



# Catholic Courier

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## Priest shortage

### *Alternatives continue to grow here*

By  
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Staff writer



**F**or Mary Lou O'Connor, the growing priest shortage became all too clear a reality during the past year.

"It's one thing to read about it in the newspapers, and it's another thing to find that when a priest leaves, there is not another one who can be assigned to our parish," said O'Connor, a parishioner at St. Gabriel's Church in Hammondsport.

St. Gabriel's has been without a permanent pastor since Father Gerard J. McMahon asked for a transfer to the Diocese of Scranton, Pa., in October of last year.

Although St. Gabriel's is still not equipped with an on-site pastor, the parish's dilemma is being eased by a new development for the Diocese of Rochester. Sister Anne Michelle McGill, SSJ, will be installed June 25 as the diocese's first-ever parish pastoral administrator.

Sister McGill will live at St. Gabriel's and carry out functions normally accorded to a resident pastor, with the exception of sacramental duties. Father Robert W. Hammond, pastor of St. Mary's Church in Bath, will take care of sacramental duties.

This development gives the diocese a viable option to offer for parishes opposing clustering — the process in which two or more churches become a parish being served by a single pastor and staff.

According to Father Peter C. Clifford, diocesan director of Parish Support Min-

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