

Team effort marks Tier renovation

Volunteers assist Apalachin parish

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

APALACHIN — St. Margaret Mary Parish has a practical tip for other communities considering renovations to their churches.

Contributions don't have to be strictly of the monetary sort.

In fact, because of the Apalachin community's willingness to get its hands dirty, the renovation's final price tag was reduced significantly.

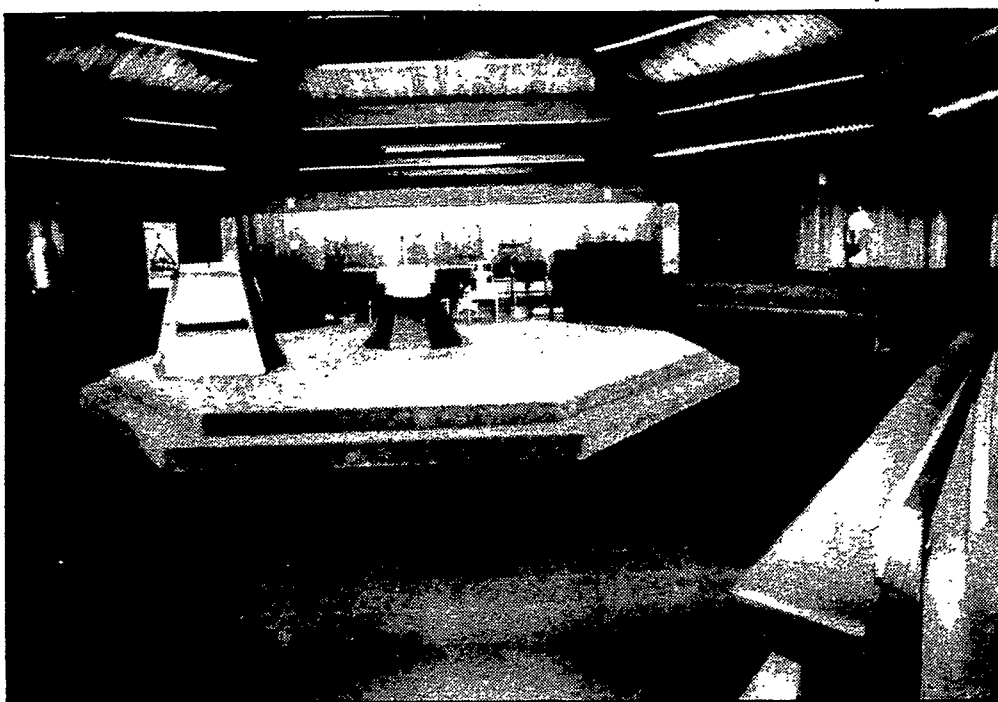
Father David P. Simon, pastor at St. Margaret Mary, 1110 Pennsylvania Ave., estimated that the five-year project's final cost of \$555,000 would have been about \$60,000 more had it not been for more than 100 parishioners' eagerness to pitch in.

"It was community building, basically," said Father Simon. "It was a wonderful use of talent and time."

Now the St. Margaret Mary community can fully enjoy the fruits of its labors. Parishioners will mark the project's completion this weekend when Bishop Matthew H. Clark presides at all three Masses: Saturday, Oct. 23, at 5:15 p.m.; and Sunday, Oct. 24, at 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Saturday's Mass is serving as the official rededication service and will be followed by a pasta dinner.

The parish was extremely thorough in renovations to the 26-year-old church. The project began by improving handicapped-accessibility in the church as well as the adjoining School of Religious Education.

This was followed by upgrades to the drainage system. In addition, the religious education school, which had been severely damaged by two floods in recent years, was entirely rebuilt.



Mike Latona

Pews now surround the altar at Apalachin's St. Margaret Mary Church, where a five-year, \$555,000 renovation was recently completed.

That work was followed by the conversion of the rectory's guest rooms — which had served as priests' quarters — into a daily Mass chapel, conference room and Stephen Ministry office.

The renovation's final phase featured work on the church building itself. The most noticeable change involved the rearrangement of the pews and altar, with the altar now encircled by all the pews.

"This is the only altar in the diocese, to my knowledge, that's in the round," Father Simon noted. "Now, the furthest anyone sits from the altar is only eight rows away."

Other additions included: a holy water font, complete with running water; lighting and sound systems; a eucharistic chapel with 24-hour accessibility; a reconciliation chapel; an air-conditioning system; a children's respite room; two stained-glass

windows; and padding for the pews.

Father Simon emphasized that all the changes were made under guidelines set forth in a book titled *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship*, which was issued by the U.S. Bishops' Committee on Liturgy.

St. Margaret Mary's pastor, who has served the Apalachin parish for 11 years, added that "no serious repercussions" arose among parishioners regarding the building's extensive changes.

"There were several families that would have liked it left the way it was," Father Simon acknowledged. "But the generosity of the campaign drive and the volunteerism speak for the willingness of the faith community to receive this project and give it their support."

Priest slated to lead retreat this weekend

A priest well-known for his healing ministry throughout the United States, South America, Asia and the Middle East will lead a healing retreat at two Rochester-area churches Oct. 22-23.



Father Richard McAlear, OMI, will celebrate a healing Mass at St. John of Rochester Church, 18 Wickford Way, Fairport, at 7:30 p.m. Friday. Following the Mass, Father McAlear and several other ministers will pray individually with those seeking their own healing blessing.

The priest will lead a Day of Spiritual Renewal from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday in the St. Louis School gymnasium, 11 Rand Place, Pittsford. Titled "Life is a Search for God ... Peace is Finding Him," the daylong event will center around Christian growth. Following presentations and group discussions, Father McAlear will celebrate the Vigil Mass at St. Louis to conclude the weekend's events.

A native of Boston, Mass., Father McAlear joined the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1960. He studied in Rome and was later ordained there in 1970.

Both day's activities are open to the public. No pre-registration is required. Although the retreat is free, donations would be appreciated. Please bring a lunch on Saturday; beverages will be provided. Call Dick Pelino, 716/223-2857; Carol Duffy, 381-8227; or Elfie Davis, 586-7542.

Diocese to employ administrators

By Lee Strong
Senior staff writer

ROCHESTER — As early as this June, some diocesan parishes may be led full-time by non-priests.

According to Father Robert P. Ring, diocesan director of priest personnel, discussions have already begun in some parishes about the possibility of having a "pastoral administrator" rather than a resident pastor.

According to Father Ring, pastoral administrators would manage parish operations, including overseeing day-to-day activities and making sure that parishioners' pastoral and sacramental preparation needs are met. A non-resident priest — called a sacramental minister or moderator — would be assigned to administer the sacraments and celebrate Masses.

In the future, the option of using a pastoral administrator will be considered — along with clustering parishes — as a means for dealing with a lack of available priests to serve as pastors, Father Ring noted.

"By June of this year, our hope is that we would have a couple of parishes with this (pastoral administrator) model as a pilot," Father Ring said.

According to Mary Kessler, director of diocesan Human Resources, qualifications for the position and the hiring process are being development.

The pastoral administrator will fulfill the non-sacramental roles that priest-pastors do, Father Ring explained. Indeed, a common job description for pastoral administrators and pastors was developed by the Priests Council in conjunction with the

Diocesan Pastoral Council, the Personnel Commission and the diocese's Human Resources department.

Although the job description has existed for several years, the diocese is only now reaching the point where pastoral administrators may become long-term solutions to staffing problems, Father Ring said.

In the past, pastoral administrators have temporarily run parishes in the diocese, for example, when pastors have been away on sabbatical or ill.

A recent example occurred in the spring of 1993 when Gloria Uterino served as pastoral administrator of the Catholic Community of the Blessed Trinity in Red Creek and Wolcott after the former pastor, Father Robert Smith, left to become a full-time prison chaplain and the newly appointed pastor, Father John V. Forni, completed a sabbatical.

Father Ring noted that the position of pastoral administrator has existed in other dioceses for nearly a decade.

The personnel director attended a workshop on pastoral administrators Sept. 1-3 in Fort Worth, Texas. Sponsored by the National Pastoral Life Center, the workshop included presentations by pastoral administrators, sacramental ministers and bishops of dioceses where pastoral administrators are being used.

"Our region of the country hasn't had the priest shortage as early as some other regions of the country," Father Ring noted. Thus, he said, regions with shortages have developed working models from which the Rochester diocese and other dioceses in the Eastern United States can learn.

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