

## New guidelines detail inclusive language use

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

**FAIRPORT** — New diocesan guidelines, issued June 22, can aid parishes and faith communities in using inclusive language, according to Sheryl B. Zabel, chairperson of the inclusive language subcommittee.

The subcommittee worked under the auspices of the Diocesan Office of Liturgy and the Diocesan Liturgical Commission to prepare "Guidelines On The Use of Inclusive Language in the Liturgy." According to the document, inclusive language "includes everyone in the assembly," and is bereft of words that stereotype people.

An example of such language, the document says, would be using the words "brothers and sisters" or "friends" in place of the more traditional "brothers" when addressing a worshipping assembly.

Zabel, pastoral associate at the Church of the Assumption, 20 East Ave., said the subcommittee will meet this September to schedule workshops for parish staff members who wish to learn more about using inclusive language.

"I hope the pastoral teams, parish councils and liturgy committees will take a look at these (guidelines) in light of their own worship life and their faith communities," Zabel said.

The guidelines call those who preach to avoid words that belittle people who are poor, attend church infrequently, or who do not belong to the Catholic Church. Emphasis is placed on steering clear of anti-Semitic language in liturgies.

The document also suggests that those who preach use a variety of images of God found in Scripture, including several that liken God to a mother and a woman.

The guidelines call for the use of rituals, music and worship spaces that include all in liturgical celebrations. For example, the guidelines say that churches should be made accessible to people with disabilities.

The 26-page document has already been distributed to diocesan pastoral leaders, Zabel said. She added that copies of a tri-fold flier summarizing the document's principles were to be available for parishioners the week of July 12.

Zabel noted the document grew out of diocesan efforts to promote the 1993 Synod's Goal No. 3, which called the diocese to recognize and value the dignity of women in church and society. The diocese later issued a pastoral plan implementing the Synod's goals, she said, and promoting the use of inclusive language was one of the steps called for by the plan. She said that the subcommittee has been meeting

since early 1997.

While a number of churches are using inclusive language, Zabel noted, the guidelines were issued partly to respond to requests from parishes for guidance on using inclusive language.

The guidelines are supported by extensive quotations from Scripture, as well as the writings of the U.S. and Canadian bishops, including Bishop Matthew H. Clark; Pope John Paul II; Pope Paul VI; Pope John XXIII; and several experts in music, liturgy and language.

The document's principles, with excerpted commentary, are:

**1. Language has power:** "How we name each other and ourselves can lead to being accepted, affirmed and included or being ignored, belittled and excluded."

**2. Language must be faithful to God's Word:** The document points out that several biblical passages are not as exclusively male-oriented as they might appear due to their translation into English from the original Hebrew or Greek. "When a scriptural passage addresses all believers, the language of the translation ought to make this clear."

**3. Language reflects and shapes our relationship with God:** "Scripture reveals to us many names and images of God."

**4. Language reflects and shapes our relationships with one another:** "By the way we speak ... we can create relationships characterized by respect and trust or relationships characterized by suspicion and contempt."

**5. Our Judeo-Christian tradition calls us to respect each person as a unique creation of God:** "God commands us to care for all who are powerless or in need," and the document cites Deuteronomy 24 and Matthew 25.

**6. Baptism is the foundation of Christian dignity and unity:** "All baptized Christians are God's beloved sons and daughters."

**7. The church promotes the full, active, and conscious participation of all the baptized in worship:** "The spoken language in worship which ignores the presence of some members of the assembly (women, children, people living in poverty, people with disabling conditions, etc.) will not promote the kind of participation called for by the Second Vatican Council."

**8. We respect people from other faith traditions:** "All references to other religions and their adherents ought to be respectful, even when we are not in agreement with some of their teachings."

**9. We honor the discipline of the church:** "Our worship language must be as inclusive as permitted under Church discipline."



Greg Francia/Staff photographer

## Happy 125th!

Dressed as clowns, Janelle Harris, 7, left, and Zuleika Reyes, 8, march in a parade kicking off the 125th anniversary celebration of St. Michael's Church, Rochester, July 12. The parade proceeded south on North Clinton Avenue from Norton Street to the church, where an English/Spanish eucharistic celebration and picnic followed. German immigrants incorporated the parish July 11, 1873, and it has been considered a safe haven for immigrants ever since. Today most St. Michael parishioners are of Hispanic origin.

## Recognizing

★ **Joan McGlynn** has retired after 32 years as business administrator/secretary at St. Mary, Our Lady of the Hills Church in Honeoye. A reception for her was held June 15 at St. Mary's parish center.

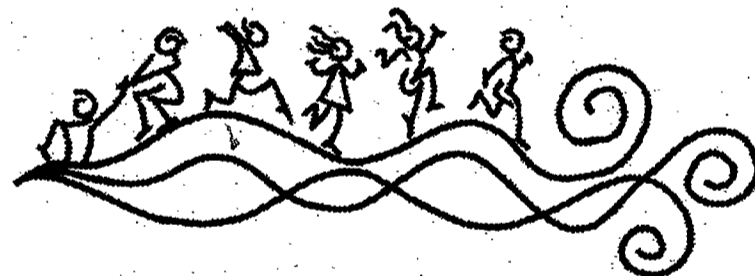
★ **Stacie Welch**, a second grader at Rochester's Sacred Heart Cathedral School, is the New York champion for her grade level in the National Handwriting Contest. Stacie received her state award at the school May 18.

★ The fifth- and sixth-grade classes at St. Louis School, Pittsford, staged a Mission Day Carnival June 5, raising \$1,000 to support missionary work by Father Protus Hamisi in his native Kenya. Father Hamisi has been a visiting priest at St. Louis Parish while attending St. John Fisher College.

★ **Patricia Heney**, social studies instructor at Northeastern Catholic Junior High School, has been selected by the U.S. Holocaust Museum to teach a Holocaust course to teachers from all over the United States. The course was to begin July 6 in Washington, D.C.

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## Minister from Groton ordained

Robert Kantor, a former youth minister at St. Anthony's Church in Groton, was ordained to the transitional diaconate May 2. Bishop John J. Nevins of Venice, Fla., ordained him at Christ the King Seminary, East Aurora, N.Y.

Deacon Kantor planned to serve St. William Parish, Naples, Fla., until his priestly ordination in Venice Oct. 24.

He joined St. Anthony's in 1988, served as youth minister from 1992 to 1994, and took teenagers to Denver to see Pope John Paul II during World Youth Day.

Deacon Kantor received his master of divinity degree this year from Christ the King. He also holds a bachelor of arts degree from Buffalo State College's Department of Journalism, Broadcasting and Speech. He worked at the former WEBR Newsradio in Buffalo and later for the Consumer Information Radio Network at Cornell University, and was vice

president of Finger Lakes Productions radio production, syndication and media consulting firm.

He also is a lieutenant commander in the U.S. Naval Reserve attached to a public affairs unit.

Deacon Kantor was a longtime parishioner at Queen of Peace Parish, Buffalo.

Catholic Courier (USPS 135-580) Vol. 109 No. 43 July 16, 1998

Published weekly except the 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.