

# DIOCESAN NEWS

## Parishioners highlight plight of Chiapas poor

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

Tom Wright was walking in a neighborhood on the outskirts of the Mexican city of Tuxtla Gutierrez a few weeks ago. He encountered a dog during that walk — but it was so thin, he said, that he didn't even see it until he was almost upon it.

Along with three other parishioners from Corpus who traveled to Tuxtla Gutierrez, Wright noted that such emaciated dogs were a common sight in the impoverished neighborhoods that ring the city in the southern state of Chiapas.

"These people are so oppressed that they have no one below them except the dogs," said Barb Smullen, a student at St. Bernard's Institute who grew up in Guatemala and has lived in El Salvador.

Wright and Smullen stayed in Chiapas from Aug. 25 to Sept. 3. They were part of a delegation of Corpus parishioners that included Pamela Edd, who does volunteer pastoral work with Rochester-area Hispanic migrant workers, and Dorothy Albertini, a senior at Our Lady of Mercy High School. The parishioners stayed with Mexican Catholic families in the area.

It was the fourth such Corpus delegation to travel to Chiapas since guerrillas in the state began warring against the Mexican government in January 1994. The delegations have been organized by Father Enrique Cadena, associate pastor of Corpus and a Mexican native. Father Cadena was still in Mexico at the time the four Corpus parishioners spoke with the *Catholic Courier* in the Corpus rectory.

Illiteracy, poverty and a lack of elec-

tricity and health care are among the many problems that combine to make life difficult for Chiapas residents, the Corpus parishioners said. Yet, the families they stayed with have worked hard to better their lives and evidenced a great faith in Jesus, the parishioners said.

"They weren't expecting any hand-outs," Albertini commented.

Edd added that the residents went out of their way to make the delegation welcome.

"They really genuinely received us," she said.

If there was one thing the poor wanted the Corpus parishioners to do, it was to tell the world of their plight, the parishioners said. Since the 1994 uprising, the government has failed to fulfill promises to better the residents' lives, Wright said.

"The current government was just not putting forth, in any way, an effort to bring services to the people," Wright said residents told him.

The Corpus parishioners added that they visited a human rights office run by the Diocese of San Cristobal de Las Casas. There, they heard the director tell them she handles at least four cases of rights violations a day by the government. Complaints have included failure by the government to settle land claims on behalf of the poor, install sanitation projects and build schools, the parishioners said.

The parishioners were in Mexico when members of the leftist Popular Revolutionary Army were launching a series of attacks against the government in several southern Mexican states, including Chiapas. Despite the widespread violence, the Corpus parishioners said they did not witness any during their stay in Chiapas.

In a written statement issued to Catholic News Service this month, nine Mexican bishops said that the delay in implementing solutions to social problems had encouraged the rise of armed groups. Among those signing the statement were Bishop Samuel Ruiz Garcia of San Cristobal de Las Casas and Bishop Felipe Aguirre Franco of Tuxtla Gutierrez.

"We recognize that the unjustified delay in providing real and deep solutions to social problems and problems of democracy is providing the surge in armed groups, which are fighting for partial interests and spaces of power, but in no way do we approve of either the violence or the guerrilla actions," the statement said.



Matthew Scott/Staff photographer

## Chaplains honored

Fathers Raymond G. Heisel and Elmer W. Heindl were the guests of honor at the Catholic Charities Community and Residential Services' second annual gala, held Sept. 8 at the Hyatt Regency Riverside, Rochester. The fundraising event had a theme of "America in the Forties." The priests were honored for their time served as U.S. Army chaplains during the Second World War. (Right) Father Heindl helps Father Heisel (left) with his chaplain's pin.

## Father Emo pleads not guilty to series of sex abuse charges

Father Eugene G. Emo pleaded not guilty to eight charges of sodomy and sexual abuse Sept. 23 in Steuben County Court.

The former pastor of St. Januarius Church, Naples, had been indicted by a Steuben County grand jury Sept. 18 on two counts of sodomy in the first degree, two counts of sexual abuse in the first degree and two counts of sodomy in the third degree — all felony charges. He was also indicted on two misdemeanor charges of sexual abuse in the second degree.

No trial date has yet been set.

Father Emo, who currently resides in Rochester, was placed on administrative leave by Bishop Matthew H. Clark on Jan. 31, 1996, after allegations surfaced that he had sexually abused a developmentally disabled man. Father Emo was arrested Feb. 16 in connection with those allegations. He pleaded not guilty in Steuben County Court to a charge of second-degree sexual abuse and was re-

leased after posting \$1,000 bail.

Father Emo had resigned as pastor of St. Januarius Church/Our Lady of the Grape Shrine Sept. 22, 1993, amid allegations that individuals other than Father Emo had mishandled parish money. There were also allegations that he had behaved inappropriately, but the diocese found no evidence of sexual misconduct.

After being placed on administrative leave until June 1994, Father Emo resided at an out-of-state treatment facility. After his return to the diocese, he served as a chaplain at Mercy Health and Rehabilitation Center in Auburn and then at the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Canandaigua.

Elizabeth Brown, director of the the diocesan Office of Communications, said Father Emo will remain on administrative leave pending the outcome of court proceedings. Administrative leave means that he may not function as a priest.

### Parish priest on leave from ministerial duty

Father Melvin Walczak, parish administrator of St. Ambrose Church, Rochester, announced during Mass Sept. 21/22 that he had requested and was granted a temporary leave of absence from ministry.

"Effective this week he is no longer at St. Ambrose," stated Father Robert Ring, director of the diocesan Department of Priest Personnel, Sept. 23. "Father Walczak will be beginning a new job with the county within the next few weeks."

Father Walczak had been administrator of the parish since June 27, 1995.

Father Ring said the opening at St. Ambrose will be posted this week, as well as a notice of the opening at Our Lady of Mercy Church. The pastor there, Father William Lum, took a leave of absence from ministry effective July 17, 1996.

Pamela Kingsley, communications assistant in the diocesan Office of Communications, said that diocesan officials are currently working to provide sacramental coverage at St. Ambrose.

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On  
October 24th,  
we will deliver  
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message to  
more than  
130,000 Catholic  
homes in the  
Greater Rochester,  
Finger Lakes and  
Southern Tier  
regions of  
New York...

Wouldn't it be  
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When you have something important to say, you typically choose the best means of delivery. On October 24, 1996, Bishop Matthew H. Clark will deliver his second major pastoral letter to Catholics during his 17 years as Bishop of Rochester. The method of delivery he chose to deliver this important message is the *Catholic Courier*, weekly newspaper of the Catholic Diocese of Rochester.

You can deliver your advertising message along with Bishop Clark's Pastoral Letter on Oct. 24. In addition to mailing the newspaper to the homes of 50,000 paid subscribers, the *Courier* will also be sent to an additional 80,000 Catholics homes throughout the Greater Rochester, Finger Lakes and the Southern Tier regions of New York.

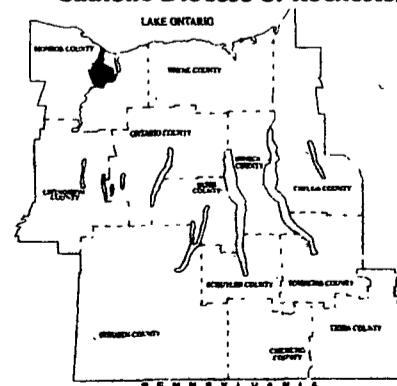
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### Catholic Diocese of Rochester



### Catholic households by county:

Cayuga	7,648	Chemung	9,366
Livingston	4,934	Monroe	80,315
Ontario	8,646	Schuyler	1,021
Seneca	2,590	Steuben	7,513
Tioga	2,674	Tompkins	3,821
Wayne	6,709	Yates	949