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Leaving legacy

The Sisters of Our Lady of Charity, who operated the former Holy Angels Home in Rochester for troubled girls, are leaving behind a long and illustrious legacy of caring as they move to the order's residence in Hamburg, N.Y. Page 5.

A compassionate ear for people in distress

By Mike Latona, Staff writer

A friend is one who comes in when the rest of the world has gone out. Before this past year, Lenore Dress could never have imagined how fully she would eventually appreciate the adage above.

It appears on the informational card of the Stephen Ministry operating out of the two-parish cluster comprising St. Columba Church, 198 North St., Caledonia, and St. Patrick Church, Church Street, Mumford.

And the support gained from that ministry now means more than ever to Dress, who first began receiving support from Julie Flanagan in early 1992. Flanagan, who currently serves as a Stephen leader at St. Columba/St. Patrick, helped Dress cope with her son's learning disability.

Then Dress' leg was severely injured in a car accident this past March. And that incident was followed by a fire which destroyed several possessions at her Caledonia residence.

The most agonizing event of all occurred over the summer: Dress' husband Al, was diagnosed in late June with inoperable cancer. He died on July 24 — just eight days before he was to have retired from Eastman Kodak Company, where he'd worked for 21 years. Due to Kodak's retirement policy, Lenore Dress says that she will not receive any of her husband's pension because he died prior to his retirement date.

Yet Flanagan, her husband, Michael, and other Stephen ministers from St. Columba/St. Patrick have helped Dress tremendously simply by visiting and listening.

"There's been times when I haven't known



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer
Lenore Dress of Caledonia (left) speaks with Julie Flanagan, who serves as a Stephen Minister leader at St. Columba and St. Patrick churches.

what I'd do without them. I'm overwhelmed by everything that's happened to me, so I'm very grateful for them," Dress remarked. "I'm glad to know there's decent people left in the world. You start to feel there's no justice in the world anymore, and it's nice to find out that there is."

It's situations such as Dress' where Stephen Ministry has been an invaluable means of support.

Stephen Ministries were founded in 1975 by Dr. Kenneth Haugk, a Lutheran minister and clinical psychologist from St. Louis, Mo. Haugk began the program, he said, after coming to the realization that the lay community was capable of assisting with his extensive pastoral duties.

"I was discovering I couldn't do it all myself," said the 48-year-old Haugk in a telephone interview with the *Catholic Courier*. "I was either doing shoddy work or I was burning myself out."

His creation has now produced approximately 4,000 Stephen Ministries in the United States, Canada and several foreign countries.

Haugk, who currently serves as executive director of Stephen Ministries, noted that the non-profit organization is growing at a rate of 400 new groups per year. Approximately 65 Chris-

tian denominations participate in Stephen Ministries, with Roman Catholics representing the fifth-largest group.

In the Rochester diocese, 14 parishes conduct Stephen Ministry programs. Three communities are in their first year: St. Mary of the Lake Church, 901 N. Decatur St., Watkins Glen; Holy Trinity Church, 1460 Ridge Road, Webster; and St. Louis Church, 60 S. Main St., Pittsford.

The process to prepare someone to serve as a Stephen minister is anything but simple. Contingents from St. Mary of the Lake, Holy Trinity and St. Louis churches spent two weeks of

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Service program active in 14 diocesan parishes



According to records provided by Stephen Ministries' national office in St. Louis, Mo., the following diocesan parishes currently offer Stephen Series programs.

MONROE — Church of the Resurrection, 63 Mason Road, Fairport; Holy Name of Jesus Church, St. Martin's Way, Greece; Holy Trinity Church, 1460 Ridge Road, Webster; and St. Louis Church, 60 S. Main St., Pittsford.

LIVINGSTON — St. Agnes Church, 108 Prospect St., Avon; St. Mary Church, 40 Elizabeth St., Dansville; and the cluster of St. Columba Church, 198 North St., Caledonia, and St. Patrick Church, Church Street, Mumford.

YATES-ONTARIO-WAYNE — St. Francis De Sales Church, 130 Exchange St., Geneva; St. Gregory Church, 3806 Union St., Marion; St. Anne Church, 136 Church St., Palmyra; St. Mary of the Lake Church, 5823 Walworth Road, Ontario; and Church of the Epiphany, 105 W. Main St., Sodus.

TOMPKINS-TIOGA — St. Margaret Mary Church, 1110 Pennsylvania Ave., Apalachin.

SCHUYLER-CHEMUNG — St. Mary of the Lake Church, 901 N. Decatur St., Watkins Glen.

Stephen Ministries

