

## Former health secretary coming to Tier March 21

ELMIRA — Dr. Louis Sullivan, who served as secretary of U.S. Health and Human Services under former President George Bush (1989-1993), will be the guest speaker at the upcoming St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation Spirit Awards Dinner.

The banquet will take place Tuesday, March 21, beginning at 6:30 p.m. at the downtown Holiday Inn, 1 Holiday Plaza.

Sullivan will address the topic of "Health Care in the Year 2000." He is currently president of the Morehouse School of Medicine in Atlanta, Ga.

In addition to Sullivan's presentation, nine individuals will be honored with Spirit Awards. They are:

Health professionals — Father Rick Farrell; Melissa Palinkas Wichtowski; Jeanne Knapp.

Volunteers — Jim Smith; Mary Wheeler; Ester Tournour.

Physicians — Dr. William Bishop; Dr. Mark Gibson; Dr. Thomas Boman.



Dr. Louis Sullivan

Tickets for the banquet are available at \$25 each. To order tickets, call 607/737-7004.

## Chaplains

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helps decrease the stress and tension associated with prison life. "They know the grapevines of both playing fields — the inmates and the administration," Rojas said of chaplains.

Van Buren pointed out that chaplains often mediate disputes between different prison "organizations" or gangs, helping to diffuse potential violence.

A chaplain like Father Panepinto also serves as a sounding board for inmates who often have no one else to turn to when confronted with problems, he said. Unlike counselors who only see the inmates every several weeks, full-time chaplains are available on a daily basis to inmates who need regular contact to establish trust, he added.

"When you go to a counselor, you're an inmate, you're a number," Van Buren commented. "But when you go to a chaplain, you might get that needed hug that you never got."

Rojas added that Catholic inmates, in particular, can build trust with the chaplain through confession.

Prisoners are often reluctant to confide in their fellow inmates, Father Panepinto said, noting that prison society does not consider emotional sensitivity a cherished trait.

"It can be perceived as a sign of weak-

ness," Father Panepinto said. "It can be used back against an inmate."

The Rev. Elliot echoed Father Panepinto's remarks when he noted that many inmates turn to him when a relative dies.

"They can sit in your office and cry," he said. "They can't walk around the block or the fieldhouse crying."

Beyond steering inmates away from violence and bandaging emotional wounds, chaplains help inmates realize that they are children of God who can choose a better life, the chaplains and inmates agreed.

For example, Van Buren explained that Father Panepinto often reminds him that he has a son on the outside, and that therefore, he must behave in prison and prepare for his eventual reintegration into mainstream society.

Imam Muhammad echoed Van Buren's remarks by noting that a chaplain can tell an inmate "he has a God-given obligation to advance himself."

All the chaplains and inmates expressed concern about public attitudes underlying proposed funding cuts for such prison programs as education and recreation. At the end of the day, treating prisoners harshly will only result in their treating society harshly when they are released, the men argued.

"What the community has to realize is that if we don't have straight-up life sentences, one day we're coming back into the community," Brooks said.

Imam Muhammad and the others remarked that many of the inmates grew up in abusive homes and impoverished neighborhoods, and they will only be harmed by a punitive approach to their time in prison.

"Many of our inmates are men who come from an environment that never gave them an idea that they could honorably earn the things that they (need)," he said.

Father Panepinto and Ladley added that it contradicts the Gospel for Catholics to support a harsh approach to prisoners that dismisses rehabilitation.

In particular, Ladley stressed that Jesus Himself demanded of His followers a commitment to inmates.

"It has to do with Matthew 25," Ladley said. "When you were in prison, I was with you. I just didn't bring flowers and split."

## Obituary

### Sister Mary Rosaria Hughes, RSM; at 81 years

Sister Mary Rosaria Hughes, RSM, died on Feb. 13, 1995, in the Lourdes Hall infirmary at the Sisters of Mercy motherhouse in Brighton. She was 81.

Sister Rosaria, an Elmira native, entered the Mercy congregation in 1931 from St. Patrick Parish and professed her final vows in 1937. She was a graduate of Nazareth Normal School and St. Bonaventure University.

For 35 years, she served as a teacher and administrator in diocesan schools. Her most extensive duty was at Holy Family School in Auburn from 1941-47 and 1951-66. She also served at Holy Cross, St. Charles Borromeo, St. John

the Evangelist (Humboldt St.), St. Thomas the Apostle and Cardinal Mooney High School, all in Rochester; as well as St. Mary School in Corning and St. Patrick School in Elmira.

Sister Rosaria's many administrative efforts included senior training officer with the OEO Multi-Purpose Training Center at Atlanta University, Ga., from 1968-71, where she concentrated on poverty programs in the South; executive director of the Community Action Program of Wayne County, 1971-80; program planner and grant developer at the Southern Tier Office of Social Ministry, 1980-86; administrator of Tangle-

wood Community Nature Center, 1986-88; and program planner and grant developer for various Southern Tier organizations, 1988-present.

At the time of her death, Sister Rosaria was a member of the Sisters of Mercy community at the Notre Dame convent in Elmira, where she had served as eucharistic minister to homebound and elderly Elmira residents.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Feb. 16, 1995, at St. Patrick Church in Elmira.

Sister Rosaria is survived by two sisters, Ruth and Florence Hughes; a brother, William Hughes; and several cousins.

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