



Greg Francis/Staff photographer



Protest greets speaker

Elaine Mullaly, right photo, a parishioner of St. Christopher Church, North Chill, protests Carol Love speaking at the Dugan Center, St. Mary's Church, Rochester April 29. Love, executive director of Planned Parenthood of Rochester and the Genesee Valley, left photo, listens to another speaker during the program about gender issues. Approximately 20 people joined the protest, which was organized by the New York Lambs of Christ. In response to Love's appearance at St. Mary's, Bishop Matthew H. Clark, in an April 29 statement, said, "I stand strong in my pro-life position. But my office does not require that parishes check programs with us before they are scheduled."

Center considers abortion policy

By Kathleen Schwar
Staff writer

Peggy Ruscio was looking forward to attending the Consistent Life Ethic award nominees' reception April 28, especially because she had nominated the director of Faith Haven, a home for single mothers. But something else came up.

"I felt I had to witness for life," she said.

Ruscio, CLE synod coordinator and social ministry chair for St. Januarius Church in Naples, went to a special meeting of the Rushville Health Center board of directors that night. She and others urged the board to adopt a pro-life policy against abortion.

Nearly 100 area residents turned out for the meeting after hearing an experimental chemical abortion had been performed at the center, according to parishioners.

"I prayed to the Holy Spirit and Mary all day," Ruscio said, explaining her fear of public speaking. She also had friends praying for her, she said.

Her daughter and other diocesan Catholics, including several from St. Mary's, Rushville, and St. Theresa, Stanley, joined residents at the meeting, held at the health center. The board received petitions with more than 900 signatures — reportedly begun by the Middlesex Baptist Church and also signed at a few Catholic Masses in the area — calling for a pro-life policy.

Among those attending were Anne Meyer-Wilber, social ministry director from St. Michael's Church, Penn Yan, and fellow parishioner Dorothy Barry. Barry had formulated a letter the committee sent to the center's board members prior to the meeting.

"The Rushville Health Center has always from its beginning, been a powerful agent for healing the poorest people of our counties," it stated.

The center was begun 27 years ago with funding from the diocesan Office of Human Development, largely to serve migrant workers and rural poor people. The

center has not received diocesan funds in years, according to the center and the diocese.

The social ministry committee objected to the center's use of the injection that ended a pregnancy saying, "We feel this procedure violates the intentions of our past citizens who have given a good part of their lives to the Rushville Health Center."

The procedure came to light after it apparently led a nurse to resign recently from the center. Upon resigning, the nurse had asked to speak to the board, and the board scheduled a special meeting before its regular session April 28.

"We felt we needed to honor that," Steven Levine, the center's executive director explained of the hearing. He said the nurse had taken her approval to speak a step further, announcing publicly there would be such a meeting, and inviting others.

Nearly 30 people spoke at the meeting, including five in favor of making abortion procedures available. One man expressed his frustration that "the same people" who protested the abortions had sent him overseas in the military service to kill, Meyer-Wilber recalled.

Rushville Health Center serves Yates and Ontario counties, as well as residents of Wayne and Monroe counties, according to Levine. A medical director and six residents from the University of Rochester staff it. The center had performed the procedure using the drug methotrexate once, he said, adding the technology is new.

"We attempt to accommodate the patient based on what technology skills we have and what we are licensed to do, and based upon what's legal," Levine said. Clinical treatment in the medical, dental, outreach and migrant departments are based on decisions made between a provider and a patient, he said.

Only minor surgeries are performed, he said, and "abortion is not a minor surgical procedure." However, he said the clinic does provide emergency contra-

ception medication.

The board was expected to reach a decision on future policy within a couple weeks after its meeting, he said.

"We don't feel obligated to act any differently than we have all along, until the board makes a decision," he said.

Meanwhile, Joyce Jaquith of St. Mary's said she's decided to withhold financial support from the clinic until she knows where its directors stand.

"I gave good substantial donations," Jaquith said, "and I have always inquired about abortions and been assured over the years, 'No, we don't do that.'"

"I really feel they are going to shoot themselves in the foot," she said, if the center's physicians provide abortions.

She had signed a petition circulated by Terri and Tim Hedding of St. Mary's. The Heddings and their four boys have been active in the pro-life movement, from marches in Rochester and Washington, to fundraisers and life chains, Terri said.

"Everybody spoke from the heart," she said of the April 28 meeting.

Meyer-Wilber noted that the meeting itself led to more interaction among people who might not normally gather together.

Many who lingered shared their concerns about what they could do, she said, such as occasionally volunteering at Faith Haven.

While awaiting the board's decision, she said, "I would assume the board members have a lot to think about."

Kids' Answers from page 7

- | | |
|--------------|-------------|
| 1. Peter | 6. Barnabas |
| 2. Stephen | 7. Philip |
| 3. James | 8. Timothy |
| 4. Titus | 9. Paul |
| 5. Cornelius | |

Obituaries

Sr. Leary; native of Elmira

Sister Rose Eileen Leary, SSJ, who spent more than 20 years as a teacher at both Nazareth Academy in Rochester and Geneva DeSales High School, died March 12, 1998, at Rochester's Strong Memorial Hospital. She was 91.

Sister Rose Eileen, an Elmira native, entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1925 out of Ss. Peter and Paul Parish. She earned her baccalaureate degree from Nazareth College in 1937 and her master's degree from the University of Notre Dame in 1946.

Sister Rose Eileen's teaching career was spent mostly at Nazareth Academy, where she served for 21 years; and Geneva DeSales, where she taught for 22 years. She also taught at Corpus Christi and Nazareth Hall elementary schools in Rochester.

After she left teaching, Sister Rose Eileen was a core member of the Sisters of St. Joseph Prayer Center in Rochester. She was also parish visitor at Church of St. Mary Our Mother in Horseheads for eight years, and a receptionist at the SSJ motherhouse for three years. In addition, she served as a visitor in the St. Joseph Convent Infirmary.

Sister Rose Eileen's funeral Mass was celebrated March 14 at the SSJ motherhouse chapel in Pittsford. Msgr. William Shannon served as celebrant, with Msgr. Emmett Murphy and Fathers Donald Curtiss and Bartholomew O'Brien assisting.

Sister Rose Eileen is survived by a sister-in-law, Ruth Leary; nieces and nephews; grandnieces and grandnephews; cousins; and her sisters in the Congregation of St. Joseph.

Contributions in Sister Rose Eileen's memory may be made to the St. Joseph Convent Infirmary.

Sister Holzschuh, OSF; 96

Sister Eugene Marie Holzschuh, OSF, a native of Rochester, died March 28, 1998, at St. Elizabeth Motherhouse, Allegany. The Franciscan sister was 96.

The daughter of the late Louis and Catherine Boor Holzschuh, Sister Holzschuh entered the Congregation of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany in 1934, and professed her final vows in 1941.

Sister Holzschuh then worked as a nurse at St. Francis Hospital, Miami Beach, Fla., and St. Joseph Hospital, Tampa, Fla. In 1939, she was sent to St. Francis Hospital in Olean, where she served for 38 years. There, she served as supervisor of nurses in the Obstetrical Department and as director of Nursing Services. She served the hospital as a patient visitor in her retirement.

In 1981, Sister Holzschuh went to the St. Elizabeth Motherhouse Infirmary where she stayed until her death.

She was predeceased by her brother, Eugene, and is survived by her sister, Vera Haney of Rochester, and two nieces.

Catholic Courier (USPS 135-580)

Vol. 109 No. 33 May 7, 1998

Published weekly except first Thursday in January.

Subscription rates: single copy, 75¢; one-year subscription in U.S., \$20.00; Canada and foreign \$20.00 plus postage. Offices: 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624, 716/328-4340. Periodicals postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Catholic Courier, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.



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