

Hunger

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The report noted that every cloud of hunger in 1993 was lined with some relief. Private U.S. citizens and groups gave \$2 billion to provide relief and development internationally; and those 150,000 overworked U.S. relief organizations distributed \$3-4 billion worth of food.

Such efforts have been a hallmark of the Rochester diocese for many years.

More than 80 Catholic parishes in the diocese gave almost \$75,000 to Catholic Relief Services' Operation Rice Bowl campaign during Lent, according to Judy Taylor, CRS's diocesan coordinator.

Seventy-five percent of that amount goes to CRS development projects in Third World countries, with the remaining quarter going to hunger-relief efforts in the diocese itself, she noted.

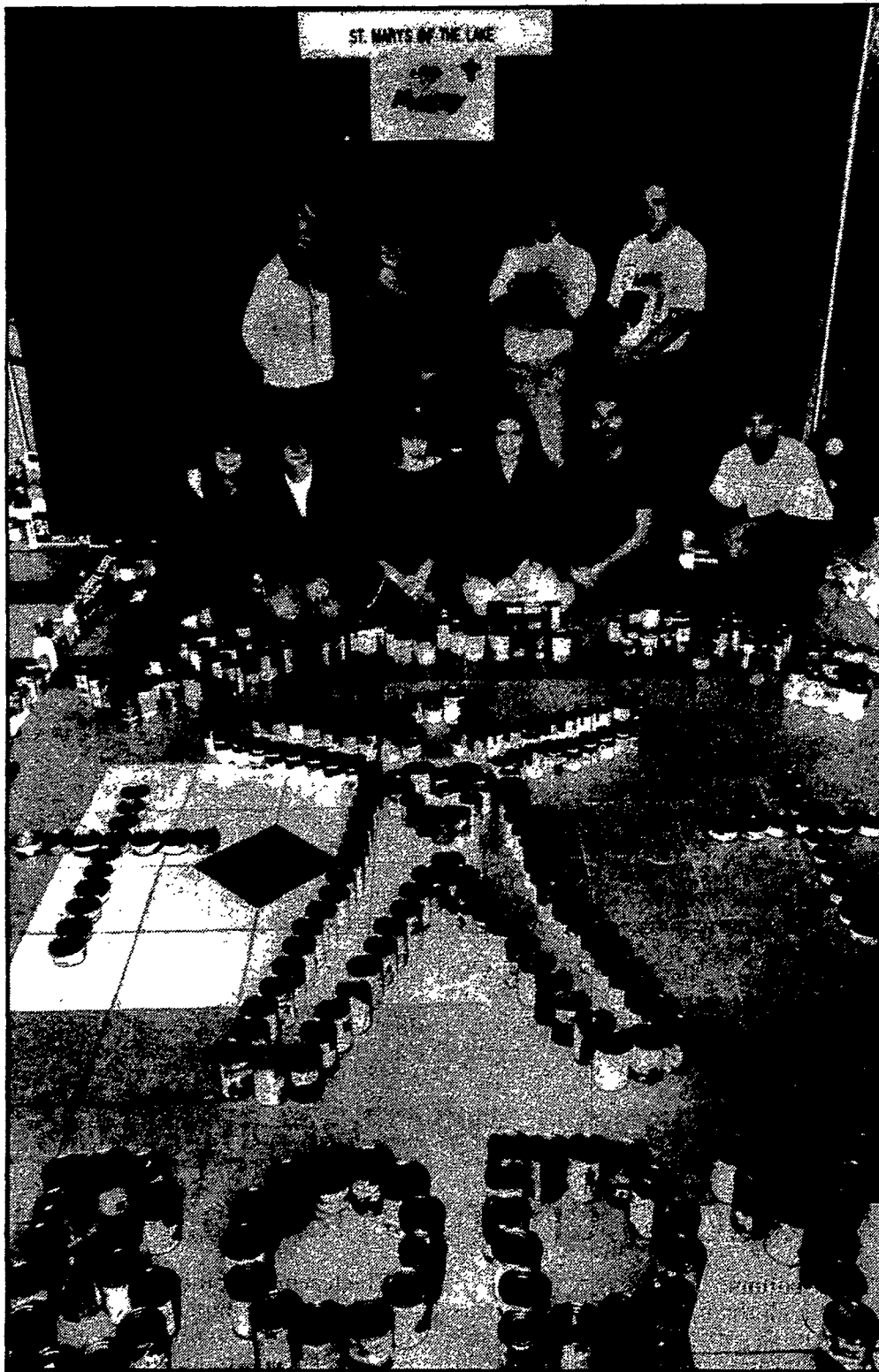
Diocesan Catholics have long cooperated with other Christians, non-Christians and secular groups to alleviate hunger at home. Many parishes collect canned foods and money for soup kitchens and pantries, and several parishes provide numerous volunteers to help various anti-hunger agencies.

Some, like Ss. Peter and Paul in Rochester, regularly serve free meals to the needy; others, including St. Michael's in Penn Yan and St. Stephen's in Geneva, are home to food purchasing cooperatives that serve low-income people.

Parishes also can play a vital role in helping social-ministry offices find populations in need of food assistance, according to Kevin Hennessy, community development director for the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry. He pointed out that his office has been able to inform many Hispanic migrants of governmental anti-hunger programs by seeking them out at the Spanish Mass that takes place at Epiphany Church in Sodus.

Parishes have also served as vital contributors — and beneficiaries — of such organizations as the Southern Tier Community Food Bank, established by the Southern Tier Office of Social Ministry in 1981.

The food bank serves numerous organizations and churches, including Catholic parishes and food pantries in Broome, Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben,



At Greece's Long Ridge Mall Nov. 3, members of the youth group at Ontario's St. Mary of the Lake Church pose with their sculpture spelling out 'We Are One Body' — the theme of this year's World Youth Day. The group formed its creation out of donated canned goods for Foodlink's 'Cans Festival.'

S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

in Ontario, which constructed a sculpture consisting of donated foodstuffs.

Viewers of the sculptures could check out Foodlink's information table, where information pamphlets and packets explained the organization's efforts.

Yet, as the BFTW report repeatedly stressed, hunger poses such vast financial challenges that it cannot be eliminated without the active assistance of governments, here and abroad.

The report praised President Bill Clinton for signing legislation this year that earmarked \$21 billion for the Earned Income Tax Credit, which assists 10 million families with children and 5 million childless workers. In addition, \$2.5 billion has been allocated to make the Food Stamp program more effective, the report noted.

The report also pointed out that negotiations and peace accords in the Middle East, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Mozambique and the nations of Central America could alleviate hunger and development problems for millions of people.

In the Diocese of Rochester, a number of steps have been taken to encourage policy both at home and overseas.

The Diocesan Office of Social Ministry, Catholic Family Center, and the social ministry offices of the Finger Lakes and the Southern Tier all supported BFTW's Many Neighbors, One Earth campaign in 1993.

The campaign seeks to redirect U.S. foreign aid from its Cold War focus on military support of anti-communist dictatorships to a new emphasis on the following four objectives:

- Increasing incomes and earning capacity of poor people.
- Helping meet people's basic needs.
- Protecting the environment.
- Promoting people's participation in economic and political decision making.

On the domestic front, each of the diocesan social ministry agencies has encouraged Catholics to write to their legislators in support of anti-hunger and poverty legislative initiatives.

The Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry, for example, supported state legislation requiring rural schools to offer free breakfasts to students in need, Hennessy noted. The breakfast program will be phased in over a three-year period, he said, and will eventually cover all elementary students and needy pupils in middle and high schools.

EDITORS' NOTE: For further information contact Catholic Family Center at 716/262-7020; Foodlink at 716/328-3380; Southern Tier Community Food Bank at 607/732-1837; the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry at 315/789-2686.

Workers and donations are needed for a Thanksgiving dinner at the Elmira Community Kitchen, located at Ss. Peter and Paul Parish Hall. Call Kathy Dubel at 607/734-9784 for information.

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 for our deceased friends and
 loved ones.

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Tioga and Tompkins counties and in northern Pennsylvania.

Foodlink is another food bank, serving 450 groups in such diocesan counties as Ontario, Livingston, Monroe, Seneca, Wayne and Yates, including a number of Catholic organizations and churches.

From Nov. 3-7, Foodlink, which doubles as an anti-hunger advocacy organization, sponsored a "Cans Festival" at Long Ridge Mall in Greece. Among the participants was the youth-ministry group from St. Mary's of the Lake Parish

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