

# YOUNG ADULTS

## Forum offers 'Last Friday' series of talks on issues

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

Since February 1995, a group of diocesan Catholics whose ages range from 25 to 40 have been meeting regularly to discuss issues related to both their life in the church and outside of it.

Originally called Young Catholic Leaders, the group has changed its name to The Catholic Leadership Forum. It has drawn anywhere from 25 to 100 people to its events over the last year, according to Mary Consler, diocesan director of major gifts, and a member of the forum's planning committee.

"Our focus is to foster communication with these people," Consler said, "(and) not necessarily just on Catholic topics."

The forum has held discussion workshops at St. Mary's Parish in downtown Rochester and at Our Lady Queen of Peace in Brighton, she said. Topics have included spirituality, service, Catholic schools, and the diocesan Synod, according to information from Consler's office.

Consler added that the forum is designed to get Catholic adults interested in the church as early as possible because their faith communities — at both the parish level and the diocesan level — need their input. Young adults bring energy and enthusiasm to the church, she commented.

"They probably have a whole lot of objective opinions to offer," Consler said. "They're still open to learning and sharing."

Parishes need young adults to teach religious education, perform social ministry work and guide financial planning, Consler noted. The diocese also needs young adults to volunteer through such agencies as Catholic Charities, or to work on diocesan development, she added.

While young adults are needed to help the church complete its mission, the church can also offer young adults knowledge and teaching that they can use in their own lives, Consler continued. To that end, The Catholic Leadership Forum has instituted "The Last Friday Series," which will offer lunch-time speakers and discussions of contemporary issues, she said.

Bishop Matthew H. Clark will kick off the series on Friday, March 29, at the University Club, 26 Broadway, in Rochester, with a speech on nurturing spirituality in the work environment. An



**Bishop Matthew H. Clark will kick off "The Last Friday Series" March 29 at the University Club in Rochester. The luncheons will offer discussions of contemporary issues. Future speakers will include John Carr, director of Social Development and World Peace at the United States Catholic Conference in Washington, and Father Frederick Betti, SJ, chairman of the religious studies department at McQuaid Jesuit High School.**

informational flyer notes that the bishop will talk about "responding to the needs of the spirit while we attend to the needs of the work place."

The luncheon will run from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m., and is designed to not interfere with the average workday, Consler said. The cost is \$10 per person, and reservation information is available by calling Nancy Nash at 328-3210, ext. 278.

Subsequent luncheons are scheduled for April and May. On April 26, John Carr, director of Social Development and World Peace at the United States Catholic Conference in Washington, D.C., will speak on "why the church should be involved in the public policy arena."

On May 31, Father Frederick G. Betti, SJ, chairman of the religious studies department at Rochester's McQuaid Jesuit High School, will speak on "understanding moral issues for today's youth."

All three luncheons are slated for the University Club, and Consler said that one more will probably take place the last Friday in June.

The forum's planning committee has sent out letters about "The Last Friday Series" to 370 people, Consler said, adding that she hopes forum members will reach out even to young adult Catholics who no longer attend church.

"We want to make sure they're involved earlier so that we don't miss them later," she said of young adults.

Consler acknowledged that The Catholic Leadership Forum is rooted primarily in the Rochester area. But she expressed hope that this idea of offering young adults a connection with their church will spread throughout the diocese.

She added that the forum may consider some type of fund-raising activity.

To learn more about The Catholic Leadership Forum, call Consler at 716/328-3210.

Readers with ideas for topics in the Young Adults page should contact Rob Cullivan or Mike Latona at 716/328-4340, or write them at the Catholic Courier, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624-1899.

### Two parishes will hold game nights for singles

The Corning-Painted Post Catholic Community Adult Singles Group is sponsoring a "games night" at 5 p.m. Sunday, March 24, in St. Patrick's School Hall, 274 Denison Parkway, Corning.

The evening will include pizza, games and munchies. Donation is \$2, and participants are encouraged to bring a game and a friend. For details, call 607/936-4689.

An adult singles "games night" will also take place at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 2, at St. Charles Borromeo Church, 3003 Dewey Ave., Greece. The event is open to all single adults, regardless of age, parish affiliation or religious denomination. Refreshments will be provided, and free-will offerings will be accepted. For details, call 716/663-3230.

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