

Analysis teams plan Synod implementation

By Lee Strong
Senior staff writer

ROCHESTER — Diocesan Catholics know "what." The process is now underway to help determine "how."

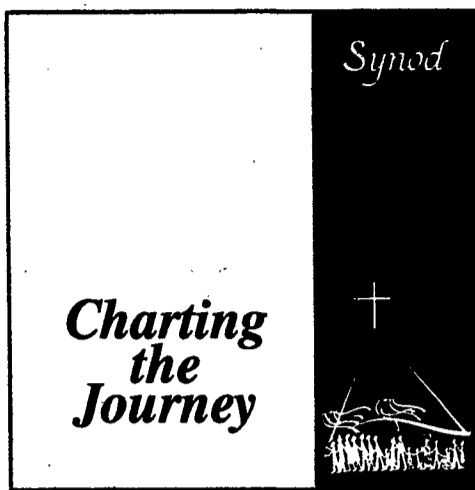
The "what" are the five recommendations that emerged from last year's General Synod, held from Oct. 1-3.

These recommendations, outlined after a three-year process of parish, community and regional meetings, are: life-long religious education; a consistent life ethic; Catholic moral education; the role of women in the church; and the formation of small Christian communities.

The "how" is the pastoral plan to govern the implementation of these recommendations over the next five years.

The process of developing that plan is the work of the Synod Implementation Commission, headed by Deacon Thomas Cass of St. Michael's Parish in Newark.

The commission has created five



analysis teams — one for each recommendation — to develop the components of the pastoral plan. The teams are scheduled to present these proposals to the Synod Implementation Commission at its March 9 meeting.

Deacon Cass explained that immediately following the General Synod,

parishes were asked to report on how they were implementing the Synod recommendations. The analysis teams were then formed to examine the information furnished by the parishes, as well as outside resources.

The analysis teams are made up of a cross-section of representatives from around the diocese, including members of parishes, the Pastoral Center, and the Synod Implementation Commission. Teams have been meeting regularly, Deacon Cass said, some as often as once a week.

In using parishes' input to develop proposals, Deacon Cass said, the commission was simply following the pattern of parish involvement developed during the Synod process.

"We wanted the parishes to be in the lead of the Synod implementation," Deacon Cass said. "The commission is very concerned about keeping the parishes and faith communities involved in the process."

Once approved, the implementation plan will encompass all five recommendations, Deacon Cass said. He noted that parishes will not be expected immediately to implement every portion of the plan.

"Coming from a parish myself, I don't know of any of them that aren't living week-to-week trying to pay off their bills," he said. "The diocese recognizes the limitation of resources and the reality that we can't do all things simultaneously."

Thus, Deacon Cass explained, the implementation process will take place over five years.

In addition, he said, parishes should not simply be waiting for the commission to develop a plan.

"I would encourage them to continue the Synod process," Deacon Cass said. "While waiting to hear from us, (they should) determine what things to do locally."

Lenten series to begin Feb. 20 at Tier church

ELMIRA — A six-session Adult Lenten Series on Conscience and Morals will begin on Sunday, Feb. 20, at 7:30 p.m. at the parish center of St. Anthony's Church, 204 W. Washington Ave.

Nationally known theologian Father Charles E. Curran, a Rochester diocesan priest, will be the featured speaker on Feb. 20. His scheduled topic is "Conscience and Conscience Formation."

Five additional events will take place at other Southern Tier parishes. All will run from 7:30-9:30 p.m. Sessions are scheduled as follows: Feb. 22 — "Death Issues: Right to Die and Abortion," Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 1100 W. First St., Elmira; March 1 — "Life Issues: In Vitro Fertilization, Contraception, Sterilization," St. Mary of the Lake Church, 901 N. Decatur St., Watkins Glen; March 8 — "Sex Issues: Heterosexual and Homosexual Relationships," St. Casimir Church, 1004 Davis St., Elmira; March 13 — "Social Justice Issues: Racism, Sexism, Etc.," Ss. Peter and Paul Church, Market and High streets, Elmira; and March 22 — "Violence Issues: War, Abuse," St. Mary Church, 22 Franklin St., Elmira.

Tickets for the series are \$20 each and can be purchased at all Catholic parish rectories in Chemung and Schuyler counties, as well as the Mount Saviour Monastery bookstore in Pine City. Tickets are also available at Conklin and Rorick and Cappy's, both in Elmira.

Liturgy office releases lenten fast guidelines

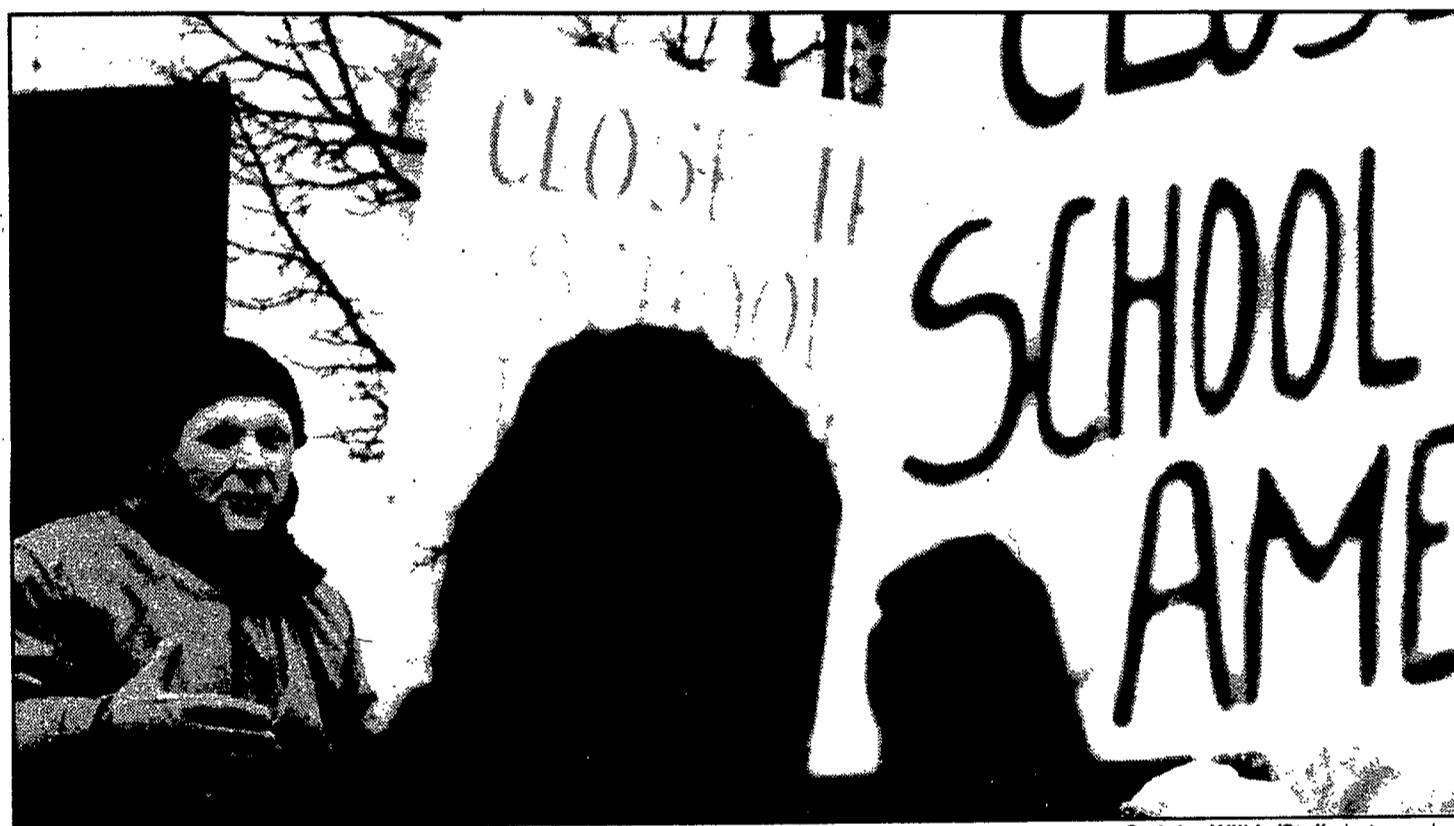
The diocesan Office of Liturgy has released lenten fast and abstinence guidelines.

Ash Wednesday falls on Feb. 16 this year, while Good Friday is April 1, and Easter is April 3.

All Catholics, ranging in age from 18 to 59, are required to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Fasting means eating only one full meal and two smaller meals that combined do not equal the full meal. No eating between meals is permitted.

All Catholics 14 years old and older are obligated to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays during Lent.

Demonstrators call for school's closing



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

Maryknoll priest urges crowd to write Congress

Father Roy Bourgeois, a Maryknoll priest and ex-missionary to Latin America, addresses more than 30 people who marched outside the Federal building in downtown Rochester on Friday afternoon, Feb. 4. The priest was calling on the U.S. government to close down the School of the Americas, a U.S. Army training center at Fort Benning, Ga. Many of SOA's Latin American graduates are accused of human rights violations, Father Bourgeois said.

Legislature head meets action network

ROCHESTER — The leader of the Monroe County Legislature has agreed to try and delay voting on proposed jail expansion for six months, according to Brian Kane, Catholic Family Center's Justice and Peace director.

Arnold J. Eckert said concerns over drug and alcohol treatment that CFC's Social Action Network brought to a Feb. 2 meeting with the legislature president will be relayed to a legislative drug task force.

More than 270 people attended the public meeting, sponsored by SAN representatives at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, 1089 Joseph Ave., according to Kane.

A coalition of churches and agencies, SAN has been pushing to persuade the legislature to divert funding for jail expansion into drug and alcohol treatment. Kane said that SAN leaders will privately meet with the legislative drug task force in about two weeks.

An Irondequoit Republican (17th Dis-

trict), Eckert said that the timetable from last year's Monroe County Capital Improvement Plan, which called for expansion of the county's jails this year, would be changed under this year's proposed plan. Under the recently released plan, slated for a legislative vote in May, jail expansion could be delayed for a few years, and 1994 would only see \$500,000 go to jail expansion efforts, he explained.

Hence, until the vote on this year's proposed plan, a bipartisan legislative drug task force and other groups within the legislature can examine ways of reducing drug abuse and the jail population, Eckert said.

To get a grasp on what is needed to create alternatives to jail expansion, Eckert emphasized the necessity for the county to be better able to predict fluctuations in the jail population. He also noted that in-depth study must be done of local substance-abusing populations, what part they make up of the jail population, and what services they need.

The county must also look at individual case-management of offenders; streamlining the judicial system for misdemeanor offenders; and eliminating unnecessary lock-ups of pre-trial defendants, Eckert explained.

— Rob Cullivan

Elmira hospital to hold awards night on Feb. 22

ELMIRA — Tickets are available for the St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation Spirit Awards Dinner, scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 22, at the downtown Holiday Inn, 1 Holiday Plaza.

Guest speaker will be Sister Elaine Roulet, founder and executive director of Providence House, Inc., which offers shelters for battered women and their families, homeless women, and women released from prison.

Tickets are \$18 for the 6:30 p.m. banquet. To order tickets, call 607/737-7004.