

Priest agrees to retire and repay diocese

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Father Robert J. Winterkorn, former pastor of Spencerport's St. John the Evangelist Church, is officially retired and is prohibited from performing priestly duties, Bishop Matthew H. Clark announced Jan. 15.

Although he will continue to draw a diocesan pension, Father Winterkorn will not reside in a rectory, according to Elizabeth Brown, diocesan director of constituent relations.

The priest's status was announced in a diocesan press release. Father Winterkorn has been on administrative leave since September, 1993, and has undergone psychological assessment and treatment, the statement said.

Father Winterkorn resigned last year at the request of Bishop Clark, following investigation of a parishioner's complaint of sexual misconduct. According to the press release, several other individuals who came forth and made similar complaints are currently receiving counseling at diocesan expense.

In addition to the complaints of professional misconduct, the diocese said that an audit of parish finances revealed that Father Winterkorn had mishandled \$137,500 in parish funds. Some of that money has already been repaid by Father Winterkorn, recipients of the funds, or by others on his behalf. The diocesan self-insurance fund has reimbursed the parish \$120,000, the statement noted.

According to the diocese, Father Winterkorn has signed a "confession of judgment," agreeing that he remains liable for repaying the diocese more than \$100,000. The agreement was drawn up by attorneys representing both the diocese and the priest.

Brown stated that, under the agreement, Father Winterkorn must surrender 10 percent of his gross earnings to the diocese until the debt is paid. However, none of that money will be paid back using the priest's pension funds, she said.

Father Winterkorn is currently employed part-time in the dispatching office at Irondequoit Police Department.

The former pastor remains a priest and may apply for restoration of his ministerial faculties, Brown said. However, she emphasized that the diocese would have the final say on whether he can be restored to full ministry.



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

Ralph Reed, executive director of the Christian Coalition, Jan. 14 addresses the audience gathered for Crisis Pregnancy Centers' 14th anniversary brunch at the Mapledale Party House.

Reed promotes role of religion in politics

By Lee Strong
Senior staff writer

Ralph Reed has a vision of America in which people of faith have a say in how their country is run.

In pursuit of that vision, Reed has, since 1989, served as the executive director of the Christian Coalition, a self-described "pro-family movement" advocating a broad agenda that includes increasing the standard income tax deduction for children; reforming the education system to allow school choice; strengthening the criminal-justice system and providing alternative sentences for juvenile offenders; and overturning *Roe v. Wade*, the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decision that effectively legalized abortion in the United States.

And in promoting that agenda, the Christian Coalition is credited with having affected a number of races in the 1994 elections — elections which saw Republicans take over the U.S. Congress and political conservatives gain more power across the country.

"I think that the movement is going to be the most salient, effective political force on the electoral landscape for the next decade," noted Reed, who spoke at Rochester's Mapledale Party House Jan. 14 as part of a fundraising brunch for Crisis Pregnancy Centers.

In an interview with the *Catholic Courier* Jan. 16, Reed discussed the coalition's purpose and goals.

Reed, who holds a doctorate in American history from Emory University, noted that, unlike some earlier movements, the Christian Coalition is interested in creating a sustained effort.

"We are beginning more slowly, being more sophisticated and recognizing that we can't achieve our goals overnight," Reed observed. "The pro-family movement will be a permanent fixture on the political landscape."

Some of these goals will be achieved through creating a broad-based coalition that includes more than evan-

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March for Life

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gan in 1974.

While the turnout may be affected, Gray said, the march's tone will remain the same. "I think it will be a very prayerful march for all the victims of abortion: the preborn, the victims in the 'abortatorium,' the reported alleged shooter."

"That's the position we have taken for 22 years," she said, "and now the numbers are growing."

Gray was referring to victims Shannon Lowney and Leanne Nichols, receptionists at the Boston-area clinics killed in the Dec. 30 attacks, as well as five clinic workers wounded, and the alleged gunman, John C. Salvi III.

Like last year, the march is not being held on the Jan. 22 anniversary date of *Roe vs. Wade* because it falls on a weekend. Organizers believe turnout — and post-march access to members of Congress — is greater if the rally is held on a weekday.

The March for Life also is to sponsor a weekend conference Jan. 21-22 at a Washington hotel in conjunction with the march. The evening of the march, the 14th annual Rose Dinner will be held in Washington.

The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception will again be the site of a National Prayer Vigil for Life Jan. 22-23. The vigil is co-sponsored by the basilica, the Archdiocese of Washington, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and Seminarians for Life International.

Cardinal Roger M. Mahony of Los Angeles, chairman of the bishops' Committee for Pro-Life Activities, will be the principal celebrant and homilist for a vigil Mass at the shrine Jan. 22. It will be followed by a National Rosary for Life.

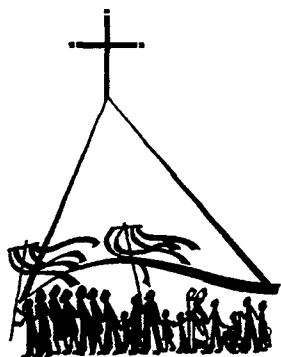
Cardinal Bernard F. Law of Boston will celebrate and preach at a morning Mass Jan. 23 before marchers gather at the Ellipse.

Several of the groups leaving from the Rochester diocese will hold Masses or prayer services before heading to Washington, D.C. The Holy Trinity contingent, for example, is sponsoring a service at the church, 1460 Ridge Road, at 9:30 p.m. Meanwhile, St. Jude's Church, 4100 Lyell Road, has a liturgy scheduled to begin at 8 p.m.

For information about departure times and fees for bus trips, please call: 716/872-6071 (Holy Trinity); 716/586-3956 (St. Jude's); 716/342-3216 (St. Thomas the Apostle, Rochester); 315/539-8860 (St. Mary's, Waterloo); and 607/732-3169 (Horseheads).

Contains reporting by Catholic News Service in Washington, D.C.

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Kathleen Cannon
newly appointed Synod Implementation Coordinator



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