

## New priests celebrate



From left, Fathers Timothy Niven, Michael Mayer and Eric Phillips concelebrate their first Mass as priests with Bishop Matthew H. Clark, who recites the eucharistic prayer at their ordination June 6 at Sacred Heart Cathedral.

Greg Francis/Staff photographer

## Father Charles Mulligan to leave priesthood

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

Father Charles F. Mulligan has resigned as co-pastor of St. Michael's Church in Penn Yan and St. Andrew's Church in Dundee, as he plans to leave the priesthood to get married.

Father Mulligan, a priest for 34 years, made the announcement the weekend of May 30-31 at his parish. And on June 1, he left town.

"He did his best to follow his conscience. This has been very painful for him," said Father Peter Deckman, his co-pastor. "It's a surprise to everybody except the people he had to work with. It's a difficult time for all of us."

Although the move may have seemed abrupt to parishioners, Father Mulligan indicated in his letter that his plans were carefully thought out.

"My decision to leave the priesthood has been a long time coming. I made it in May of 1997 when I made a thirty day retreat with the Jesuits in Guelph, Ontario," Father Mulligan, 58, wrote in a letter to his parishioners dated May 27.

He added that his discernment process

was extremely difficult.

"I really don't want to leave. My life as a priest has been filled with a deep and intimate sense of walking with God, privileged moments with many, and slow and sometimes painful learning of how God works with his/her people. Why would I want to leave that?" Father Mulligan wrote.

However, he added, "What has been (a) struggle for me, for perhaps 20 years, has been the absence of a consistent person with whom I can share my life ... each year, it seems more difficult for me to integrate my life, its events and my heart. My struggle is to balance the celibacy necessary for priesthood and my personal need for companionship and love. I have decided to marry."

Father Mulligan noted that he was moving to Paterson, N.J., and would work with the poor there, "especially newly arrived immigrants."

According to Father Deckman, Father Mulligan has known the woman he plans to marry for several years, and that she is not a resident of the Rochester Diocese. He said that he believes they met while Father Mulligan was performing mission

duty in South America, where he worked in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Attempts to contact Father Mulligan for comment were unsuccessful.

According to Father Robert Ring, diocesan director of priest personnel, Father Maciej Napieralski — a priest from Poland — will serve as Father Mulligan's replacement at St. Michael's/St. Andrew's through June. Father Brian Cool, currently parochial vicar at St. Mary's Parish, Canandaigua, will become Father Deckman's co-administrator, effective June 30.

Most of Father Mulligan's priesthood was marked by his extensive work in social ministry. He served as director of the diocesan Office of Human Development — later renamed the Office of Social Ministry and now known as Catholic Charities — from 1971 to 1985. He then spent seven years as a Maryknoll Associate, working with the impoverished in South America.

Father Mulligan returned to the Rochester Diocese in 1993, and served one year as parochial vicar at St. Michael's Church in Newark before moving to Penn Yan/Dundee. He was well known for ministering to Hispanic migrant workers in the Finger Lakes area during these parish assignments.

"Charlie has made great contributions to the diocese over his more than 20 years in parish and diocesan work, especially in the area of social justice," Bishop Matthew H. Clark said in a prepared statement.

"I will personally miss him, and priests of the diocese will miss his leadership and service among us," the bishop added. "I am pleased that he will continue his ministry to the poor when he moves to New Jersey."

## TGA's director to take new job

By Kathleen Schwar  
Staff writer

Tom D'Agostino, director of annual giving for the diocese for nearly six years, will leave to become director of development for the School of the Holy Childhood, beginning July 13.

D'Agostino oversaw the diocese's most successful Thanks Giving Appeal in 1997-98, which reached a record \$5 million. The TGA is the primary fundraiser for diocesan operations, providing 57 percent of the operations budget last year.

"Some good things have happened," D'Agostino said. "We broke through the \$5 million psychological barrier. ... It came together nicely."

Planning meetings for the next TGA have already been held in the past several weeks with parishes across the diocese.

"More than 1,000 people work with the TGA every year in some way, shape or form," he noted, adding, "One annual giving director leaving is not going to stop the show."

D'Agostino also had worked with about 30 parishes in overseeing sacrificial giving, a stewardship program that suggests tithing a percentage of one's income and time to bolster parish revenue.

His decision to leave comes in the wake of Mark Seeborg's stepping down as the diocese's director of development. Seeborg, who is starting his own business, was replaced as of June 1 by Richard Rosati.

Although they have only worked together briefly, D'Agostino had praise for Rosati.

"He has a lot of good ideas," D'Agostino said. "I think he'll bring a lot to the table."

But he said Holy Childhood contacted him recently and convinced him the school needed him.

"I was extremely impressed with the work of the board and Sister Seraphine, their work with (developmentally disabled) children and the scope of the board," he said. "They have a remarkable story."

Sister Seraphine Herbst, SSJ, is executive director of Holy Childhood, 100 Gorton Parkway, Henrietta, founded in 1946 to serve exceptional children and adults.

The diocese is accepting applications for a replacement director of annual giving until June 19.

"It's an important position to the diocese and we hope to find someone who will work as well with the parishes as Tom has done," Rosati said.

"One thing I feel strongly about," Rosati added, "is that for the past six years Tom has done an outstanding job coordinating the Thanks Giving Appeal, and he has been a special help to me. I wish him the very best for success."

### Appointments

Bishop Matthew H. Clark has announced the following pastoral appointments, effective June 30.

• Father Paul Bonacci, from chaplain, Ithaca College, to parochial vicar, St. Stephen's Church, Geneva.

• Father Brian Cool, from parochial vicar, St. Mary's Church, Canandaigua, to co-administrator with Father Peter Deckman, St. Michael's Church, Penn Yan, and St. Andrew's Church, Dundee.

• Father Brian Jeffers, from parochial vicar, St. Stephen's Church, Geneva, to administrator, Our Lady of the Lake, King Ferry; St. Bernard's, Scipio Center; St. Joseph's, Cayuga; St. Michael's, Union Springs; St. Patrick's, Aurora; St. Patrick's, Moravia.



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