

## Church, AIDS

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ates rent-free in a building owned by Rochester's St. Augustine Church, have died of AIDS, according to Episcopal Deacon Lynne McNulty, director.

Deacon McNulty, who serves at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church — which supports Elisha House together with St. Augustine's — added that Elisha House receives some funding through a grant from the Rochester diocese.

Much of the fight on the AIDS front is marked by cooperation between diocesan agencies, and between diocesan institutions and the wider community.

Pickering, for example, noted that AIDS Services is currently working on creating a joint program with Catholic Family Center and Rochester's St. Mary's Hospital to reach out to Hispanic women at risk of contracting HIV.

In addition to its cooperative efforts with CFC and AIDS Services, St. Mary's has applied for a state grant to fund a hospital HIV education program targeting fifth- and sixth-graders in eight inner-city schools, according to Bonnie Hadden, director of St. Mary's commu-

nity health division.

Members of St. Mary's staff also regularly visit 11 homeless shelters to present AIDS education programs and provide AIDS patients with such items as prescribed medicines paid for by Rite Aid Pharmacies, according to Sylvia Carter, a nurse-practitioner and a member of the Black Leadership Commission on AIDS.

Carter perceives a greater willingness now than she witnessed years ago among many of her minority clients to listen to her message. A decade ago, for example, minority males, in particular, dismissed or ignored the possibility of contracting HIV, viewing AIDS as a gay white male disease, she said. However, with the increase in infection among minority males, such attitudes have changed, she added.

"Even though not everyone practices what we like to call 'safe sex,' the knowledge (of AIDS) is much greater," Carter said of minorities.

Indeed, according to a Catholic News Service report, although blacks constitute only 12 percent of the U.S. population, 32 percent of all men with AIDS are black. In addition, blacks make up 54 percent of all women with the disease and 55 percent of all infants. The report also said that while Hispanics

account for only 9 percent of the total U.S. population, 17 percent of men with AIDS are Hispanic, along with 20 percent of the women and 27 percent of infants.

Percentages of those with AIDS have grown in the minority community largely because of drug use, and women are vulnerable not only because of that trend but also because many men infected through the use of drug needles or by prostitutes transmit the virus to them through intercourse, the report concluded.

Catholic Family Center cooperates with AIDS Rochester in the Harm Reduction Program, which counsels HIV-positive individuals or people suspected of intravenous drug use — a practice which can lead to HIV infection because addicts often share dirty needles to inject their drugs.

An HRP van regularly visits intravenous drug-users, some of whom are persuaded to enter into CFC's drug rehabilitation programs, according to Rita Augustine, CFC's associate executive director for program services.

"Our focus is really on reducing the harm they can cause themselves and the community," Augustine said of the addicts.


Just as church and secular agencies are linking up to fight AIDS in Rochester, St. James Mercy Hospital in Hornell is linking up with the AIDS Task Force of Steuben County to present discussions titled "Talking with Kids about AIDS," on June 7 and June 14 at 8:30 p.m. in DeSales Hall, 440 Monroe Ave.

Carrie Whitwood, the hospital's community services coordinator, also pointed out that St. James plans to work with agencies such as the Red Cross to present to area schools a program that teaches pre-kindergarten students and children in the early grades about germ transmission, and then builds on their knowledge to teach them about AIDS transmission in their later years.

St. Joseph's Hospital in Elmira has made educating its staff and patients about AIDS a goal for years now, according to Jeanne Knapp, RN, infection control practitioner.

She added that several of the Southern Tier's Catholic parishes and Protestant churches regularly provide meeting space for the hospital's AIDS/HIV support groups for patients and their family members.

"All of our churches have been very willing to let us use their facilities," she said.




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### Church offers many resources on HIV, AIDS

The following is a list of resources for those in learning more about what the church is doing in response to AIDS.

- "Living with AIDS: An Occasion of Grace," a 1994 video highlighting what the church can do as a practical response to the AIDS crisis and showcasing selected parish and diocesan programs. Funded by the Catholic Communications Campaign, this 30-minute video can be ordered for \$19.95 (plus shipping and handling costs) from the United States Catholic Conference Publishing Services at 1-800/235-8722.

- "HIV/AIDS Catalog," of Catholic Charities, USA. A directory listing of more than 100 HIV/AIDS programs and services provided by Catholic Charities agencies. Copies of this 36-page directory may be ordered for \$5 from CCUSA, 1751 King St., Suite 200, Alexandria, Va. 22314 (Phone: 1-703/549-1390, Ext. 14).

- "Called to Compassion and Responsibility: A Response to the HIV/AIDS Crisis," published in November, 1989, by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. In addition to presenting guidelines for the church, the health care community and for legislation, this document fosters understanding of the ethical and spiritual dimensions of the HIV/AIDS crisis. People may order this 40-page document from USCC Publishing Services for \$1.95 (plus shipping and handling) at 1-800-235-8722.

- "The Lord Himself Taught Me to Have Compassion," a pastoral instruction on the AIDS crisis published in February, 1988, by Bishop Matthew H. Clark. Copies of this 15-page document may be ordered for \$3 from the diocese by calling 716/328-3228, ext. 317.

- "The Many Faces of AIDS: A Gospel Response," a statement from the USCC's administrative board, published Dec. 24, 1987. Call *Origins*, the documentary service of Catholic News Service in Washington, D.C., about availability and ordering information at 202/541-3990.

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