

SENIOR LIFESTYLES

St. Ann's Community marks 125th anniversary

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

IRONDEQUOIT — It was about 70 years ago that Mary Holland was first impressed by the St. Ann's Community, when she visited a relative at the original St. Ann's Home.

"I thought, 'This is where I want to come when I get old enough,'" recalled Holland, now 91.

Holland has indeed become a part of St. Ann's. She resides at The Heritage, a senior citizen apartment tower that opened in 1974 next to the current St. Ann's Home.

"It's the most satisfying place you'd ever want to be," said Holland, who has lived at the Heritage for slightly more than a year.

St. Ann's Community has expanded greatly from the time of its founding in 1873 as St. Ann's Home on Lake Avenue in Rochester. The home moved to Irondequoit in 1963 and opened a 354-bed long-term care facility. The Heritage, a 237-unit building for seniors who don't require round-the-clock care, opened 11 years later, and Chapel Oaks retirement community was completed in 1997.

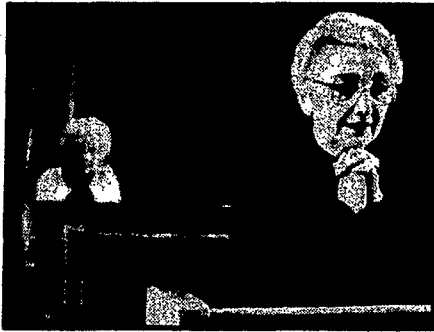
All three facilities are located between Portland Avenue and Goodman Street, just south of Route 104. Together, they form the base of what is now referred to as the St. Ann's Community.

St. Ann's has been celebrating 125 years of growth with anniversary observances the week of Oct. 4-9. Bishop Matthew H. Clark will join in the festivities by celebrating an anniversary Mass at 3:45 p.m. Friday, Oct. 9, in the St. Ann's Home chapel.

Among the other scheduled anniver-



Greg Francis/Staff photographer
Margaret Dandenault, left, and Margaret Wahle, both Heritage residents, work out in an exercise class Oct. 1 at The Heritage. Below, Rose Grassi, a resident of Chapel Oaks, often prays in St. Ann's Chapel.



sary events were: a community open house; a concert by Rochester's Dady Brothers; an art gallery exhibit opening; and dedication of a mile-long walking

path that winds through the St. Ann's campus.

Elizabeth Mullin, St. Ann's second-year president and chief executive officer, remarked that St. Ann's has constantly striven to improve its services over the years.

"One of the things that attracted me to St. Ann's was the potential to grow," Mullin said. "I was in the enviable position of coming to an organization that had a great reputation and a willingness to take on new ventures."

Some of those ventures include Home Connection, an on-site adult day care program begun in 1990; and Home and Heart, an adult day center located at

Rochester's Sacred Heart Cathedral, begun in 1995. Mullin added that St. Ann's has also launched plans to build an on-site residence for senior citizens suffering from memory loss.

When asked what separates St. Ann's from other senior citizen facilities, Mullin pointed to the community's Catholic foundation.

"Pastoral care — it is incredibly important to the residents, and it's important to the families," Mullin said.

Charlie Escott, a St. Ann's Home resident the past two years, said that the entire St. Ann's staff exudes caring and compassion.

"They're very good. Nothing but the best," commented Escott, 81.

Rose Grassi, 76, said she was able to renew many friendships with staff when she moved into Chapel Oaks this past July. She explained that she had gotten to know the St. Ann's nurses and aides during the 12 years her mother lived at St. Ann's Home. (Her mother died four years ago.)

"It was just like coming home. They were so excited," she said.

Grassi said she has made many friends with residents, also, during her short time at Chapel Oaks.

"I wanted a place for security and companionship, and that's what I got," said Grassi, who volunteers twice a week in the crafts room at St. Ann's Home. She also noted that she's scheduled to serve as a greeter at the Oct. 9 anniversary Mass.

Holland agreed with Grassi that both the staff and residents of St. Ann's Community are very approachable.

"No matter where you sit, you can find somebody to talk to," Holland commented.

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