

# DIOCESAN NEWS

## Lenten guide gathers best of groups' ideas

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

In the past, Diane Knittle, parish life coordinator at St. Philip Neri Church in Rochester, would get reams of documents from various offices at the diocesan pastoral center in Gates.

Such documents would suggest how her parish could improve its liturgies, or contain possible bulletin inserts to highlight issues the church considered important, she noted. But at times, she said, several such documents would arrive simultaneously.

"I'd pick and choose," Knittle recalled. "If I felt overwhelmed, I pitched stuff. So it wasn't the best use of (Pastoral Office employees') time preparing it that it would end up in the garbage."

About a year ago, a group of pastoral center staff members began consolidating their efforts to provide liturgy guides and other materials used by parishes, according to Joan Workmaster, director of the Diocesan Office of Liturgy. The result of its efforts was made available Feb. 11 to parish leaders through a packet of documents titled "Radical Spirit."

The packet's title was taken from Bishop Matthew H. Clark's 1996 vision statement in the diocese's "Pastoral Planning for the New Millennium" resource book.

"We long to be a community that is ready to wrestle with the difficult issues of the day with a radical spirit of faith," he wrote.

The documents in "Radical Spirit" were prepared with input from the diocese's offices of liturgy, Synod, and evangelization and catechesis as well as diocesan Catholic Charities, Workmaster said.

The Pastoral Office staff members who created "Radical Spirit," which Workmaster edited, knew that parish leaders were often swamped with documents from different ministries, Workmaster said.

"All these different groups would send

things out, and it was totally unconnected," she said. "We learned from parish staffs that they couldn't use it. It was too much."

The first in what the diocese hopes will be a series of such packets, "Radical Spirit" contains several three- and four-page documents that include suggestions for homily topics; suggestions for liturgical music; topics for small-group discussions; bulletin inserts; and information for parishes' Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults programs.

"This effort is an attempt to integrate aspects of the several Synod goals into one user-friendly resource ...," the packet's cover letter reads.

The 1993 Synod called for the diocese to promote the following goals:

1. Form Catholics in beliefs, Catholic morality and spirituality through life.
2. Advocate for the consistent life ethic, which opposes abortion, war, euthanasia, poverty and the death penalty.
3. Recognize and value the dignity of women in church and society.
4. Promote the growth of small Christian communities.

The "Radical Spirit" packet is made up of separate documents intended as guides for Ash Wednesday and all the Sunday liturgies during Lent concluding with Passion Sunday, Workmaster said. She added that additional packets on Holy Week and Easter will be provided to parishes soon.

Each "Radical Spirit" document typically follows the pattern exemplified by the document for the second Sunday of Lent. That document relates that week's scriptural readings about Abram's covenant with God and about the Transfiguration of Jesus to Synod Goal 2 — the consistent life ethic. "Radical Spirit" notes that both scriptural stories call one to listen to God.

"This listening can refer to the manner in which we hear news about social ills in our community," the document reads. "Do we shut our ears to the needs of society?"



Greg Francis/Staff photographer

## A small sign of faith

Allison Runyon, 3, left, and her sister Abby, 7, receive ashes from Father Edward Golden at Church of the Assumption, Fairport, Feb. 25. With her granddaughters is Grace Runyon, who was visiting the family of parishioners Charles and Kathy Runyon.

Suggested bulletin inserts include a note that March 8 is International Women's Day, which commemorates the 1908 women's march for suffrage and against child labor; and a reflective piece on Operation Rice Bowl, the U.S. bishops' annual Lenten collection for the world's poor.

The document also contains topics for parishes' small Christian communities and an illustration about Abram. Such graphics may be reproduced by parishes for their own use, Workmaster said.

Workmaster stressed that "Radical Spirit" is merely a guide for parishes, not a series of mandates. She added that parishes have been asked to evaluate the packets after Easter, so that their suggestions can be

used in improving another series of such documents planned for Advent and Christmas. The diocese is also considering hiring a part-time editor for the series, she said.

Knittle is already happy with the first installment of "Radical Spirit."

"I think they're really wonderful," she said of the documents in the packet. "I've read them through, and I like the way they cover every aspect of liturgy."

Her feelings were shared by Lori Osgood, music and liturgy coordinator at Holy Ghost Parish in Gates.

"I thought it was a well-organized packet of materials," she said. "These ideas are general enough to leave you leeway, but they kind of give you the current thinking."

## Seeberg to step down as diocesan director of development

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

Professionally, Mark Seeberg said, he is most invigorated by the challenge of building successful programs.

"I don't derive as much satisfaction from maintaining something, as starting something up and putting the pieces together," Seeberg remarked.

It was largely for this reason that Seeberg, 48, has decided to relinquish his position as the Diocese of Rochester's director of development.

After a 10-year stint — during which charitable giving commitments to Catholic agencies in the diocese increased more than threefold — Seeberg reduced his workload to part-time status in January. He will leave the position June 30 to operate his new private consulting business full-time.

Under Seeberg's direction, the diocesan Office of Development has consolidated charitable giving into one department. Previously, Seeberg noted, such departments as diocesan Catholic schools and the Thanks Giving Appeal conducted separate development campaigns.

Seeberg said he addressed four major areas during this process: data management; communications; annual giving; and major capital giving.

Since 1988, Seeberg noted, charitable giving to the diocese has totaled nearly \$100 million in commitments — an average of almost \$10 million per year. This is a drastic increase over the \$22 million in commitments — an average of slightly more than \$3 million per year — in the seven years before he was hired to revamp the diocesan development office.

The key gift during Seeberg's tenure came in 1995, when the Wegmans Inner City (WIN) Voucher Program was created. This \$25 million pledge was made by

Robert Wegman, chairman of Wegmans Food Markets Inc., and his wife, Peggy. Their massive contribution is supporting six inner-city Catholic schools in Rochester over a 10-year period.

"That, to me, was particularly satisfying. That might be the largest gift in the country to Catholic schools," Seeberg said.

Seeberg explained that his office has helped facilitate ongoing dialogue between the Wegmans and diocesan officials. He described this communication process as "an example of the kind of nurturing development" that a diocesan task force had envisioned at the time of his hiring.

Seeberg added that his office has also overseen campaigns to provide funds to-

ward retirement for women religious; support and development of lay ministry; and enhancement of current programs in faith development, parish services and social ministries through the Thanks Giving Appeal.

The diocese is currently conducting a search for Seeberg's replacement. According to Seeberg, the new director of development would begin duties in May.

Seeberg resides in Pittsford and is a parishioner at Church of the Transfiguration. He said that his background with the diocesan development office should prove useful in his fledgling consulting business, which will target development campaigns for non-profit organizations.

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