

Choir's performance is music to pope's ears

Group cherished Rome audience

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — At one point during Sacred Heart Cathedral Choir's performance at the Nov. 3 papal audience in Rome, Betty Spaziano saw Pope John Paul II turn to the singers and wave his hand.

"He lit up like a candle," said Spaziano, an alto in the 29-member choir which sang *Gaude Mater Polino — Hail Mother of Poland*, during the recent audience.

According to Ralph Jozefowicz, a bass in the choir and a third-generation U.S. Pole, the song is the oldest Latin hymn in the Polish Catholic church and serves as its "official religious anthem."

Choir members shared memories of their Oct. 28-Nov. 4 trip to Italy following the 11:30 a.m. Mass on Sunday, Nov. 28, at the cathedral, 296 Flower City Park.

Apparently, Bishop Matthew H. Clark's recent "ad limina" visit with the pope was still fresh in the pontiff's mind, according to choir members.

"When we told him where we were from, he recognized it immediately and said, 'Oh, Bishop Clark,'" explained Amy Blum, a soprano.

Marian Hayes, an alto, said she was struck by the pope's frailty in contrast to her image of him as a large, strapping man. Nonetheless, "he just exuded love and holiness and simplicity," she said.

Kevin Moriarty, a bass, noted that the pope blessed the choir and sent



Photo courtesy of Sacred Heart Choir
Dr. J. William Greene (left), director of the Sacred Heart Cathedral Choir, shakes hands with Pope John Paul II in Rome. Standing directly behind the pope is Kevin Moriarty whose painting of Sacred Heart (bottom right) was given to the pontiff.

blessings to their families.

A self-described amateur artist, Moriarty has the added thrill of seeing one of his works join the Vatican's vast art collection after the choir presented his painting of Sacred Heart Cathedral to the pope.

Touring such architectural and artistic masterpieces as St. Peter's Basilica left a lasting impression on Moriarty, he added.

"It deepens my commitment to do the best I can," he said.

Blum's husband, Pete, a bass, was also impressed by the architecture in Rome. He noted that the famed ancient

Roman temple, the Pantheon, built in 27 B.C., still serves as a site for Catholic Masses.

"It has kept up to meet the religions as they've progressed," he mused, adding that he was fascinated that the temple's 2,000-year-old concrete has endured so long.

Another church fascinated the choir members, medieval St. Mary Major in Assisi, birthplace of St. Francis, and about two-and-a-half hours' drive north of Rome. The choir sang on Monday, Nov. 1, in the church — "more like a chapel," one member said — at a Mass for themselves.

The choir's sound echoed sweetly in

such churches, Spaziano said.

"I never heard a sound like I heard in the churches in Italy," she claimed.

Dr. J. William Greene, choirmaster, said the old churches' friendly acoustics can be credited to their stone structure. Many modern churches use softer materials that deaden a choir's sound, he explained.

"It's the reverberation," he said. "Anything that's made out of stone is going to sound right."

According to Jozefowicz, the choir sounded just right during High Mass at St. Peter's Basilica on Oct. 31.

"From a group and musical viewpoint, St. Peter's was a highlight," he said. "It was a thrill beyond belief. We sang extremely well, I think, because we were carried away by the spirit."

Jozefowicz added that the performance was especially meaningful to the choir's older members, some of whom joined the group 20 years ago. However, Greene explained that the group's camaraderie was tinged with bitterness due to the fact that one member, Susan Frank, missed performing on the tour.

Frank, who was pregnant at the time, had her physician's OK to fly. She then went into labor on the flight over to Italy. The group was happy to report that she gave birth to a healthy baby boy in Italy. His name: Jason Christian.

It's that kind of caring for each other that marks the choir's relations, Greene said, and that fellowship set the trip's tone.

"It was the culmination of two years of hard work and fundraising," he said. "We liked each other before we went, and we liked each other more after coming back."

Diocese receives grant for AIDS housing program

By Lee Strong
Senior staff writer

ROCHESTER — The Diocese of Rochester has received a \$93,000 from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The HUD grant is intended to help people with AIDS find and maintain housing that is safe and affordable.

The diocese will use the funds — administered by the New York State Department of Social Service — to rent apartments, which it then will sublet to people with AIDS, noted Sharon Nyquist, director of AIDS Services for diocesan Social Ministry.

Diocesan AIDS Services hired Patricia Serowick Nov. 1 as the housing specialist to oversee the new program, which is titled Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS.

During the first year of the program,

the diocese will sublet approximately eight apartments, Nyquist explained. Although the apartments will be unsupervised, the individuals living in them will be required to have case managers — either through diocesan Social Ministry or other agencies — to make sure that they are receiving necessary medical and social services.

The program will also operate a van to transport clients to appointments.

Because the program is just getting launched, the first apartment will not become available until early next year, Serowick reported.

As part of her job, Serowick will locate apartments, interview potential renters, and serve as a liaison between renters and landlords in the event that problems arise, she said.

Nyquist pointed out that people with AIDS are often chronically ill, which makes it difficult for them to

find new apartments, get to appointments, and even go out to shop. The program will allow them to remain independent, while giving them access to services they need.

Despite area programs already serving people with AIDS, Serowick noted that the Rochester community needs a program of this sort, which will be the first of its kind in Rochester.

"Some (people with AIDS) are living with family members, some are living in unsafe neighborhoods in apartments where they have to walk up flights of stairs, which becomes harder as their physical condition deteriorates," Serowick said.

She said similar programs in such places as San Francisco and New York City will serve as guides.

Currently, Serowick is developing forms and procedures to get the program up and running. She also is speaking with local social-service providers about the program and what needs she might address. An intern working with AIDS Services also has spoken with potential clients, Serowick reported.

Meanwhile, the diocese already has submitted a \$99,000 grant proposal to HUD to continue the program after the current one-year grant runs out.

Nyquist was optimistic that such funding will be available.

"I don't think (the government) is looking at this as a one-year program," Nyquist suggested. "This will be ongoing."

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SSJs set to open outreach center

ROCHESTER — The Sisters of St. Joseph have scheduled an open house for their new St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center, located at 417 South Ave., this Tuesday, Dec. 7, from 3 to 7 p.m.

The center, which is a joint project of the Sisters of St. Joseph and the University of Rochester's Community Nursing Center will provide primary health care; counseling support and opportunities for spiritual growth for individuals and families; mediation services for landlord/tenant disputes, neighborhood conflicts and families; and tutoring for those seeking high-school equivalency degrees.

During the open house, visitors will be able to tour the facilities and meet its staff and board of directors. Refreshments will be served. Free parking is available.

Call Sister Christine Wagner, SSJ, at 716/586-1000, ext. 33 for information.

Applications sought

ELMIRA — Southern Tier Community Food Bank, 175 Grand Central Ave., is currently accepting membership applications from non-profit organizations.

A member organization of the Southern Tier Office of Social Ministry, the food bank serves Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, Broome, Tompkins and Tioga counties in New York, as well as Tioga and Bradford counties in Pennsylvania.

For details about applying for membership, call Marc Terpolilli at 607/732-1837.

Diocesan, parish officials named to city panels

ROCHESTER — Mayor-elect Bill Johnson has named a number of diocesan and parish officials to membership positions on six subcommittees of his Mayoral Transition Committee.

The subcommittee appointments were announced on Nov. 22, but were not released to the *Catholic Courier* until they were sent by fax on Nov. 24.

The officials and the subcommittee to which they were named are as follows:

- Sister Mary Ann Binsack, RSM, diocesan director of Faith Development Ministry and former acting superintendent of schools, will serve on the school-budgeting subcommittee.

tee.

- Deborah Long, associate director of Catholic Family Center, and Gail Blanchard, executive director of Charles Settlement House, will both serve on the human-services restructuring subcommittee.

- Dr. Charles Harden, chairman of the Department of Emergency Medicine at St. Mary's Hospital, will serve on the crime and violence subcommittee.

- Evelyn Reaves, community organizer for the neighborhood community center at Ss. Peter and Paul Parish, will serve on the neighborhood revitalization subcommittee.