

DIOCESAN NEWS

Diocese eliminates, restructures staff positions

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Citing budgetary concerns and evolving needs, the Diocese of Rochester announced April 15 that a number of positions and programs at the Pastoral Center are being eliminated or restructured.

Father Joseph Hart, moderator of the Pastoral Center, noted that these staffing changes will help free up nearly \$1 million to support initiatives in the diocesan Pastoral Plan for the New Millennium.

"We couldn't absorb the growth without eliminating positions in other areas," Father Hart said.

Father Hart said that four of the 15 job cuts were positions related to diocesan Synod goals. Those who lost their directors' posts were Gloria Ulterino, Women in Church and Society; Deacon Claude Lester, Small Christian Communities; Karen Rinefield, Young Adult, Adult and Family Faith Formation; and Suzanne Schnittman, Con-

sistent Life Ethic. Father Hart added that duties of these positions will largely be absorbed by other Pastoral Center employees.

He added that these positions had originally been formed "to create and nurture self-sustaining ministries," and that the Synod priorities "are now a part of the fabric of parish life."

"I think we have to acknowledge that good people and good programs will no longer necessarily be here (at the Pastoral Center) anymore," Father Hart said.

Of those four directors, Father Hart said that Schnittman is the only person who is confirmed, at this point, to be remaining at the Pastoral Center. Her position will be "reconfigured," he said, and no longer be funded by the diocese but instead through Catholic Charities, which maintains its own budget.

Others whose positions were cut include J. Edward Bell, director of pastoral council formation; and Deacon Brian McNulty, coordinator of ecumenical and interreligious

affairs. In addition, positions have been slashed in payroll and employee benefits, as well as secretarial support and hospital and campus chaplaincy.

A "flat" response to the Thanks Giving Appeal, Father Hart said, has played into the decision to eliminate jobs. According to Jennifer Myszka, diocesan director of annual giving, the appeal had raised \$4.954 million in pledges as of April 20 — still short of its \$5.15 million goal for the 1998-1999 campaign that ends June 30. Comparatively, the 1997-1998 appeal had raised \$4.95 million by early March 1998.

Another budgetary concern involves a potential loss of \$100,000 in rental revenue for a building on Pastoral Center property. Monroe County Social Services is leaving the building as of July 1, and no new tenant has been secured.

Bill Olsen, diocesan director of human resources, said that some Pastoral Center employees left their positions immediately, whereas others will stay on for up to four

weeks since the April 15 announcement. Affected employees, he said, were given severance pay of one week per year of service with the diocese, with a maximum of six weeks.

Father Hart and Olsen noted that the cuts were announced in mid-April because many openings within the diocese are being posted at this time of year, thus giving the affected people an opportunity to apply for some of these openings. Olsen added that the diocese is helping many of these people in their job searches.

Money saved through the job cuts, Father Hart said, will help create positions for two people, one full-time and one part-time, who will be liaisons between parish planning groups and the Pastoral Center. In addition, the diocese will hire a full-time person in information technology and continue investing in computer technology.

These developments, Father Hart said, are in accordance with goals cited in the diocesan strategic plan in 1998.

Protests

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she declined the request.

Operation Save America — or "OSA," as organizers call it — started off with a rally on Sunday night, April 18, at MacAlpine Presbyterian Church in Buffalo that drew about 300 people, according to the Rev. Warren, organizer of the Rochester end of the protests.

Rev. Warren added that more than 100 people from places outside of Buffalo had traveled to the city for the protest, which is being organized by the pro-life group Operation Rescue National. OSA targeted facilities where abortions are performed, high schools and Barnes & Noble Booksellers as well. OSA organizers characterize certain books there as "child pornography" — books showing pictures of nude children taken by certain art photographers.

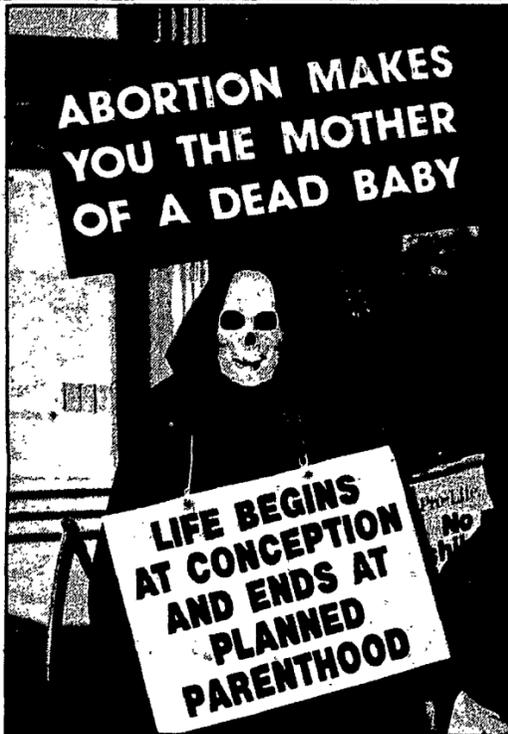
However, in an official statement from its New York City offices, Barnes & Noble said that the books in question had been reviewed by several district attorneys in various cities and determined not to be child pornography.

"(B)ookstores of all sizes follow one rule: we do not stock materials that violate state or federal obscenity or child pornography statutes," the statement read.

Rev. Warren added that OSA activists had picketed two Buffalo-area high schools — Kenmore East and Kenmore West — on the morning of April 19 to show their opposition to the teaching of evolution, "the mainstreaming" of homosexuality in public schools and to protest abortion.

Rev. Warren has said OSA activists would also be picketing at various sites in Rochester on Wednesday, April 21, and possibly on Thursday, April 22, as well. Potential sites including the offices of Planned Parenthood of Rochester and the Genesee Valley and various hospitals and doctors' offices, he said. The protesters were to return to Buffalo to continue their activities through Sunday, April 25.

On mid-morning Monday, April 19, more than 40 protesters, many holding signs that displayed an enlarged photo-



Greg Francis/Staff photographer

Retired Air Force Col. Richard Ulbrich of Denver, Colo., dressed as the Grim Reaper, protests at the U.S. District Courthouse, Buffalo, April 19.

graph of an apparently aborted fetus, entered the lobby of the U.S. District Courthouse in Buffalo, outside of which stood several Buffalo police. The protesters asked security guards in the lobby if they could see U.S. District Judge Richard J. Arcara, but were told they could not, Rev. Warren said.

Judge Arcara had ruled April 15 in favor of a group of pro-choice plaintiffs and New York State Attorney General Eliot Spitzer, who had asked the judge to temporarily widen "buffer zones" around sites where abortions were performed from 15 feet, to between 50 and 60 feet. Protesters were prohibited from crossing such zones, the judge ruled.

Additionally, the judge ruled that protesters be barred from using megaphones and loudspeakers outside facilities where abortions are performed.

At the courthouse April 19, several

U.S. marshals watched the protesters as they prayed, talked and sang, but nobody broke any laws. One protester, Mary Melfi, who attends St. Cecilia's Church in Irondequoit, held a small coffin with a baby doll and roses in it.

"This is to symbolize that our children are going to their graves too soon," Melfi said.

Asked by a reporter to compare the demonstration to others that had taken place at the courthouse, one security guard said that the protest was "nice."

Free Methodist Rev. Flip Benham, Operation Rescue's national director hinted that no "rescues" would take place at abortion clinics in the area during the week. Rescues generally involve groups of activists blockading clinic entrances. Attempted rescues were a hallmark of "The Spring of Life" protests seven years ago in Buffalo that drew thousands of pro-life and pro-choice activists and that resulted in the arrests of hundreds of demonstrators on both sides.

"There's no sense in repeating it," Rev. Benham said of the Spring of Life tactics. He added that the police presence at abortion sites in the area during the week would likely discourage women from seeking abortions this week.

"The police are doing a wonderful job of protecting (unborn) children," the minister said.

Two brothers to make vows

Brother Laurence Jenny will make his solemn profession at Mass Sunday, April 25; and Brother Gerard D'Souza, at Mass Monday, May 24, at the Abbey of the Genesee, Piffard.

Brother Jenny, 57, a St. Louis, Mo., native, speaks Chinese, Japanese, French and German. He served in the U.S. Air Force (1963-66), in Taiwan. In 1971 he earned a master's degree in East Asian language and literature from the University of Indiana. He taught in Hong Kong and Tokyo, and while in Tokyo converted to Catholicism. He entered the Jesuit novitiate in Hiroshima in 1981. After teaching at St. John Jesuit College in Belize, he earned an M.Div. from Weston School of Theology in 1992. He joined the abbey community that same year.

Brother D'Souza, 40, was born in the United Arab Emirates to Indian parents. He was raised in Mumbai, Bombay, and earned a bachelor's in psychology from the University of Bombay. He pursued seminary studies at St. Pius College, Bombay, and worked with his father's electronic firm. He came to work at St. Monica's Parish in Manhattan (1988) and to earn a master's of theology from Dunwoodie (1991) in Yonkers. He read a book about monastic life, which eventually helped to lead him to the abbey community in 1992.

The abbey's last solemn profession was Aug. 15; Brother David Wilson, OCSO, made his vows then.

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Appointments

Bishop Matthew H. Clark has announced the following pastoral assignments, effective June 29:

Father Bernard Carges, from pastor, St. Anthony Church, Groton, to pastor of combined St. Anthony/Holy Cross, Dryden.

Father Ronald Harley, from pastor, St. Francis de Sales, Geneva, to pastor,

St. Agnes, Avon.

Father Desmond O'Neill, from chaplain, Monroe Community Hospital, to pastor, St. Thomas Aquinas/St. Lucy, Leicester/Retsof, and sacramental minister, SUNY Genesee.

Father Richard Beligotti, from pastor, St. Thomas Aquinas/St. Lucy, Leicester/Retsof, to administrator, St. Bridget/St. Joseph, East Bloomfield.