

## Upstate city churches meet

### Discuss direction of outreach in '90s

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Father James B. Callan, pastor of Corpus Christi Church, distinctly remembered what he perceived as his parish's make-or-break moment in 1979.

The parish leadership was asked to vote on whether to open a health care outreach center. Father Callan recalled being concerned over the vote's outcome.

"If the church doesn't take a chance in this neighborhood, no one will," the pastor recalled thinking. "If we said 'no' that night, Corpus would close ranks, trim its sails, become conservative and die."

The leadership overwhelmingly voted in favor of opening the center, and since then Corpus has become well known for its ambitious social ministry projects, he explained.

Father Callan related this tale on Friday morning, Feb. 11, to an audience comprising social outreach workers and other officials from 14 urban Catholic and Protestant churches in upstate New York. On Thursday night, Feb. 10, the group began meeting at Corpus Christi Church, 864 Main St. E., for the first-ever two-day meeting of the Upstate Parish Connection.

St. John Fisher Campus Ministry, Ss. Peter and Paul, St. Bridget's, and the Roman Catholic Community of the 19th Ward — St. Monica's, St. Augustine's and Our Lady of Good Counsel — were among the diocesan parishes that participated. Other churches hailed from Syracuse, Buffalo and Utica.

Risks such as opening the health center can also pay off in unexpected ways, Father Callan said. For example, he noted that Corpus Christi's attendance has risen by the same percentage each year that the parish tithes of its income for

non-parish charities — 12 percent.

Yet, whether rewarded or not, Christian congregations must take risks on a regular basis if they are to fulfill what Father Callan sees as their mission in the 1990s — "to be menders of the breach," a phrase taken from the 12th verse of chapter 58 in Isaiah.

Breaches, or gaps exist everywhere in U.S. society and throughout the world, Father Callan said. Divisions between rich and poor, urban and suburban, clergy and laity all represent breaches that must be mended, he maintained. But to mend divisions in society, he emphasized that Christians interested in social ministry must first mend the breaches in their own church communities.

"All the great ideas in the world won't work unless there's a group that feels close enough to do it," he said.

Sometimes, forming that community means taking practical steps, he said, like putting on a communal dinner.

"The best way to unity is through the stomach," he joked.

Parishes should also make their liturgies welcoming to all groups, including African-Americans and Hispanics who sometimes feel excluded by a service's music or language.

Installing devices that make the church handicapped-accessible welcomes the disabled as well, he added.

Following his remarks, members of the Upstate Parish Connection related their own experiences to one another.

Maureen Domaratz, co-director of Matthew's Closet, Corpus Christi's donated-clothing store, along with her husband, Patrick, was pleased with the Connection's first meeting.

"The best thing that happened at the Connection was the camaraderie and sharing of the vision," she said. "It helped us to keep working because we know other people are doing the same."

Domaratz, one of the Connection's organizers, noted that participants will continue to meet yearly for networking and training purposes.

## Service remembers victims

Monroe County District Attorney Howard Relin (right) lights a candle during a memorial service to honor Jennifer Koon, Ralick Henton, Tamika Fleming, Greg Fickess, and other recent victims of violence in Rochester. The ecumenical service, held on Valentine's Day and led by various Rochester-area clergy, took place in the St. John Fisher College chapel.



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

## Diocesan catechists will hear familiar themes at conference

By Lee Strong  
Senior staff writer

ROCHESTER — Youth ministers and religious educators traveling from the Rochester diocese to Washington D.C. Feb. 25-27 for the East Coast Conference for Religious Education are likely to hear some familiar topics.

Titled "New Pathways: Catechesis in the Life of the Church," the conference will include discussion of such themes as lifelong religious education and small Christian communities.

Those are two of the five recommendations that emerged from the diocese's General Synod, held Oct. 1-3, 1993. The recommendations are to be implemented in the diocese over the next five years.

Indeed Mary Britton, catechetical consultant for the diocesan Department of Evangelization and Catechesis, said this year's conference is one of the strongest ever.

"I'm looking forward to it because of the quality of the speakers," Britton said. "It's an unusual year with this many top notch speakers."

Among the individuals scheduled to speak are Father Avery Dulles, SJ, of Fordham University; keynote speaker Thomas Groome, one of the pioneers in religious education after the Second Vatican Council; Kathleen Chesto, who has helped to develop intergenerational religious education programs; Thomas Zanzig, a leading figure in youth ministry; and Sister Eva Marie Lumas, SSS,

who is noted for her multicultural approach to religious education.

Sessions to be offered at the conference will include the Catechism of the Catholic Church; lay spirituality; religion and politics; the family's role in religious education; the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults; and links between parishes and high schools.

Britton noted that the quality of the speakers and the topics to be covered at the conference has spurred the most interest among diocesan Catholics that she can remember.

In fact, so many people are planning to go that the diocese — for the first time ever — is chartering a bus to Washington, D.C. The bus will leave the Pastoral Center, 1150 Buffalo Road, the morning of Feb. 24, then stop at St. Dominic's Parish in Shortsville and Immaculate Conception Parish in Painted Post to pick up participants. Britton noted that a number of people are also driving down to the conference on their own.

She added that registrations will be taken up to Feb. 18 so anyone who is thinking of attending this conference is running out of time.

"I think catechesis in the life of the church is so central to the ministry of the church," Britton said.

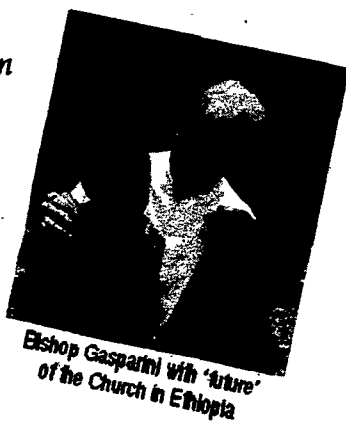
**EDITORS' NOTE:** Cost for the conference is \$90 per person. Round trip bus fare is \$88. For more information, contact Britton at 716/328-3210.

## MISSION NEWS

### NEWS IN BRIEF...

...On October 7, 1993, in the Diocese of Agats in Indonesia, Bishop Alphonsus Sowada, O.S.C., ordained his first diocesan priest, Father Bavo Felndity; "this brings us much joy and hope for the future." ...A new local Religious

Community in Awasa, Ethiopia, now has 23 members preparing for vows. As Sisters, they will teach in the newly-established Secondary School. Bishop Armido Gasparini, 80, writes: "I hope some will be ready to attend nursing classes." ...A Propagation of the Faith Gift Annuity helps you provide for the future of the Church in the Missions ...and provide for yourself now, giving you a guaranteed income for your lifetime. Please write for details.



Bishop Gasparini with 'future' of the Church in Ethiopia

The Society for THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH  
Most Rev. William J. McCormack, National Director  
Propagation of the Faith, Dept. "C", 366 Fifth Ave., NY, NY 10001

Enclosed is support for the Church in the Missions today...

\$100  \$50  \$25  \$10  \$\_\_\_\_\_ (other)

Please send information about your Gift Annuity.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please remember The Society for the Propagation of the Faith when writing or changing your Will. #344 2/17/94

## Mass set for Sister Mary Antonino Cassano

ROCHESTER — A memorial Mass for Sister Mary Antonino Cassano, SSND, is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 19, at Sacred Heart Cathedral, 296 Flower City Park.

Sister Mary Antonino, a member of the School Sisters of Notre Dame and a Rochester native, died on Jan. 2, 1994, in Wilton, Conn.

Family members have provided additional information which did not appear in Sister Mary Antonino's obituary in the Jan. 20, 1994, issue of the *Catholic Courier*.

The information is as follows:

Sister Mary Antonino is survived by two sisters, Carmella Cassano and Anna (Sam) Giardina; one brother, James (Mary) Cassano; an aunt, Helen Cassano; a brother-in-law, Oscar Steinwachs; and several nephews, nieces, grandnephews, grandnieces and cousins.

In addition, the address in the Jan. 20 issue for donations in memory of Sister Mary Antonino was incorrect. Donations may be made to the School Sisters of Notre Dame Development Fund, 345 Belden Hill Road, Wilton, Conn., 06897.