

DIOCESAN NEWS

RG&E gives \$300,000 to CFC, Lifespan project

Eldersource starts Nov. 1

By Lee Strong
Associate editor

The shareholders of Rochester Gas and Electric Corporation have donated \$300,000 to create Eldersource, a joint project of the Catholic Family Center's Elder Services department and Lifespan — formerly known as the Regional Council on the Aging.

Beginning Nov. 1, Eldersource will be available to help link senior adults and their families in Monroe County to services, provide information, offer an assessment of needs and provide support to help get those needs met. People will be able to reach Eldersource by calling 716/325-2800.

"What it does for both agencies is it gives us a central point to do intake, and provide information and consultation," explained Irene Coveny, director of Elder Services for the Catholic Family Center.

The two agencies are dealing with many of the same issues — and with the growing needs of seniors and their families. Thus it makes sense to begin cooperating, Coveny noted.

"We decided we could probably better meet the growing need if we worked together," Coveny said.

Through the joint service, Coveny

explained, case workers will be able to refer people to programs at both agencies, helping to cut down on duplication of services.

Indeed, Eldersource will help to eliminate a sense of competition between the two, according to Mary Rose McBride, Eldersource's administrator.

"The two agencies were really competitors," McBride said. "We would go out there and compete for grants."

About a year ago, however, representatives of the two agencies began discussing how to better coordinate their activities in light of growing demands, and decreasing government funding and grant monies, McBride noted.

As part of their preparation process, officials of the two agencies had gone to the RG&E to seek access to the utility's data base listing where frail elderly people lived. The corporation developed that data base in the wake of the March, 1991, ice storm.

But a few months after being approached by Eldersource's organizers, utility officials contacted them to say they were interested in supporting the program, and shareholders designated a \$300,000 donation spread over three years for the project. McBride said the money — plus approximately \$100,000 from other sources — will help the program to get off the ground.

"What we are trying to do with the project is to try to make it self-sufficient in four to five years," McBride said.

Part of the funding base for Eldersource will come from a sliding

scale clients and their families will pay. But both Coveny and McBride noted that no one will be turned away for lack of money.

McBride projected that in its first year of operation, Eldersource will handle approximately 5,000 information calls, and will provide case management services for some 600 people.

Coveny said that in choosing to work

together, the two agencies are following a pattern that is becoming the norm among health care providers both locally and nationally. She cited specifically a recently announced working relationship between Strong Memorial and Highland hospitals in Rochester.

"We just thought we had to make some changes to meet the future," Coveny concluded.



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer

Path to priesthood

Douglas Della Pietra continued his path to the diocesan priesthood at Bishop Matthew Clark's side during his diaconal ordination Oct. 14. Della Pietra of St. John of Rochester Parish, Perinton, and Frank Fusare from St. Mary's Parish, Elmira, were both ordained to the transitional diaconate at St. Mary's Church in Corning by Bishop Clark.

Fund drive seeks to squelch rosary program's financial struggles

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

His nightly rosary program has aired continuously for 45 years.

Yet, perhaps, only in recent weeks — after financial woes threatened the show's future — has Msgr. Joseph A. Cirrincione become fully aware of how deeply his Family Rosary for Peace is cherished.

An appeal begun last month has drawn such a great response, Msgr. Cirrincione said, that he and his assistants cannot open the donation envelopes quickly enough.

"Some of the letters say they've listened to (the show) since it began," Msgr. Cirrincione said. "The mail that has come in so far has been very gratifying. We've had so many letters."

The fund drive was launched because the show — which relies entirely on private donations — could no longer meet its \$9,000-per-month operating budget

to cover the cost of air time and telephone lines.

An audit performed by diocesan officials revealed that the show had been operating at a deficit for the past four years, leading officials to suggest a downsizing of the network of five radio franchises and two cable television channels currently carrying the program.

Subsequent letters from Msgr. Cirrincione and Bishop Matthew H. Clark were mailed to Catholics across the diocese. "The Family Rosary for Peace is a positive, beneficial and inspiring living tradition in our region, and you are part of its vitality," Bishop Clark stated in his appeal.

Because donations are still arriving, Msgr. Cirrincione said it's too early to determine whether the entire fleet of stations carrying the rosary can be retained. He acknowledged that a decision must be reached by Jan. 1 because that's when contracts are signed with the stations.

Participating radio stations include WWVG-1460 AM (Rochester); WXRL-1300 AM (Buffalo, Niagara Falls); WSFW-99 FM and WSFW-1110 AM (Seneca Falls, Auburn); WVOA-105 FM and WSIV-1540 AM (Syracuse); and WIQT-820 AM (Elmira). In addition, the radio broadcasts are transmitted on cable television channels 35 and 13 in Binghamton, and Channel 13 in Corning. The show is carried live nightly from 6:30 to 7 p.m.

Msgr. Cirrincione said the Syracuse and Buffalo stations are the first being considered for deletion because they are not located in the Rochester diocese. Earlier this year, the show ceased being aired over Cable Channel 6 in Hornell due to insufficient donations from that part of the diocese.

Msgr. Cirrincione, 85, has served continuously in Rochester's St. Francis of

Assisi parish since he was ordained a priest in 1934. He has continued to reside at St. Francis since he retired in 1977 after 40 years as pastor.

He began the rosary broadcast in 1950 on WSAY-AM radio, from a house located near the church. A heart attack in 1990 forced Msgr. Cirrincione to cease his on-air chores, and the 30-minute broadcast now originates from the Sisters of St. Joseph convent infirmary chapel in Pittsford.

However, the monsignor still handles all the show's paperwork — a duty which, based on the daily influx of donations, has kept him pleasantly busy as of late.

"It's a sign that people still want this on the air," he remarked.

EDITORS' NOTE: Donations are still being welcomed and may be sent to Family Rosary for Peace, P.O. Box 11007, Rochester, N.Y., 14611.

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