

CONTINUED...

Ecumenical

Continued from page 1

more similar you get," Deacon McNulty said.

Such cooperative effort can be found in northern Steuben County, where five churches —

one Catholic (St. Joseph's, Wayland), two Methodist, one United Church of Christ and one Church of the Nazarene — have joined forces for Thursday-night prayer services during Lent. The services have included hymns, shared prayers and guest speakers from participating churches.

And in Perkinsville, Rev. Brandenstein added, the United Church of Christ and Sacred Heart Catholic Church have shared a soup supper on Tuesdays during Lent.

In Chemung County, member churches of the Horseheads-Big Flats Ecumenical Council have staged a dinner and lecture series on Wednesdays during Lent. The series, titled "The Disciplines of Lent," featured speakers on such subjects as fasting, prayer and suffering.

Father Scott Kubinski observed that the topics were presented so that participants could relate to the material regardless of their denomination.

"Something like fasting is a more specifically Catholic practice, but there are clearly more likenesses (between the denominations) than differences," said Father Kubinski, parochial vicar at Church of St. Mary's Mother in Horseheads. Father Kubinski spoke on the topic of suffering during an April 1 dinner/lecture at Big Flats Presbyterian Church.

On Easter Sunday, an ecumenical sunrise service will take place at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery in Greece. The Rev. Charles Roberts, pastor of John Knox Presbyterian Church in Greece, originated the service two years ago. He noted that when he first raised the idea, none of the area's Protestant churches flinched when they heard the service would be held at a Catholic cemetery.

"A number of churches thought it would be a great idea on that given day, to celebrate our unity," said Rev. Roberts, who serves as vice-president of the Greece Ministerial Association. He added that the service attracted 50 to 75 people in its first year, and doubled in size last Easter.

And in Geneva, Catholic-Jewish relations were acknowledged through a Seder held April 2 at the St. Francis de Sales/St.



Greg Francis/Staff photographer

Father Paul Schnacky and Rev. Robert Brandenstein, right, greet parishioners after the ecumenical Lenten service at St. Paul's United Church of Christ April 2.

Stephen's School hall. According to organizer Dan Hennessey, a teacher at St. Francis de Sales/St. Stephen, the Seder, the traditional Jewish meal and prayer observed at the start of the Passover, included foods to signify the deliverance of the Hebrews from Egypt.

Rev. Brandenstein said that such interfaith acknowledgements are living examples of what has been discussed for many years among world religious leaders.

"If local congregations don't catch a sense of it, it's not going to happen," Rev. Brandenstein said.

Taking it to the streets

Outdoor ecumenical services are also quite popular during Lent. For instance, Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Brighton combined with St. Thomas Episcopal Church for a Palm Sunday service April 5. Following 10 a.m. Mass at Lourdes, worshippers from both churches processed to St. Thomas, displaying a cloth that had covered a cross at Lourdes. The cloth was then put on an outdoor cross at St. Thomas.

In addition, the same two churches will conduct a cross walk from St. Thomas to Lourdes on Good Friday. The event will conclude with a joint Stations of the Cross inside Lourdes.

"We have parishioners from both churches living in the same area. This certainly brings down some barriers, where they feel comfortable in each other's churches if they were to go to a wedding or funeral," said Father John O'Connor, pastor at Our Lady of Lourdes. He added that the two churches also collaborated on an Ash Wednesday service at St. Thomas.

Ecumenical cross walks are a tradition in other parts of the diocese as well. In

Wayland, area churches have staged a Good Friday cross walk for close to 25 years. The 2½-mile pilgrimage proceeds through the village and up Calvary Hill, where a steel cross remains year-round.

Father Paul Schnacky, pastor of St. Joseph's Church in Wayland, said the cross walk fuels not only ecumenism, but evangelization.

"It brings out a lot of young people — especially people who don't generally come to the other services," Father Schnacky said.

A similar Good Friday cross walk takes place annually in Palmyra. According to Deni Mack, pastoral associate in the Catholic Communities of St. Anne/St. Gregory in Palmyra and Marion, a number of churches in Wayne and Ontario counties participate each year.

Mack recalled an incident two years ago that punctuated the meaning of the cross walk. As participants passed by a tavern, she said, they endured heckling from some patrons standing in the doorway.

"We said, 'Wait a minute. This is just like what Jesus experienced.' And we smiled at each other and nodded. We understood," Mack remarked.

Observing limits

Even though many ecumenical gatherings take place during Holy Week, Deacon McNulty observed that most do not involve joint participation in a regularly scheduled church service. One reason, he said, is that several Protestant denominations observe full liturgies on Good Friday, whereas Catholics do not celebrate Masses on that day. He added that some denominations do not observe Holy Thursday at all.

Distinctions between denominations are also noted prior to the Easter sunrise service held at Rochester's Holy Sepulchre Cemetery. Although Catholics are welcomed at the service, Holy Sepulchre Executive Director James R. Weisbeck said the event is not widely promoted in Catholic parish bulletins.

"It could cause confusion. We don't want people to think it satisfies the requirement

for Easter Sunday," Weisbeck explained.

"The only unity is that we're all there witnessing the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. How we practice that and live it out in our own faiths is different," Rev. Roberts added.

By and large, the main reason that Catholics and other denominations remain separate is because of differing views on the Eucharist, said Joan Workmaster, diocesan director of liturgy.

Workmaster explained that Catholic teaching upholds the concept of transubstantiation — the whole substances of bread and wine being changed into the body and blood of Christ. But many Protestants, she said, are taught that bread and wine are only symbols or reminders of Jesus.

"Our regulations prohibit anyone from coming to Eucharist who does not fully believe this is the body and blood of Jesus Christ," Workmaster said.

But, Workmaster said, this distinction should not discourage Catholics and other denominations from conducting ecumenical events.

"There are so many ways we can gather to pray, and all of that is possible without having to cross the line," she said.

Such is the case with the many ecumenical events in the Wayland-Perkinsville area, none of which include a eucharistic celebration.

"We have enough divergences about the Eucharist, so we know better than to do that," Rev. Brandenstein said.

However, Workmaster noted, there have been some occasions in recent years — within the Rochester Diocese — when churches have held joint celebrations involving the Eucharist. Even if church leaders only give Eucharist to their respective parishioners, Workmaster emphasized, the diocese has discouraged these services because it creates the illusion that Catholics and other denominations have identical beliefs about the Eucharist.

"In a sense this is saying we're all the same — and we're not," Workmaster said. "Once you cross the line into eucharistic liturgy, then you're headed for trouble."

Although Deacon McNulty said he follows Catholic Church policy discouraging ecumenical eucharistic celebrations, he views the separation as sadly ironic.

"The one thing that Jesus gave us to unify us, is the thing that divides us. And that's disheartening," the deacon commented.

COURIER CLASSIFIEDS

GENERAL

Announcements

ADOPTIONS The Catholic Courier does not publish adoption advertising. To obtain a list of agencies that serve birth mothers and adoptive parents, call 716-328-4340. Agencies wishing to be included on this list, may send information to the Catholic Courier.

EMPLOYMENT

Help Wanted

ADMINISTRATOR: The Diocese is seeking an administrator to direct the administrative and formation responsibilities of the Tribunal Office in order to ensure efficient and timely completion of cases submitted to the Tribunal for judgment. Manage personnel and work flow distribution; provide direction for training initiatives. Send resume and cover letter by April 30th to: Barbara Pedeville, c/o Diocese of Rochester, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, NY, 14624, EOE

EMPLOYMENT

Help Wanted

CASE INSTRUCTOR: The Diocese is seeking a Case Instructor to provide assistance in the acceptance, preparation and instruction of annulment cases being processed by the Diocesan Tribunal. Send resume and cover letter by April 30th to: Barbara Pedeville, c/o Diocese of Rochester, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, NY 14624. EOE.

MUSIC DIRECTOR ORGANIST Suburban parish of 2200 families in quaint historic village near Buffalo requires keyboard/vocal skills, knowledge of Catholic liturgy & contemporary/traditional music. Direct adult choir, assist folk group, occasional children's liturgy. Send resume to: Search Committee Immaculate Conception Church, 520 Oakwood Ave. East Aurora, NY 14052 FAX: 716-652-7168

EMPLOYMENT

Help Wanted

EARN MONEY READING books! \$30,000/yr. income potential. Details 800-513-4343, ext. Y-1467.

PRODUCTION WORKER WANTED: Some lifting involved. 9am to 5pm. Friendly atmosphere. High school graduate. **PIE INDUSTRIES, 453 Portland Ave.**

MERCHANDISE

Wanted to Buy

Furniture, Trunks, Clocks, Sterling and China, Linens. Wanted: complete estates and households. Sell to me for cash or I will conduct a sale for you. **Marilyn's Antiques 716-647-2480**

PROPERTY

Resort Property

FINGER LAKES Rent trailer w/screened room on private site in retirement campground east of Coda Lake. Monthly/seasonal. 716-482-5764.

SERVICES

Appliance Repair

We Make House Calls 
SEW & VAC REPAIR CTR.
724 Winton Rd. N.
716-482-6111

Ceiling Repair

TEXTURED/SWIRED CEILINGS 9' x 12' ceiling only \$59. Water Damage, drywall, plaster repairs. Quality work; reasonable prices. 716-392-5076.

Heating & Air Conditioning

Hicks Home Heating
Call us for Summer Comfort!
Heat & Air Conditioning Specialists
• Sales • Service • Installation
Family Owned & Operated
424-4848

Home Health Care

Home Care Aid to assist elderly lady in daily routine. Private room in nice home. Must have references. 716-654-8408.

SERVICES

Home Improvement

MASONRY REPAIR: brick steps, sidewalks, basements, patchwork. Reasonable. 35 yrs. exp. etc. 716-323-1007. Al Meyvis, Sr.

Moving & Hauling

K-D Moving & Storage, Inc.
Experience in office, household moving and deliveries.
Big or Small, We do them All!
473-6610/473-4357
23 Arlington St. Rochester NY 14607
NYDOT#9657

Painting & Wallcovering

BASEMENT WALLS repaired, painted. Wet basement problems. Small jobs welcome. 20 yrs. exp. Al Meyvis Jr. 716-392-4435 or 323-2876.

BURG-MASTER PAINTING/PAPERHANGING, texture ceilings, walls, ceilings repaired, rugs shampooed. Insured, powerwashing. Dan Burgmaster, 716-663-0827.

SERVICES

Roofing Siding & Gutters

BOWMAN ROOFING & SIDING CO.
Established 1912

George R. Bowman, Sr.
• Roof Repairs • Siding •
• Replacement Windows •
• Seamless Aluminum Gutters •
• Gutter Cleaning • Ice Problems •

671-3270
671-2912



Call 716-328-4340 to advertise in the Courier Classifieds!