

West-side Rochester Catholics ponder future

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — About 150 people attended a meeting at Holy Apostles School Hall on Nov. 29 to discuss the future of four west-side parishes — Holy Apostles, Holy Family, St. Anthony of Padua and St. Francis of Assisi.

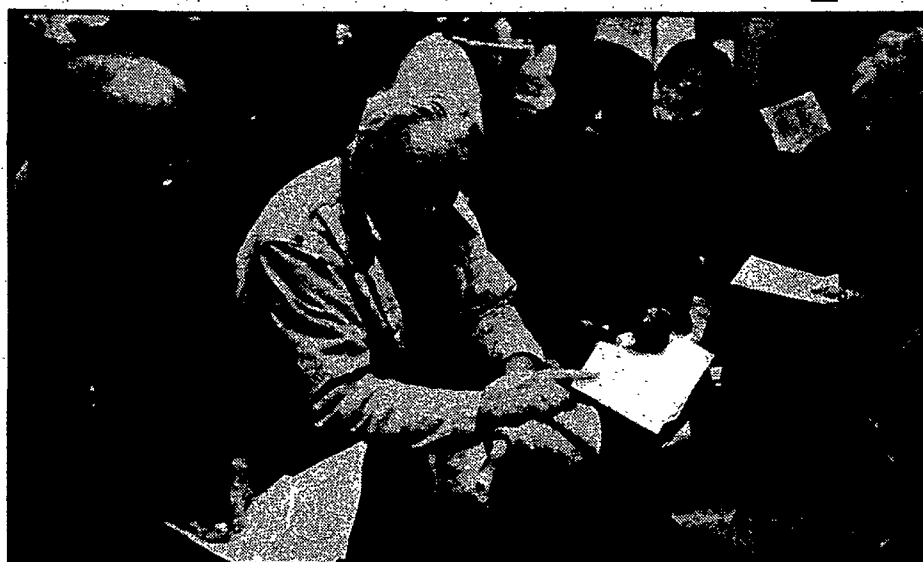
In early November, a four-parish planning team mailed members of the churches a proposal to close all four parishes and create a new, combined parish. The team cited decreasing populations, reduced finances and underutilized space at the four churches as reasons.

That proposal was then discussed with members of all four churches during weekend Masses Nov. 14-15. At the Nov. 29 meeting, participants were given handouts — in English, Spanish and Vietnamese — that answered several questions the parishioners had asked at the weekend Masses.

The handout said that no plan had yet been finalized, but that the four parishes can expect to share two priests in the future, including one who speaks Vietnamese. St. Anthony's is home to a large Vietnamese community. The new four-parish structure would also offer Spanish Masses, the handout said.

Gail Blanchard, chairwoman of the planning team, said that out of several plans suggested by the team and by parishioners' input, the following were the ones the team was considering most seriously.

A. Sell three churches, and keep one



Greg Francis/Staff photographer
St. Anthony Church parishioner Bill Sullivan, center, speaks in an impromptu discussion group during a break in a town meeting at the Holy Apostles School Hall, Rochester, Nov. 29.

open that would serve all four churches' members.

B. Acquire or renovate a new building that would serve all four churches' members.

C. Create one parish composed of buildings at two different locations.

A fourth option, to keep all four churches and run them with lay administrators while a group of priests ministered to all city parishes, was also initially considered.

However, Blanchard later told the *Catholic Courier* it was likely that the plan-

ning team would drop this plan from consideration and replace it with another plan taken from the alternatives suggested by parishioners.

Blanchard also told the *Courier* that it was unlikely the planning team would make its original deadline to submit a plan to Bishop Matthew H. Clark by the end of December for his approval.

But whatever proposal is finally chosen, it will have to answer numerous questions, according to participants at the Nov. 29 meeting.

Mary Spaziano, a Holy Apostles parishioner, said she wanted the team to consider her parish as a possible central location since it was located on Lyell Avenue.

"It's on a bus line, a main thoroughfare for people who don't drive," she said.

Norb Schroth, a Holy Family parishioner, said the planning team needs to provide a more detailed analysis of the financial costs of any proposal, an opinion echoed by James Muscatella, a St. Francis parishioner.

Muscatella added that he wanted to know what impact any possible church closings could have on the city.

"If you close a church, what happens to that (church's) neighborhood?" he asked.

Fred Giampietro said he supported closing three churches and keeping one open — his own, St. Anthony's of Padua. The church is younger than the other three churches, he said, and in good physical condition. He added that all four churches' members can't keep asking priests to shuffle from church to another every weekend in order to say Masses.

"It's tough on them, especially in the winter," he said.

Although their opinions varied on how to solve their problems, meeting participants seemed to accept the argument that their churches can no longer continue operating as they are.

"Each parish is dying, and, as a result, you can either stay with the corpse, or you could do something about it," said Jack Fawks, a member of Holy Apostles.

Aquinas Institute captures state football championship, 33-16

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

When his 1998 football season began, Kassim Howell was playing at running back and wide receiver for Aquinas Institute. The versatile junior, who also plays at defensive back, thought he could handle a third offensive position.

"I used to always joke around and say I wanted to be a quarterback," Howell recalled.

Howell's wish turned out to be no joke — but he's still laughing. After early-season injuries to two other AQ quarterbacks, Howell took over the controls — and helped guide the Little Irish to their

first-ever state championship.

AQ upset the state's top-ranked Class A team, Queensbury, 33-16, in the Nov. 29 title game at Syracuse's Carrier Dome. The win gave Aquinas a final record of 11-2.

While Howell ran for one touchdown and passed for another, the spotlight shined just as brightly on his backfield mate, junior Kwynn Walton. The record-breaking running back amassed 177 yards on 22 carries, scoring two TDs. He finished the year as Section 5's all-time single-season rushing leader, compiling 2,111 yards.

Aquinas was one of two football teams from Catholic high schools in the diocese

to battle for state titles last weekend. Elmira Notre Dame was edged in the Nov. 27 Class C title game, 28-27 in overtime, by Edgemont of Section 1. That contest, also, was held at the Carrier Dome.

Meanwhile, the Aquinas girls' soccer team lost 2-1 in the Class B title game to Rockville Center Southside of Section 7 at the Soccer Hall of Fame in Oneonta. The Little Irish lost to the same team by the same score in 1997.

Aquinas, which had won its third consecutive Section 5 Class B soccer title en route to the state tournament, ended the season with a 23-2-1 record.

In the football championship against Section 2's Queensbury, Aquinas erased

an early 8-0 deficit when Walton ran for a 63-yard touchdown in the first quarter and Howell completed a two-point conversion pass to Kory Schramm to tie the score at 8-8. That began a run of 33 unanswered AQ points.

Two days earlier, Elmira Notre Dame fell just short of producing the perfect season it had hoped for. ND won its 12 games before falling to Edgemont.

Senior quarterback Mike Meck led Notre Dame by factoring in all four of his team's touchdowns against Edgemont. He made first-quarter scoring runs of 18 and 23 yards, then completed TD passes of eight yards to Sean Hanrahan in the third quarter and 12 yards to Dave Zeller in overtime.

The Crusaders earlier had won the Section 4 Class C championship.

Obituary

Father Walter J. Carron, 86; pastored in Geneseo

Father Walter J. Carron, 86, pastor of St. Mary's Parish in Geneseo from 1965 to 1982, died at the Sisters of Mercy Infirmary in Rochester on Nov. 28, 1998.

Father Carron grew up attending Corpus Christi Church in Rochester. Before his ordination in 1937, he attended St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's seminaries.

Father Carron assisted at the following parishes after his ordination: St. Mary's, Auburn; Holy Redeemer, Rochester; St. John the Evangelist, Spencerport; and St. Francis DeSales, Geneva.

Father Carron also served as spiritual director at St. Andrew's Seminary, from 1946 to 1951.

Father Carron was appointed to his first pastorate at St. Gregory's Church, Marion, after leaving St. Francis DeSales in 1958. He subsequently served as pastor at St. Michael's, Livonia Center, and St. Mary's, Honeoye, from 1961 to 1965, before leaving for St. Mary's, Geneseo.

Madeline Peri served as parish secretary and bookkeeper for St. Mary's during Father Carron's years there.

"He was a very good boss," she recalled. "He was very stately. Everyone saw him walking around Geneseo a lot. He used to have his little dog with him."

She added that Father Carron enjoyed being a priest.

"He was very, very spiritual," she said. "He was always there for everyone."

He is survived by a brother-in-law, Walter Hanss of Rochester; his nieces, Sister Terese Hanss, SSJ, and Margaret (Arthur) Gaisser of Alfred; his nephews, Walter (Mary) Hanss of Texas; James (Margaret) Hanss and Gerard (Lauren) Hanss, both of Rochester.

Father Carron is also survived by several grandnieces and grandnephews; and special friends, Peri and her husband, Bob Peri; Jackie and John Robinson; and Anna Gottchalk, all of Geneseo.

Retired Auxiliary Bishop Dennis W. Hickey celebrated a Mass of Christ the High Priest on Nov. 30, at St. Mary's Church, Geneseo. Bishop Matthew H.

Clark celebrated a funeral Mass Dec. 1 at St. Mary's. Interment took place at St. Mary's Cemetery, Geneseo.

Memorials may be made to: Father Carron Memorial Fund, St. Mary's Church, 4 Avon Road, Geneseo, N.Y. 14454.

— Rob Cullivan

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