "Guided Fantasy."

Sister Anne Marie Fehrenbach, SSJ, began the meetings on Jan. 10 with a talk on "Rebuilding When Your Relationship Ends."

Brooklyn bishop to speak

ROCHESTER — Bishop Austin B. Vaughan, auxiliary bishop of New York and a leading pro-life activist, will be the featured speaker at the Catholic Physicians Guild's annual Winter Dinner on Jan. 30.

The evening will begin with a 6:30 p.m. Mass at the University of Rochester's Interfaith Chapel, followed by a buffet dinner at the Faculty Club and Bishop Vaughan's address.

Bishop Vaughan has been an outspoken pro-life advocate. He has been arrested several times for participating in abortion protests.

The cost of the dinner is \$20. Reservations and payments may be sent to W. Stewart Beecher, 106 Gregory Park Condo, Rochester, N.Y. 14620.

Social ministry seminar to explore family needs

ELMIRA — Catholic social ministers in the Southern Tier are invited to attend the annual "Winter Refresher" on Saturday, Feb. 6. The event is scheduled to take place from 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the administration building of the Elmira Psychiatric Center, 100 Washington St.

The day's activities will include various workshops, along with the keynote address by Jack Balinsky, director of diocesan Social Ministry. His lecture is titled, "Putting Children and Families First: A Call to Action."

Pre-registration is required. To register, call 607/734-5893.



S. John Wilkin/Photo intern

Joyce Newton of New Bethel CME Church discusses violence in the community before a crowd of about 140 people gathered in front of J.S. Gun Shop in Rochester following an anti-gun march Jan. 15. Several Catholic priests and religious participated in the march, which began at the Liberty Pole and concluded outside the gun shop, to draw attention to the city's gun buy-back program.

March supports gun buy-back plan

Churches in city to serve as drop sites for program

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Several Catholic priests and religious participated in an anti-gun march down East Main Street on Friday morning, Jan. 15. The rally began at the Liberty Pole before eventually ending up in front of J.S. Gun Shop, Inc., 115 State St.

About 140 people participated in the march, which served to draw attention to the city's gun buy-back program. The march was sponsored by United Church Ministries.

Three Catholic and two Protestant churches are joining forces to participate in the city's plan to buy back guns from residents. The operation was scheduled to run through Jan. 29. The Rochester City Council voted last week to appropriate \$20,000 for the plan.

As of Monday evening, Jan. 18, around 50 guns had been turned in to the police, according to Sgt. Harold Dack of the Rochester Police Department.

March leaders emphasize that they were not condemning the gun shop's owner by rallying in front of his store. Rather, protesters insisted that the shop symbolized the nation's infatuation with the use and ownership of guns.

"We know that violence only begets violence," commented Father James B. Callan, pastor of Corpus Christi Church, which is one of the buy-back sites. "It is not legitimate to solve differences through violence."

The store's owner and his employees apparently took the rally in stride, serving coffee to the protesters and exchanging views in a friendly manner.

Some of the protesters' signs offered some call for a ban on handgun

MOST GUN LAWS ONLY AFFECT THE HONEST CITIZEN. CRIMINALS BY DEFINITION DO NOT OBEY THE LAW. THE 2ND AMENDMENT STATES THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO KEEP AND BEAR ARMS SHALL NOT BE INFRINGED.

The windows of J.S. Gun Shop display signs penned by Owner Joe Staffieri, advocating safe gun use.

ownership, a call that did not reflect that of the store's employees. Indeed, the store displayed its own signs in its windows, calling for a crackdown on criminals, rather than law-abiding gun-owners.

"I support their constitutional right to do what they are doing," said store owner Joe Staffieri, following the rally. "But I resent the fact that they want us to give up our constitutional rights. That's like denying people the right to gather because they had riots in L.A."

One priest admitted that the buy-back program may not go far enough in eliminating gun-related violence.

"It might not be completely realistic that many people will be motivated to give up their guns," said Father Enrique Cadena, pastoral associate at Corpus Christi Church.

Nonetheless, the priest and others stated that the gun buy-back program symbolizes the combined efforts of churches and the city to eliminate guns' use in violent crime and domestic disputes. For example, Father Laurence C. Tracy, administrator of St.

Michael's Parish, another buy-back site, noted that two of his teenage parishioners were killed by guns last year.

The program echoes a similar buy-back effort in Dec., 1991. That effort garnered the city 266 hand guns and 72 long guns. In a press release, Mayor Thomas P. Ryan Jr. stated that if the program saves the life of only one person, it will have been worth the money spent.

Residents will receive negotiable checks of \$30 for each hand gun, and \$15 for each rifle or shotgun placed in a steel box located at a buy-back site. The checks can be cashed at all city branches of Chase Lincoln First Bank, N. A.

Guns will be bought on weekdays in fire stations at 450 Lyell Ave., 873 Genesee St., 704 Hudson Ave., and at Corpus Christi Parish, 880 E. Main St. and St. Michael Church, 869 N. Clinton Ave.

On Saturdays, guns will be bought back at St. Francis Xavier Church, 316 Bay St., New Bethel CME Church, 270 Scio St., and Pentecostal Miracle Deliverance, 580 St. Paul St.

Police will be on hand from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. to pay residents who turn in guns. Police headquarters on Exchange Street will buy back guns 24 hours a day.

Names and addresses of those who drop off guns will not be recorded. Neither will ownership of weapons have to be proven.

For information on the current effort, call 716/428-6140.

GRCC plans prayer service for Christian unity week

ROCHESTER — The Greater Rochester Community of Churches will hold an ecumenical prayer service on Thursday, Jan. 28, as part of the group's observance marking the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

Bishop Hae-Jong Kim, newly elected bishop for the western New York area of United Methodist Church, is slated to be the featured speaker at the service. The event will begin at 7:30 p.m. at the Greek Orthodox Church of the

Annunciation, 962 East Ave.

Bishop Kim, who will live in Rochester, is the first Korean American to be elected bishop of a major Christian denomination in the United States.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity is a worldwide observance sponsored by the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and the World Council of Churches.

For information about the service, call GRCC at 716/232-6530.