

Benefit aids Hope Hall

Janis Keefe, a member of the Rochester Freedom Singers, sings 'Adelaide's Lament' during a June 3 concert at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse, 4095 East Ave., Pittsford. The performance benefited Hope Hall, an alternative school for educationally at risk students. The school features the award-winning 'Mastery in Learning' program and welcomes all students in grades 3-8. Under the direction of Sister Diana Dolce, SSJ, the school plans to open this fall.



Lauren McFalls/Photo Intern

SSJ named first pastoral administrator

HAMMONDSPOUR — Bishop Matthew H. Clark has appointed Sister Anne Michelle McGill, SSJ, as the diocese's first-ever pastoral administrator. The Sister of St. Joseph will be installed Saturday, June 25, at St. Gabriel's Church, 78 Sheather St.

Sister McGill has served as pastoral associate at St. Pius the Tenth Parish in Chili since 1983. At St. Gabriel's, she will be responsible for the parish's daily spiritual welfare, and for providing leadership in all areas of parish life.

Prior to taking on her current position at St. Pius, Sister McGill was assistant superintendent of diocesan schools; principal of Holy Trinity School, Webster, and St. Rose School, Lima; and a teacher at various Catholic schools in the diocese.

She holds a master's degree in religious studies from Aquinas College in Michigan, and she recently completed a sabbatical to study theology and other subjects.

Sister McGill noted that she sees her appointment as indicative of a church which is expanding the roles of its lay people and women.

"I think it's a very important time for the church, and I'm very happy to be a part of the changes," she said.

She also sees some irony in that the announcement of her historic appointment in terms of the Rochester diocese came shortly after Pope John Paul II's May 30 directive restating the church's opposition to women's ordination.

"It did hit me," she said of the timing. "That pronouncement really saddened me with the announcement of the closing of discussion of women in the church."

She acknowledged that as the first permanent female parish administrator in the diocese, she will be seen as a pioneer of sorts.

"There's this whole idea that 'this is the first one,'" she said. "People will be watching to see if it works."

At St. Pius, Sister McGill said she had

to tackle a variety of tasks covering nearly every aspect of parish administration. She was particularly proud of the fact that the parish's social ministry efforts widened under her encouragement.

"I really strongly believe the people are the church, and I believe I have the gifts to enable the lay people to use their own gifts," she said.

In the diocesan statement, Mary Lou O'Connor, a member of the parish's interview team, sounded enthusiastic about Sister McGill.

"Sister Anne Michelle impressed me with how well she was able to perceive the needs of the people at St. Gabriel's," O'Connor stated. "I think she will listen carefully to what the parishioners want, and lead us as we go forward in our work as a church together."

Bishop Clark echoed O'Connor's sentiments.

"She has demonstrated an ability to develop and manage school and social ministry programs, and also to involve people in church affairs by training them to be Eucharistic ministers, lectors, and visitors to the sick," commented Bishop Clark in a diocesan statement. "By accepting this position, she provides a living example of our common call through baptism to join in ministry in Christ's name."

With Sister McGill's appointment, the diocese becomes the 72nd Catholic diocese in the United States to have a parish administered by someone other than an ordained priest. Lay people, women religious, and deacons have filled in temporarily in the absence of a pastor here, but this is the first time someone other than a priest will lead a parish on a long-term basis.

St. Gabriel's has been without a pastor since October, 1993, when Father Gerard McMahon requested a transfer to the Diocese of Scranton, Pa. Father Phillip Billotte, pastor of St. Januarius Church in Naples, has been temporary administrator and sacramental moderator.

Father Robert Hammond, pastor of St. Mary's Church, Bath, has been named sacramental minister of St. Gabriel's to preside at the liturgy of the Eucharist and administer the sacraments to the faith community.

— Rob Cullivan

Obituary

Josephine M. Weis, 86; devoted to mothers' club, other societies

ROCHESTER — Josephine M. (McGrath) Weis, one of the founders of St. Agnes High School Mothers' Club, died of Parkinson's disease at St. Ann's Home, 1500 Portland Ave., on Thursday, April 14, 1994. She was 86 years old.

As a child, Mrs. Weis attended and graduated from Immaculate Conception School in Rochester. She was a long-time resident of Vassar Street and Dunn Tower in Gates.

In addition to helping found the Mothers' Club at St. Agnes High School, Mrs. Weis also founded the Sisters of St. Joseph Auxiliary Association. She was a member of St. Monica's Sodality of St. Joseph's Church, and the Rosary Society of Blessed Sacrament.

Mrs. Weis was pre-deceased by her husband, Raymond P. Weis. She is survived by two sons, Father Eugene R.

Weis, pastor of St. Casimir's Church in Elmira; and Bernard (along with daughter-in-law Joan Weis), of Rochester; a daughter, Sister Monica Weis, SSJ, English professor at Nazareth College of Rochester; sister-in-law Jean McGrath, of Buffalo; brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Joseph and Kay Weis, of Virginia; and several nieces and nephews.

Father Weis praised his mother's piety. "She helped all three of her children develop their prayer lives and their vocations," he commented.

The Elmira pastor was main celebrant at his mother's Mass of the Resurrection at St. Ann's Home Chapel on Saturday, April 16. Interment took place at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery.

Donations in memory of Mrs. Weis may be made to the Sisters of St. Joseph, 4095 East Ave., Pittsford, N.Y. 14618.

— Rob Cullivan

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DSW conference slated for June 17-19 in Troy

"New Beginnings, New Beings" is theme for the 18th annual New York state conference dealing with issues related to separation, divorce, widowhood and remarriage, scheduled for June 17-19 at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy. The conference is open to people of all faiths.

Keynote speakers will be Dorothy Levesque, executive director of the North American Conference of Separated, Divorced, Widowed and Remarried Catholics, and the Rev. Paula J. Gravelle, a noted speaker on grief and building self esteem.

Workshops will address a broad range of topics, including "Healing the Shame;" "Myths of Annulments;" "Forming Support Groups;" "The Art of Play;" "Widowhood — Making a Decision to Live Again;" "Sexual Abuse;" and "Stress Management."

Registration is subject to availability. For rates and additional information, contact Lucille Laurenzo, P.O. Box 532, Mechanicville, N.Y. 12118, or call 518/664-4995.

St. Francis Parish seeks items for rummage sale

PHELPS — St. Francis Parish is seeking items for its upcoming rummage sale, scheduled for 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. June 18, and 10 to 11 a.m. and noon to 1 p.m. June 19. The sale will take place in the church hall, 12 Church St.

Requested donations include: children's clothes, household items, tools, books, baby furniture, toys, adult clothes and games. Organizers ask that all donations be in good condition.

Sale items can be dropped off at the rectory June 15-17.

Items not sold during the sale will be donated to the St. Felix Food Cupboard or the Salvation Army.

Two-day Tier seminar to be held June 10-11

ELMIRA — A two-day seminar titled "Life in the Spirit" will take place June 10-11 at St. Casimir Church, 1004 Davis St.

Father Eugene Weis, pastor, and four guest speakers will direct the seminar. The purpose of these sessions is to develop a closer relationship with the Holy Spirit. Times are 7:30 to 10 p.m. on June 10 and 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. on June 11.

For details, call 607/734-1622.

Tier hospital auxiliary celebrates anniversary

ELMIRA — The St. Joseph's Hospital Auxiliary commemorated its 40th anniversary on Wednesday, June 8, at the Elmira Country Club.

The auxiliary's 20 past living presidents were honored at the banquet, and recognition awards were presented to volunteers.

In its 40 years of service, the auxiliary has donated more than \$1.2 million to St. Joseph's Hospital, 555 E. Market St.

Bridge is finally open

Pastoral Center staff cheered on Friday, May 27, when the Buffalo Road bridge reconstruction was finally completed.

Access to the center, 1150 Buffalo Road, Gates, is again possible by exiting at Mt. Read Boulevard from either direction on I-490.