

Bishop Clark ordains six permanent deacons

By Lee Strong
Senior staff writer

ROCHESTER — Bishop Matthew H. Clark June 11 ordained six men to the diocese's permanent diaconate during a Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral, 296 Flower City Park.

Deacons Thomas H. Beck, Anthony J. Caruso, Gary D. Clark Sr., Felix A. Medero, Ronald J. Tocci and Ronald P. Verkon completed their study programs through St. Bernard's Institute, 1100 S. Goodman St., the Certification for Designated Ministry Program, and the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program.

In addition, Deacon Medero completed three years of study through the *Instituto*, the diocese's program to train Hispanic lay leaders.

This marks the 12th class since the Diocese of Rochester began ordaining permanent deacons in 1982. The latest ordinations bring the number of permanent deacons currently serving in the diocese to 95.

The permanent diaconate was restored as an order in the Roman Catholic Church in 1967. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops approved the introduction of permanent deacons to the United States in 1968.

Permanent and transitional deacons are ordained during the same ceremony, but transitional deacons generally go on to be ordained priests. A permanent deacon must be at least 35 years of age. Although a permanent deacon may be married, he may not remarry if his spouse dies after he is ordained.

Although they perform some liturgi-



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

Father Gerald E. Dunn (left) helps Deacon Anthony J. Caruso with his stole and dalmatic during the deacon ordinations at Rochester's Sacred Heart Cathedral June 11.

cal functions — preaching, witnessing marriages, administering baptism, etc., — permanent deacons focus on a ministry of service, including caring for the sick, the elderly and those in prison.

Deacon Beck is a member of Rochester's Holy Name of Jesus Parish, but he has been assigned to serve at Our Mother of Sorrows Parish, 5000 Mt. Read Blvd.

He and his wife, Nancy, have three children: Matthew, a member of the U.S. Army, and Jennifer and Amanda, who attend school in Greece. He works part-time with Rochester Area Right to Life.

In addition to Bible study, Deacon

Beck hopes to be involved with Synod implementation and outreach work.

Deacon Caruso and his wife, Mary Ann, are members of St. Theodore's Church, 168 Spencerport Road. In addition to being involved with marriage preparation, he hopes to work with newly married couples.

Deacon Clark is a member of St. Catherine of Siena Parish, 26 Mendon-Ionia Road, Mendon. He and his wife, Beverly, have seven children: Michaelle, Kristen, Anne, Andrew, Matthew, Brigid and John. Another child, Gary Jr., previously died.

A full-time employee at Rochester Gas

and Electric Corporation, Deacon Clark hopes some day to help establish a home for the terminally ill as a parish outreach.

Deacon Felix A. Medero is a parishioner of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, 53 Ontario St., part of Rochester's Community of Hope. He and his wife, Natalia, have three children: Teresa Medero, 25; Elizabeth Ortega, 23; and Felix Medero Jr., a student at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

A full-time employee at the A.C. Rochester Division of General Motors, Deacon Medero hopes to get involved in youth ministry.

Deacon Tocci is a retired professor of computer technology who currently writes college-level text books and is a parishioner of Fairport's Church of the Assumption, 20 East Ave.

Deacon Tocci and his wife, Catherine, have three children: Michael, Mark and Carrie Anne. He plans to use his deacon-intern year to discern what specific ministries he would like to be involved in as a permanent deacon.

Deacon Verkon is a member of the Corning-Painted Post Roman Catholic Community, which consists of St. Mary's, St. Patrick's and St. Vincent DePaul in Corning, and Immaculate Heart of Mary in Painted Post. He and his wife, Margaret, have eight children: Dorothy, Tom, Pam, Mike, Kristen, Kreaugh, Jennifer and Jeffrey; as well as seven grandchildren and a great granddaughter.

A senior applications engineer with Corning, Inc., Deacon Verkon plans to get involved with the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, shut-ins and the Cursillo Movement.

Aquinas tables establishing presidency for next year

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Aquinas Institute has tabled plans for establishing a president's position, school officials told the *Catholic Courier* June 10.

The original plan, slated to take effect by the time the 1994-95 school year began, had been announced to faculty, staff and administrators, in a May 20 letter.

In that letter, Frank B. Iacovangelo, a member of the school's board of trustees, noted that running Aquinas had become a complex task for both the Basilian priests who have traditionally staffed and overseen the school, and for the school's all-volunteer lay board of trustees.

Acting as co-chairman of the presidential search committee, Iacovangelo stated in the May 20 letter that the president would be chief executive officer of Aquinas.

Due in part to concerns about the presidency among the school's Basilians, however, the board decided to postpone selecting a president until issues surrounding the position have been discussed.

A June 10 letter explained that Aquinas has decided to delay establishing the presidency, and that the school will not hire a president for the 1994-95 school year.

The June 10 letter — addressed to faculty, staff and administrators — was signed by Iacovangelo and Father Dennis J. Kauffman, superior of the Basilians at Aquinas.

Citing a number of concerns — including the short period of time before school resumes — the letter said hiring a president for the 1994-95 school year was impractical. But, it said, "the Basilians and the Board will continue to work together for the implementation of this position as soon as practicable."

According to documents sent anony-

mously to the *Catholic Courier*, the decision to delay establishing the new office arose after Basilians and faculty members raised concerns about the position's nature.

In a May 23 letter, for example, Father Kauffman informed faculty, staff and administrators that the "local community of Basilians, which is most affected by these decisions, has not been brought into any discussions with the Presidential Search Committee."

Another letter outlined complaints about the board from the Faculty Advisory Council.

The June 10 announcement acknowledged reports that the Basilians had objected to the establishment of the new position of president:

"Although the Basilians did not vote in favor of the proposal, it was not because they did not agree with the concept, but rather because of the timing and the lack of clarification of several issues associated with the position," the letter stated.

The letter also pointed out that "one area of particular concern for both parties is the role of the Basilian Fathers in the event that the primary leadership position is held by someone other than a Basilian."

"In light of these developments," the June 10 letter stated, "the Basilian Fathers and the Board of Trustees have initiated a series of dialogues by which the issues relative to the implementation of the new administrative position might be discussed."

In a related matter, Iacovangelo also said that the board would form a committee to respond to several concerns Aquinas' Faculty Advisory Council had raised in a May 3 letter to Ruthann Hassett, chairwoman of the Board of Trustees.

Signed by Stephen M. Ward, chairman of the FAC, the letter pointed to a "perceived lack of trust between the faculty and the Board," a "lack of faculty

input into issues which impact upon the faculty;" and concerns about the "ongoing relationship of the Basilian Fathers to Aquinas Institute."

Ward told the *Courier* that the June 20 letter from Iacovangelo and Father Kauffman may have satisfied the questions the FAC had raised in its letter to Hassett.

"We wanted to know what's going on with this new proposal they had," Ward said of the board's plans for a president. "If we were taking a new direction, it seemed only proper that the faculty be informed."

Iacovangelo said the board would address the FAC's concerns at its next meeting, scheduled for June 27.

The diocesan bishop served as president of the school until 1976, when Bishop Joseph L. Hogan resigned the post. Thereafter, lay volunteers have been

elected to serve as president of the board, and the Basilians have continued to administer the school through the appointment of a Basilian principal.

Iacovangelo and Father Kauffman told the *Courier* that Aquinas' current principal, Father Dennis P. Noelke, CSB, would continue in that position next fall.

Explaining the reasoning behind the board's initial decision to create a new administrative position, Iacovangelo pointed out that Aquinas' enrollment had increased from 650 students to 950 in the last decade.

"With growth in enrollment, there is a tremendous amount of responsibility on the upper-level administrative staff," Iacovangelo said.

At the same time, he said, the pool of candidates for school administrative positions in the Basilian community has declined over the last decade, he said.

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