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**Watch for the
VOCATIONS SUPPLEMENT
in the
October 17th issue**

Projects earn grant dollars

By Lee Strong
Associate editor

Southern Tier "forgiveness forums" will feature the families of murder victims.

"Evenings of Hope" in Yates County will offer alternatives to violence.

Webster youth groups will take part in a week-long consistent life ethic retreat.

Sister Helen Prejean, SSJ, will visit Rochester. Her work with death row inmates became the basis for the Academy Award winning film, "Dead Man Walking."

A Rochester project will teach youth job and fundraising skills.

A fund will help pay for prescriptions and lab fees for people on limited incomes.

These are among 26 initiatives that will begin, or continue, thanks in part to nearly \$30,000 in grants being awarded this month by the Diocese of Rochester through its Consistent Life Ethic Fund.

The amount being distributed far exceeds the \$17,400 awarded in 1995 through the Respect Life Fund, which the Consistent Life Ethic Fund supplanted.

According to Suzanne Schnittman, the diocese's consistent life ethic coordinator, the money was raised primarily through a dinner held April 26. She said an additional \$1,000 was donated to the fund by St. Mary's of the Lake Parish in Ontario, which held a fundraising dinner over the summer.

A 15-member committee evaluated proposals for funding, Schnittman said.

"They certainly weighed the validity of the consistent life ethic nature of the proposal," Schnittman said of the committee members.

Among the members' other considerations were the number of people to be affected by the proposal, the geographic distribution of awards and other sources of income for the organization or group.

Schnittman noted that the Respect Life Fund had been limited to abortion related activities. The Consistent Life Ethic Fund, however, covers all part of the consistent life ethic: abortion, the death penalty, war, euthanasia and poverty. The broader criteria of the new fund allowed moneys to go to such organizations as the Amnesty International chapter at Notre Dame High School, Elmira; several houses already providing or planning to provide

hospice-type care; the Immigration Project of Legal Aid of Rochester.

Organizers of the Consistent Life Awareness Fund, an offshoot of Common Ground, are hoping to use the grant money to help promote a speaker series ad-

ter," the series will begin with the talk by Sister Prejean, scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Jan. 15, 1997, at the Theater on the Ridge, Rochester.

One of the goals of the series is "to heighten the community's awareness of the real need to protect life-form conception through natural death," noted Jann Armantrout, executive director the Consistent Life Awareness Fund.

Among the other speakers the group is hoping to bring to Rochester are former Polish president Lech Walesa and Kathie Lee Gifford, who has become an outspoken critic of the exploitation of child workers in other lands.

The diocesan fund has enabled the group to focus on bringing in speakers.

"We certainly would have spent more of our time in fundraising, so we're very thankful the diocese is funding us so we can get started on our program," Armantrout said.

Peter Ladley of the Twin Tiers Community Against the Death Penalty likewise noted the positive effect the diocesan moneys will have on his group's "forgiveness forums."

"It makes it possible for us to do it on a wider scale," Ladley said.

The first forum, scheduled for 7 p.m. Nov. 14 at the Community Mennonite Fellowship, 290 Park Ave., Corning, will feature a panel of murder victims' families.

Ladley said organizers hope to use the arts — such as music, storytelling, the visual arts — to help promote healing and forgiveness.

"It's not enough to denounce a public policy of death," Ladley said. More important, he said, is promoting life-giving alternatives.

Schnittman is optimistic that the expanded format of the Consistent Life Ethic Fund grants will continue to thrive and support programs such as Ladley's and Armantrout's. She also hoped that other parishes will follow St. Mary's example to raise additional money for the grant fund — and thus allow more money for funding programs.

Meanwhile, a second dinner to raise money for the Consistent Life Ethic Fund has been scheduled for May 10. Details are still being worked out.

The dinner provides not only funds, but draws attention to the consistent life ethic, Schnittman observed.

"I think it was a good way to raise awareness of the consistent life ethic," Schnittman concluded.

The 1996 Consistent Life Fund grant winners

Birthright of Livingston County;
Teresa House, Inc., Livingston County;
Livingston County;
Newman Center, SUNY at Geneseo;
Birthright of Owego;
Interfaith Volunteers, Hornell;
Amnesty International chapter, Notre Dame High School, Elmira;
Twin Tiers Coalition against the Death Penalty;
Birthright of Auburn;
Faith Haven, Naples
Finger Lakes Social Ministry Teen and Parent Program;
House of John, Clifton Springs;
Birthright of Victor;
Cayuga Team Social Ministry Committee;
St. Michael's Alternatives to Violence Jail Project, Penn Yan;
St. Michael's Anti-Violence (Evenings of Hope), Penn Yan;
Birthright of Monroe County;
Catherine McAuley Housing, Rochester
Immigration Project, Legal Aid of Rochester;
Melita House, Rochester;
St. Joseph Neighborhood Center, Rochester;
Benincasa, Mendon;
Journey Home, Greece;
St. Bridget Parish, Rochester;
City Colors, Corpus Christi Parish, Rochester;
St. Joseph/St. Paul youth groups, Webster;
Consistent Life Ethic Awareness Fund, Rochester;
Feminists for Life, Rochester;
Project Rachel, Rochester;

dresssing consistent life issues.
Called "Alive: Celebrating 150 years of social justice in Roches-

CHD announces anti-poverty awards

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Campaign for Human Development, the U.S. bishops' domestic anti-poverty program, is distributing \$7.3 million in national grants to low-income groups.

The money will be used to create jobs, fight crime, reform schools, improve workplace conditions and help people find affordable homes.

The funds are being distributed to 235 projects in 44 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The average grant

is \$32,000.

The grants were announced Sept. 23. Among the winners are:

- \$50,000 to Childspace Management Group of Philadelphia to support the replication of its worker-owned Childspace day-care program, which provides jobs to low-income women and quality care to children.
- \$50,000 to Chinese Staff and Workers' Association of Brooklyn, N.Y., to fund the Brooklyn Workers' Center in its efforts to represent the interests of Chinese

workers.

- \$60,000 to Westside Eastside Congregations Acting Now in Cleveland to continue community anti-crime initiatives that have already closed 20 drug houses.
- \$50,000 to the Solidarity Sponsoring Committee of Baltimore to for efforts to raise the wages of the city's working poor.

The annual CHD collection takes place in most parishes the weekend before Thanksgiving. This year's collection is scheduled for Nov. 23-24.