

Disabled Services joins Residential Program

Addition signals further support

By Lee Strong
Senior staff writer

ROCHESTER — In an attempt to consolidate its services to disabled individuals, the Diocese of Rochester has incorporated portions of the Catholic Family Center's Department of Disabled Services into the diocesan Catholic Charities Residential Program.

Lucy Dechaine, head of the former CFC department, became director of Community Services on Jan. 1, 1993.

The new Department of Community Services will continue to oversee Project Support, which began as part of the disabled services department in 1990. Project Support provides assistance to disabled individuals who are living independently rather than in residential programs.

Another portion of the former CFC department, The Action Center for the Disabled — which provides recreational opportunities for disabled adults — has now become part of the Easter Seal Society of Monroe County,

Inc.

The incorporation of the Department of Disabled Services into the Residential Program will be mutually beneficial, Dechaine said.

"The thrust now (among residential programs) is in community services, getting people in the community on their own," Dechaine told the *Catholic Courier*. "Catholic Charities wanted to do more of it."

The new Department of Community Services will help Catholic Charities move in that direction, providing continuity for clients moving between residences and community living, Dechaine said.

At the same time, she added, affiliation with a residential program will benefit Community Services' staff members and volunteers because they are dealing with similar types of individuals and problems.

"We were the smallest service department at the Catholic Family Center," Dechaine observed. "We needed to be linked to an agency doing the same thing."

(The move) gives Lucy (Dechaine) and her staff people a home with people who are doing similar work to what they are doing," added Paul Pickering, the diocese's director of Residential Services.

Residential Services.

The Community Services Department will be an extension of the residential program, Pickering continued. The consolidation will enable a smoother transition for individuals moving from residential programs to independent living, he said.

The union will also make it easier for individuals who are having trouble on their own move into residences, Pickering added.

"From our perspective, it gives us the full spectrum of services," Pickering said.

The Department of Community Services' main thrust will be similar to that of Project Support, Dechaine noted. Full-time staff workers — Dechaine, Christine Gilchrist and Susan Willis — and some future part-time workers will help individuals find apartments, deal with government agencies and complicated paperwork, and learn such basic skills as budgeting and shopping.

In addition, Dechaine said, "We will be expanding into other kinds of services. We will be looking at other options for community kinds of programs."

Father John Gagnier resigns as pastor of Auburn church

Bishop Clark calls for reconciliation in parish

By Lee Strong
Senior staff writer

AUBURN — Bishop Matthew H. Clark has accepted the resignation of Father John F. Gagnier as pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, 185 Clark St. The resignation becomes effective April 28, 1993.

In a letter published in the parish's April 11 bulletin, Bishop Clark announced that he was accepting the pastor's resignation after studying the parish situation. "I am deeply grieved by the ongoing conflicts and divisions that plague St. Francis of Assisi Parish," Bishop Clark noted in the letter.

The bishop explained that he had accepted the resignation after "discerning with Father Gagnier what might best bring healing to the parish and wellbeing to him."

"After much prayer," Bishop Clark's letter continued, "it seems clear that Father Gagnier's resignation will allow him to gain some peace of mind and offer his gifts more effectively in another setting, while a new pastor at St. Francis can begin with a fresh slate, leading you through the difficult task of reconciliation."

The parish will receive temporary coverage from the time of Father Gagnier's departure until the end of June, at which point a new pastor will be assigned to St. Francis, Bishop Clark stated in the letter.

Father Gagnier, who has been the Auburn parish's pastor since June, 1991, expressed gratitude for Bishop Clark's attempts to bring peace to the parish.

"I am grateful for Bishop Clark's efforts to bring about reconciliation, which has been needed in the parish for many years," Father Gagnier told the *Courier*. "My prayers are with the good people of St. Francis of Assisi

Parish as they face the future."

Father Robert P. Ring, director of the diocese's Department of Priest Personnel, told the *Courier* that Father Gagnier will provide some weekend coverage at parishes until June 28, at which point he will receive a new assignment.

In the wake of the resignation, Bishop Clark's letter called for an end to disputes within the parish, which have involved "petitions, letters, phone calls and faxes from every faction." The conflict has hurt "innocent members of the community who feel caught in the cross-fire," the letter stated.

"We are all sinners who struggle with lack of charity, pride, a penchant for gossip and a host of other sins," Bishop Clark said in the letter. "Christ does not ask us to judge other hearts, but our own."

Problems at St. Francis involve "concern about leadership style," Father Ring acknowledged, although he declined to explain the exact nature of the problems or of that concern.

However, Father Ring said, "It's clear that the conflicts are so deep, (Father Gagnier) is not the person to lead (the parish) out of it."

Rural ministry to benefit from April 18 food drive

OWEGO — Tioga County Rural Ministry will be the beneficiary of a local "Food for Food Drive," scheduled for Sunday, April 18.

This first-ever charity event is being held nationwide by approximately 7,500 Subway submarine shops. From 3 to 4:30 p.m., individuals will receive a free six-inch sub in exchange for any non-perishable food items or canned goods they bring to the Owego-based Subway franchise.

Items received from this drive will be used to help stock the food pantry at Tioga County Rural Ministry, which is also located in Owego.



S. John Wilkin/Photo-Intern

Vigil held for slain doctor

Speakers plead for non-violence

ROCHESTER — Catholics, Protestants and Jews held a prayer vigil with representatives of various pro-life and pro-choice groups on Wednesday night, April 7, to mark the slaying of Dr. David Gunn, a Florida physician shot and killed outside a Pensacola abortion clinic in March.

The vigil was sponsored by Feminists For Life, an area pro-life group. Other participants included members of the Seamless Garment Network, an umbrella organization of various groups, and the Roches-

ter Coalition for Choice. Standing in a circle by the Liberty Pole in downtown Rochester, the 19 vigil participants prayed for Michael Griffin, the man who shot Dr. Gunn, and for the doctor and his family. The participants also called for opponents and proponents of legalized abortion to cease from any violent actions and words that may cause further violence.

Pictured above in the foreground is Anna Hurley-Young, daughter of Jeff and Bridget Hurley-Young of Rochester.

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