

# DIOCESAN NEWS

## Fr. Cadena quits parish; leave of absence pending

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Father Enrique Cadena has resigned his position as associate pastor of Corpus Christi Parish, and plans to apply to his order for a leave of absence from the priesthood.

In an Oct. 26 interview with the *Catholic Courier*, the Mexican-born priest cited several reasons for his decision to seek the leave, including a desire to discern whether he wanted to remain a priest, and the effect on him of the recent turmoil at Corpus Christi.

The parish and its recently ousted leadership has been in local and national headlines for its defiance of church law regarding women's liturgical roles, ministry to gays and intercommunion with non-Catholics.

"It's very much a confrontation with the rules," Father Cadena said of the controversy engulfing the parish.

He added that he has never been a priest who paid much attention to church rules, claiming he preferred "working with the people." He had come to question whether he should continue to serve as a Catholic priest, he said.

"I am questioning if there really is a place for me, and if I should really remain in the whole situation," he said.

The priest said, however, that the Diocese of Rochester had placed no pressure on him to leave the parish.

He also stressed that he had been questioning his vocation for well over a year before the recent controversy at Corpus, and that the turmoil at Corpus was not the sole reason for taking leave. Other factors, such

as the effect on him of his father's death last March, had played a part in his decision, he said.

Father Cadena belongs to the Missionaries of the Holy Spirit, an order based in Mexico City. A priest for 16 years, he has served on and off at Corpus since 1986, returning to Mexico three times to serve in his homeland. He returned to the parish in November 1997, intending to become a priest of the Diocese of Rochester.

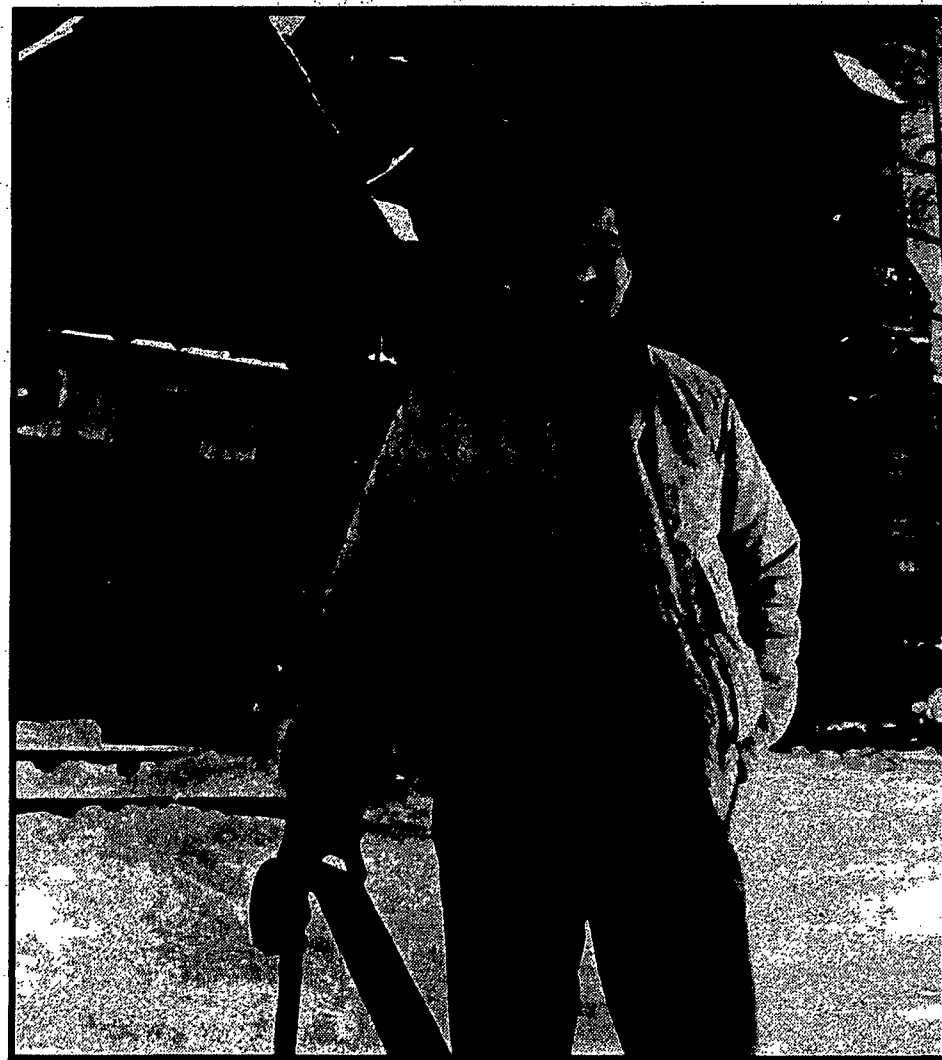
But because he has not yet been officially incardinated — accepted as a priest of the diocese — he must apply to his congregation for the leave of absence, according to Father Robert Ring, director of the diocesan Department of Priest Personnel.

Father Cadena said that his future both in his order and in the diocese is up in the air. He hopes to stay at least three more months in Rochester, he said, noting he is currently working with Corpus parishioners and Catholics in Chiapas, Mexico, on such projects as the formation of an economic cooperative that would be supported by Corpus and located in Chiapas.

Among his duties at Corpus, Father Cadena ministered to the parish's Spanish-speaking Catholics. His last Mass for the Hispanic community — and the parish — took place on Saturday night, Oct. 24.

Father Cadena's leave is the latest news to rock Corpus over the past several weeks. In August, Bishop Matthew H. Clark announced he was removing the parish's long-time administrator, Father James B. Callan, citing Father Callan's ongoing defiance of various church laws.

The priest completed a temporary assignment at Our Lady of Lourdes in Elmira on Oct. 25, and was awaiting his next as-



File Photo

Father Enrique Cadena stands outside Corpus Christi Church.

signment from the diocese, according to Father Ring.

The parish was shaken again on Oct. 15, when the diocese announced that Mary Anne Ramerman, pastoral associate at the church, had been fired. She had refused to comply with Bishop Clark's directives for the parish, and also refused to resign. She was fired by the diocesan-appointed administrative team for the parish.

Father Cadena had been a member of that team, but resigned from it — before Ramerman was fired — because he said he could not reconcile his support for Corpus Christi's values with his duties as a member of the team. The priest added that he wanted to leave the parish to give more room to Father Daniel McMullin, the new pastor at Corpus.

"Basically, he needs to have a fresh start," Father Cadena said of Father McMullin. "I don't think we're going to be a good match if I stayed around here."

"He seems to be a very good person, open," Father Cadena added about the new pastor. "I have confidence that he will do his best."

Although Father Cadena said Father McMullin, given time, may win over a number of parishioners, the former associate pastor predicted a large number of Corpus parishioners will leave the parish. The

parish's inclusive nature draws people from far outside its boundaries, he said.

"If they don't see that spirit anymore, it will be hard for them to drive all the way here," he said.

Meanwhile, parishioners had slated a "supplemental" or alternative worship service for the Corpus community that was to take place Tuesday, Oct. 27, at 7 p.m. in Downtown United Presbyterian Church.

However, things may be looking up for Father McMullin, if the reaction to his homily at the 9:30 Mass Oct. 25 is any indication. The pastor — whose first Masses at the parish Oct. 17-18 were the occasion of protests — said that over the last week, some people accused him of being for discrimination against women, gays and lesbians, and of being insensitive to alcoholics.

But he noted that his father had been an alcoholic who died in an alcohol-related car/train collision. He added that his sister had been in a 15-year committed relationship with another woman, and that women had helped to form his spirituality.

He also said that at one point in his life, he had taken a leave of absence from the priesthood for five years, and he thanked Bishop Clark for giving him the opportunity to return to active ministry.

The priest received a standing ovation at the end of his homily.



## Catholic Cemetery Sunday

November 1, 1998 - All Saint's Day

Visit your Catholic Cemetery on November 1, 1998, and throughout the year to honor the memory of our deceased loved ones and proclaim our belief in the Resurrection of Jesus and all who follow him.

COME VISIT OUR NEW COMPUTERIZED INFORMATION CENTER KIOSK

Located just inside the Lake Avenue Entrance Gates, adjacent to the office parking lot. Open all hours that Cemetery is open.

*A Caring member of the Catholic Community for 127 years...*

## HOLY SEPULCHRE CEMETERY

2461 LAKE AVE. • ROCHESTER, NY • (716) 458-4110

www.holysepulchre.org

## Richard Scarry's Busytown

Omaha Theatre Company for Young People

Best-selling author Richard Scarry's magical characters come to life on stage for the very first time in this charming adaptation for children ages four and up. Join Huckle Cat, Lowly Worm and all the residents of Busytown working, playing, creating and even — on occasion — getting into trouble!

Saturday, November 7, 1998

11:00 A.M. & 2:00 P.M.

General Admission Tickets \$8

\*Interpreted for the hearing impaired.

Box Office: 389-2170

Groups: 424-2979



Nazareth College  
Arts Center

The Callahan Theater, 4245 East Avenue • Rochester, NY 14618-3790