

Organizers ready for more Catholics at March for Jesus

ROCHESTER — Organizers are gearing up for increased Catholic involvement in the second annual March for Jesus, scheduled for Saturday, June 25.

The march is slated to begin at 10 a.m. at the corner of Upper Falls Boulevard and North Clinton Avenue, and conclude with a prayer rally at Silver Stadium, 500 Norton St.

Last year's march on June 12 drew an estimated 12,000 participants from around Monroe County — far exceeding pre-march predictions of 5,000.

Ten Catholic parishes have already agreed to take part in the march, with several other Catholic churches considering participation, noted Bernice McGrath, who is coordinating Catholic involvement. Last year, only a handful of Catholic parishes participated, she said.

"The purpose is just to march in the street and glorify Jesus, not to put anyone down," observed McGrath, a parishioner at St. Joseph's Church, 35 Gebhardt Road, Penfield. "It is to proclaim and glorify His name in the streets."

As part of the march's preparations, May 21 rallies have been slated for Bethel Full Gospel Church, 321 East

Ave., from 4 to 5:30 p.m., and St. Joseph's Church from 7:30 to 9 p.m.

The march is part of an international, interfaith effort started in England in 1987. This year, the march will begin at 10 a.m. in New Zealand, then progress around the world beginning at 10 a.m. in each time zone.

McGrath noted that — as of April 25 — 86 churches in all had registered to take part in the Rochester march. Last year, only 50 churches participated in the march, she added.

Father Anthony Mugavero, pastor of St. Bridget's Church, 175 St. Bridget's Drive, is serving on the pastor's committee helping to oversee the event, McGrath said.

She speculated that Catholic involvement may improve this year due to publicity generated by 1993's march.

"When you say, 'March for Jesus,' they've already heard of it," McGrath said of calls she's been making to pastors this year. "Last year, when you said 'March for Jesus,' they'd say, 'What?'"

EDITORS' NOTE: In addition to the rallies, organizers have scheduled training sessions for volunteers and seminars for dancers. For information, call 716/482-5160.

For information about Catholic involvement in the march, contact McGrath at 716/385-4940 or 377-0341.

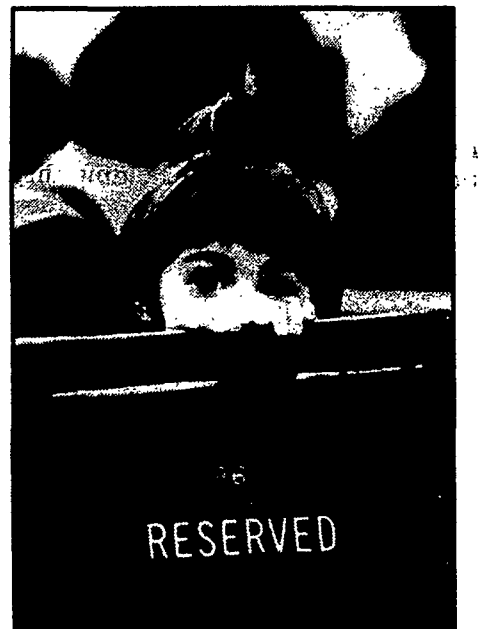
— Lee Strong



S. John Wilkiri/Staff photographer

Celebrating Neophytes

Bishop Matthew H. Clark (center) processes from the church with Fathers Thomas Mull (right) and Michael Brown (left) at the conclusion of the April 30 Neophyte Mass at Rochester's Sacred Heart Cathedral, 296 Flower City Park. The Mass celebrated new Catholics throughout the diocese who recently completed the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults program. At right, Stephanie Farbizio sits in a reserved pew along with her father, Joe, and mother, Sandy, who recently completed the RCIA program at St. Paul's Church in Webster.



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Diocesan leaders hold meeting with Southern Tier legislators

FISHERVILLE — Reforming health care and welfare were among the topics discussed at an April 28 breakfast meeting between Bishop Matthew H. Clark, members of both the Diocesan Public Policy Committee and the Board of Directors of Catholic Charities of the Southern Tier, and Tier state legislators.

The meeting took place in the Southern Tier Community Food Bank on Route 64. Following the meeting, Bishop Clark blessed the recently constructed building.

All three legislators who attended the meeting were Republicans: Senator John R. Kuhl (52nd District); Assemblyman Donald R. Davidsen, (130th Dist.); and Assemblyman George H. Winner Jr. (127th Dist.)

Kathy Dubel, director of Justice and Peace, for Catholic Charities of the Southern Tier, noted that Catholics at-

tending the meeting reiterated many of the stands taken by state and diocesan church leaders in prior meetings with state legislators: support of such measures as an increased minimum wage; an earned income tax credit; increased funding for child assistance programs; state support for small business micro-enterprises; and universal health care.

One of the diocesan presenters urged that any health care reform effort emphasizing preventative health care instead of just treating illness could significantly decrease health care costs.

Sister Ren McNiff, chairwoman of Catholic Charities' board of directors, told the *Catholic Courier* that she hoped legislators will fund such preventative health care measures as programs to help employees avoid heart disease.

"If there were incentives to do wellness care, it would save us the cost of some illnesses, and universal coverage would not cost the gigantic amount they're projecting," predicted Sister McNiff, who also serves as president and CEO of the Sisters of Mercy health care system in the Southern Tier.

— Rob Cullivan