

Law prohibits smoking at bingo

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Many diocesan parishes operating bingo games are apparently violating a smoking law which took effect five months ago, according to an attorney who represents the diocese at the state level.

A portion of Chapter 565 in the state Laws of 1994 states that "no person shall use tobacco on school grounds; provided, however, that smoking by adult faculty and staff members may be permitted in a designated smoking area during non-school hours."

School grounds are defined as "any building, structure and surrounding outdoor grounds contained within a public or private pre-school, nursery school, elementary or secondary school's legally defined property boundaries as registered in a county clerk's office," states Chapter 565, which went into effect on Aug. 25, 1994.

The one portion which allows for smoking — in a designated area for adult faculty and staff members during non-school hours — does not extend to people who smoke during bingo games at parishes with an attached or adjacent school.

"The law in New York is pretty strict. All parishes should be aware that this is what the law says," stated Mike Cooney, a Rochester attorney with Nixon Hargrave Devans and Doyle.

Cooney, who works with the state Catholic Charities Public Policy Committee, was told at a New York State Catholic Conference meeting in Albany in late November that the smoking law is inclusive of Catholic schools.

In a sampling of diocesan parishes that operate both school buildings and bingo games, adherence to the law has been mixed.

According to Joe Prunier, a parishioner at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Elmira, all Chemung County parishes and schools except one — St. Anthony's Church in Elmira, which does not have a school — had switched to smoke-free bingo as of Jan. 1, 1995.

"We got a letter from the (local) board of health saying that we had to conform," said Prunier, who serves as bingo treasurer. "We have no way of getting around the law."

Prunier added that renting another facility has been considered as an option if revenues drop off from bingo games currently being held at Holy Family Intermediate School, which is located at Our Lady of Lourdes.

Although Prunier appeared to be clearly informed of the law, Sister Patricia E. Carroll, SSJ, assistant superintendent

for Government Services and Administration in the diocesan Department of Catholic Schools, said she wasn't even aware of the new ruling until a memo was sent to her from the State Education Department in November.

At that time, Sister Carroll said, she alerted diocesan school principals to the smoking law but was unclear on how it affected bingo. Sister Carroll explained that her role is to monitor activities that occurs during school hours, and that the bingo issues are dealt with at the parish level.

It would appear that most other diocesan parishes, also, were unaware of the law when it took hold in August. At that time, only one diocesan school — Corning's All Saints Academy at Denison Parkway — offered smoke-free bingo.

On the other hand, even as parishes gain more information about the ruling, not all are intending to immediately abide by it.

Father James J. Marvin, pastor of St. Ambrose Church in Rochester, said the law "is a concern and we have talked about it." But he still does not plan to prohibit smoking from bingo at Dailey Hall, a gymnasium which is also used by St. Ambrose School students.

"We also have to think about the larger picture. We aren't going to take that chance; we have too much competition," said Father Marvin, who explained that much of St. Ambrose School's revenues come from bingo.

Yet Father Marvin also emphasized that "by saying this, I'm not saying I'm

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Unified gathering

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was marked at Rochester's Episcopal Church of the Ascension, 1360 Lake Ave., on Jan. 22.



Wendy Longlade/Photo Intern.

Sponsored by the Greater Rochester Community of Churches, the celebration was titled 'The Communion in God: Life Together' and featured an ecumenical service followed by a reception. (Above) Guitarist Samuel Lopez is joined by young voices in providing music for the service. (Left) The Rev. Carol Gomez, pastor of the West Avenue United Methodist Church, delivers her sermon. Unity week ended on Jan. 25.

Group leaves for beatification

A Rochester delegation left for Rome Jan. 24 to take part in the beatification of the Blessed Grimoaldo Santamaria.

Blessed Grimoaldo (1883-1902), a Passionist seminarian, is scheduled to be beatified by Pope John Paul II at St. Peter's Basilica on Sunday, Jan. 29.

The Rochester delegation of 39 is headed by Blessed Grimoaldo's two Rochester-area nieces, Ida Turan and Helene Schlegel. Other delegation members include 17 from California, two from Connecticut, one from Pennsylvania, two from Holland, and the rest from metro Rochester.

Two diocesan priests are also part of

the delegation: Father John T. Reif of St. Rita's in Webster; and Father Foster P. Rogers of Auburn's St. Alphonsus Church.

Father David W. Mura, pastor of the Holy Apostles/St. Anthony of Padua Parish Cluster, who was originally going to travel to Rome as part of the delegation, stayed home to recover from recent heart surgery.

The beatification will take place at 9:30 a.m. this Sunday. The pope is scheduled to receive the visitors during a special audience on Monday, Jan. 30.

— Staff report

St. Bernard's taking offerings 'on the road'

Six Rochester-area parishes have joined St. Bernard's Institute to sponsor "St. Bernard's on the Road," a series of talks and workshops presented by SBI faculty.

The first session is scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 2, at Church of the Transfiguration, 50 W. Bloomfield Road, Pittsford, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. This session will address the topic, "What Does It Mean to Be Roman Catholic," and will include workshops on the papacy and how it functions, as well as "cafeteria Catholicism" — the term coined by some to describe those Catholics who pick and choose certain elements of the Catholic faith.

The second session is scheduled for Feb. 9, at St. Louis Church, 60 S. Main Street, Pittsford, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. This session's theme, "On Being American, Free — and Catholic." Workshops will cover when Catholics don't always think and do the same things in their faith — and Catholicism since Catholics are no longer outsiders in society.

The series will continue in May with sessions addressing the question, "How Do Catholics Decide?" (May 15 at St. Catherine's and May 22 at Good Shepherd).

In addition to Pittsford's Transfiguration and St. Louis churches, sponsoring parishes are: St. Catherine's in Mendon; Church of the Good Shepherd in Henrietta; St. Jerome's in East Rochester; and St. Thomas More in Rochester.

A \$5 donation each evening is requested. For details, contact one of these parishes or call St. Bernard's Institute at 716/271-1320, ext. 290.

Eye exams available to low-income families

Optometrists from across the state are offering free eye exams to low-income, uninsured working residents and their families.

This program is being conducted through the New York State Optometric Association. Those eligible must have one family member employed; must not be covered under any government or private health insurance; must have not received an eye exam in the past 24 months; and not be in a household which exceeds a predetermined income level based on household size.

If you think you may be eligible for these exams, call 1-800/766-4466 weekdays from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. until Jan. 31. Those who qualify will be notified by mail if a volunteer optometrist is in their area. Exams will take place in March.

Apalachin parish plans mission week Feb. 5-11

APALACHIN — Luke's gospel will serve as the theme for Mission 1995 at St. Margaret Mary Church, 1110 Pennsylvania Ave.

The mission will take place from Feb. 5-11, at 6:45 p.m. each evening (except for 6:30 p.m. Feb. 5 and 5:15 p.m. Feb. 11).

Among the scheduled speakers are Father David L. Bonin, pastor of St. Mary of the Lake Church, Watkins Glen; and St. Benedict Church, Odessa; Father David P. Reid, SS.CC., pastor of the St. Francis of Assisi/SS. Peter and Paul cluster, Rochester; and Sister Barbara Moore, RSM, community services coordinator at Rochester's Highland Hospital.