

# Aquinas priest-teacher resigns post at school

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Father Joseph M. Lanzalaco, CSB, has resigned from Aquinas Institute after the school's principal, Basilian Father Dennis P. Noelke, suspended the priest Tuesday night, Oct. 11, after Father Lanzalaco publicly criticized the Catholic school's board of trustees.

In an Oct. 7 public letter, Father Lanzalaco claimed the school's board of trustees reneged on a June, 1994, deal that tabled establishment of a president's position at the school for 1994-95.

Additionally, Father Lanzalaco asserted that the Basilian community had been left out of promised discussions regarding the establishment of a president's position at Aquinas.

He also called for the board's resignation and for formation of a teachers' union at Aquinas.

Father Lanzalaco said he decided to resign rather than become a "folk hero" among students, teachers or alumni discontent with the current board of trustees overseeing Aquinas.

"I knew the minute I was suspended, I became the issue," Father Lanzalaco said. He emphasized that he wanted the Basilians' dispute with the board of trustees — and the lack of a union at the school — to be the focus of public attention, and not his personal plight.

He added that he had initially refused to take the suspension, but was subsequently ordered to accept it by his superiors in Toronto.

"I've taken a vow," the priest remarked. "I won't go in the face of my religious superiors."

Father Lanzalaco said students and faculty members had expressed support for his public stance, but that he had discouraged any demonstrations on his

behalf by students.

"I said, 'Let the adults battle it out,'" he commented.

According to Father Dennis J. Kauffman, superior of the Basilians at Aquinas, at least one of the issues raised by Father Lanzalaco has been settled during the last week.

Father Kauffman noted that members

of the board of trustees and the Basilian community met on Friday, Oct. 14, in an effort to include the Basilians in the dialogue concerning the role a president would play in the school's administration.

This meeting came in response to an Oct. 6 letter in which three officers of the local Basilian community informed

the Aquinas board that they were having "great difficulty" in appointing one of their members to serve on the school's presidential search committee. The letter attributed that difficulty to "several unresolved issues" surrounding the position's establishment.

That letter — delivered to the *Catholic Courier* by an individual who requested anonymity — was written by Father Kauffman; Father John B. Huber, first counselor; and Father Albert R. Gaelens, second counselor.

Addressed to the board's officers, and the chairs of the Presidential Search Committee and the Chair of the Advisory Committee, the letter states:

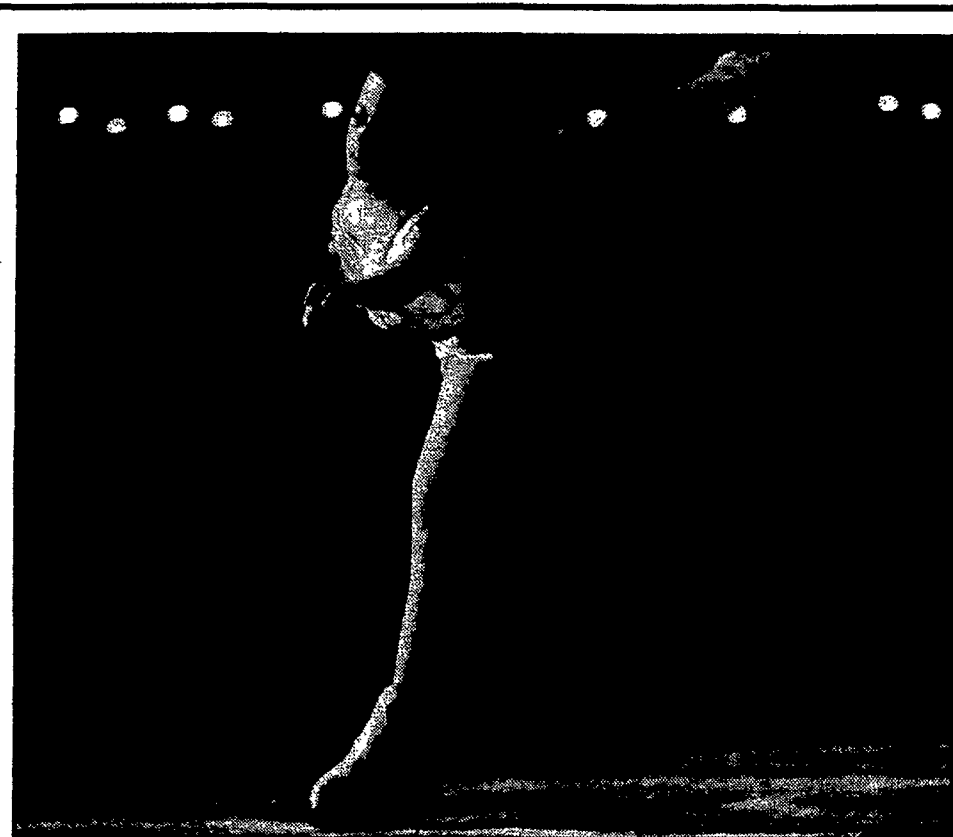
"The Basilian community at Aquinas is having great difficulty appointing one of its members to serve as representative on the Advisory Committee to the Presidential Search Committee of the Board of Trustees due to several unresolved issues."

The letter recalls that on June 10, Father Kauffman and Frank B. Iacovangelo, co-chairman of the Presidential Search Committee, released a joint statement indicating dialogue would take place between the board and the Basilians regarding the presidency.

"We are now asked to appoint one of our members to an Advisory Committee for the purpose of meeting and interviewing the three finalists for the position of president, when no dialogue has yet occurred between the Board and the local Basilian community for the purpose of clarifying those issues associated with the position of president," the Oct. 6 letter states.

"Closely associated with this issue is the fact that we have never been presented with job descriptions for the proposed administrative structure of Aquinas as envisioned by the President-

Continued on page 5



Wendy Longlade/Photo Intern

## Skating to 'Fantasia'

The Genesee Figure Skating Club hosted 'A Skating Spectacular' Oct. 14-16 at RIT's Frank Ritter Memorial Arena. Club members joined skating champions to perform to Disney music. Maia Wilkin, a parishioner at Brighton's Our Lady of Lourdes Church and a junior at Bishop Kearney High School, skates to the music of 'Fantasia.'

# Diocesan agencies try to fight domestic abuse

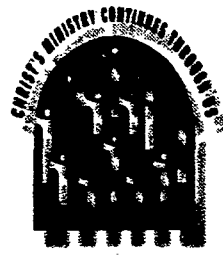
By Lee Strong  
Senior staff writer

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

But counselors at Catholic Charities of the Southern Tier and Finger Lakes Social Ministry know that domestic abuse in its many forms is really a year-round problem.

"The truth is, it pretty much permeates our family system,"

observed Norman White, coordinator of Catholic Charities Emergency Services for Catholic Charities of the South-



1994-95  
TGA

ern Tier.

In Chemung County alone, White said, recently compiled data from police and social service agencies shows there were some 1,800 instances of domestic violence reported between 1989 and 1992. That violence included the abuse of spouses, children, siblings and parents.

Meanwhile, Sister Alicia Schur, RSM, counseling services coordinator for Finger Lakes Social Ministry, estimated that between 15 and 20 percent of approximately 200 clients her department sees annually have been victims of physical abuse.

In addition, she observed, "I think the

whole area of verbal abuse I can't even begin to estimate."

In attempting to respond to the number of abused individuals seeking help, Catholic Charities of the Southern Tier sponsored an Oct. 18 workshop focusing on pastoral responses to the problem. The program presented the dynamics of abuse, why women remain in abusive relationships and how abuse affects children.

White helped to organize the workshop along with Kathy Dubel, director of the Elmira-based Catholic Charities' Department of Justice and Peace.

The Southern Tier agency, along with Finger Lakes Social Ministry's counseling services, are funded in part with Thanks Giving Appeal money.

Domestic abuse is a problem putting demands on the two agencies services. And it is a problem affecting all family members.

"The family is an increasingly dangerous place to be," White observed. "We put a lot of energy into broadening perspectives beyond spousal abuse."

In addition to educating parish staffs as to the nature of domestic abuse, White said he hoped the workshop might lead participants to developing follow-up responses, such as creating additional support groups.

"There's certainly a need for community support services beyond therapy," White said.

Sister Schur agreed with White's contention that people's understanding of what abuse is — particularly verbal abuse — needs to be expanded.

"Verbal abuse is anything that takes away a person's sense of self-worth," Sister Schur explained. "Sometimes its

something as simple as name-calling. Sometimes, it's more subtle, like low expectations."

Parents often resort to verbally abusing their children without realizing it, sometimes calling them names such as "stupid" or "bad." Verbal abuse, along with neglect, "Can be so much more harmful than physical abuse," she observed. But all too often, she added, the approach to more subtle kinds of abuse is "We can't see it, so we don't know it."

Sister Schur said that a need exists in the Finger Lakes region for more support groups to help people affected by abuse. In addition, the region could use a shelter for battered women. One existed, she noted, but had to close due to the lack of funds.

And work remains to be done to explain the effects of abuse on the victims and why they often fail to do anything to change the situation, Sister Schur continued.

"Women that get abused, they often don't know anything else," Sister Schur said. "They don't know that that's not the way it's supposed to be."

Consequently, both Sister Schur and White noted, all too often abuse is not reported, or charges do not get filed.

One new weapon in the fight against abuse is a new state law, White reported. In the past, if a woman was abused, she had to file charges against the perpetrator. But many of these women were afraid to do so, or changed their minds. Under the new law, if a police officer sees clear signs of physical abuse, the officer may file charges.

White observed that in states where such laws exist, incidents of abuse are declining.

## Foster parents needed

for therapeutic foster care program to work with emotionally disturbed children and adolescents and/or mothering teens.

Liberal stipend, on-going training, and 24hr. support services provided.

Call Hillside Children's Center, 654-4520. EOE



## REGINA TOURS

Specials!

Fatima from \$649	Rome from \$799
Lourdes from \$699	Spain from \$699
England from \$799	Ireland from \$769
Vienna from \$799	Greece from \$799
Holy Land from \$897	

Prices include airfare from JFK, most meals, sightseeing, tour guide, hotel, and portage\*

Please call REGINA TOURS today for further information

1-800-CATHOLIC, that's  
1-800-228-4654

Travel November through March  
SPACE IS LIMITED! CALL TODAY!

\*Certain restrictions apply