

FEATURE

Seniors

MONTHLY FEATURE



St. Anne installs system to aid hearing impaired

St. Anne Church in Rochester has installed an audio amplification system to assist the hearing impaired. Any listener with a hearing aid equipped with a telecoil (t-switch) can pick up the harmless magnetic waves emitted by a wire loop around the room.

The audio induction loop amplification system installed is similar to systems in many church buildings, and was recommended by the Parish Pastoral Council. The council recommended it to highlight the diocesan Synod's goal of promoting the consistent life ethic, which includes making the church more accessible to people with disabilities.

"As a person who suffers with a hearing loss, I can now participate fully in the meetings of the Parish Pastoral Council," stated Patricia Irr, a member of the council. "Many hearing-impaired people avoid parish meetings and activities, other than Mass, because they are not able to adequately hear and therefore feel part of what is going on."

Irr also works for the Rochester chapter of Self-Help for Hard of Hearing People. The group educates churches about devices that churches can use to become accessible to those with hearing disabilities.

For information, call 716/271-1587.

Tier agency gets \$2.6 million grant

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Catholic Charities of the Southern Tier has been approved for a \$2.6 million federal grant for construction of a senior citizen housing complex on Elmira's east side.

The 40-unit apartment structure will be constructed on a three-acre site on East Church Street, across from St. Joseph's Hospital. The hospital owns the land, which is being used as a hospital employees' parking lot. But the hospital will sell the site to Catholic Charities, according to Denis Sweeney, community relations director for St. Joseph's.

"There was a definite need for this kind of housing," Sweeney said.

He said the development will help ease a large demand for senior housing in Chemung County. He explained that many such facilities in the county currently have long waiting lists.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development approved the funds Nov. 21. The money was secured through the Providence Housing Development Corporation, a member agency of the Diocese of Rochester's Catholic Charities office.

Construction and operation of the apartment complex will be a joint venture of Catholic Charities groups in the dioceses of Rochester and Syracuse.

According to Providence Housing's executive director, Maggie Bringewatt, the grant is the largest of its kind in the Southern Tier since Providence was formed in 1994.

"It's the most significant project in terms of size and scope," Bringewatt remarked.

Bringewatt predicted that senior citizens will be able to move into the new complex by the end of 1997. She added that HUD's grant will cover construction

DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER

Catholic Charities



and development costs, and that HUD will also provide annual subsidies so senior citizens may receive significantly reduced rental rates.

The location of the apartments, Sweeney pointed out, will allow residents quick access to both St. Joseph's Hospital and downtown Elmira.

"It will provide close proximity to health-care needs, and it's also close to downtown services and transportation," Sweeney said.

Bringewatt stressed that cooperation among Catholic Charities, St. Joseph's Hospital and Elmira city officials helped contribute toward HUD's approval of the venture.

"It represents a real collaborative ef-

fort," Bringewatt said.

Anthony Barbaro, Catholic Charities of the Southern Tier's executive director, remarked that the federal grant represents an ongoing effort by his agency to improve housing conditions in the Southern Tier. Another such effort, Barbaro said, is a Catholic Charities-sponsored home buyers' program. This service allows first-time homeowners to purchase houses at reduced rates.

Providence Housing is involved with this homeowners' project as well. Bringewatt noted that her corporation applied Nov. 1 for a \$250,000 state grant to help fund construction of 10 single-family homes on Elmira's east side. She said she expects to have a reply within a month.

Employment service offers weekly orientation class

Lifespan Employment Services is offering weekly employment orientation sessions.

These classes are held each Thursday at 12:45 p.m. at the Lifespan office, 79 Clinton Ave. N., seventh floor, Rochester. Sessions are offered for anybody over 45 years old who has

lost a job, is looking for work or looking to update job skills; or anybody over 19 who may be eligible as a displaced homemaker. Participants are asked to bring an updated resume if available.

For details, call 716/454-3224, ext. 138.

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