

DIOCESAN NEWS

Masses at Masses may need Christmas passes

By Kathleen Schwar
Assistant editor

Sister Chris Treichel, OSF, remembers the time a child became separated from his parents at St. John the Evangelist Church on Rochester's Humboldt Street. It was at a particularly crowded Christmas Eve Mass.

"His parents were frantic they couldn't find their child in this mob of people," she recalled. The priest had to stop the Mass until parents and child could be reunited.

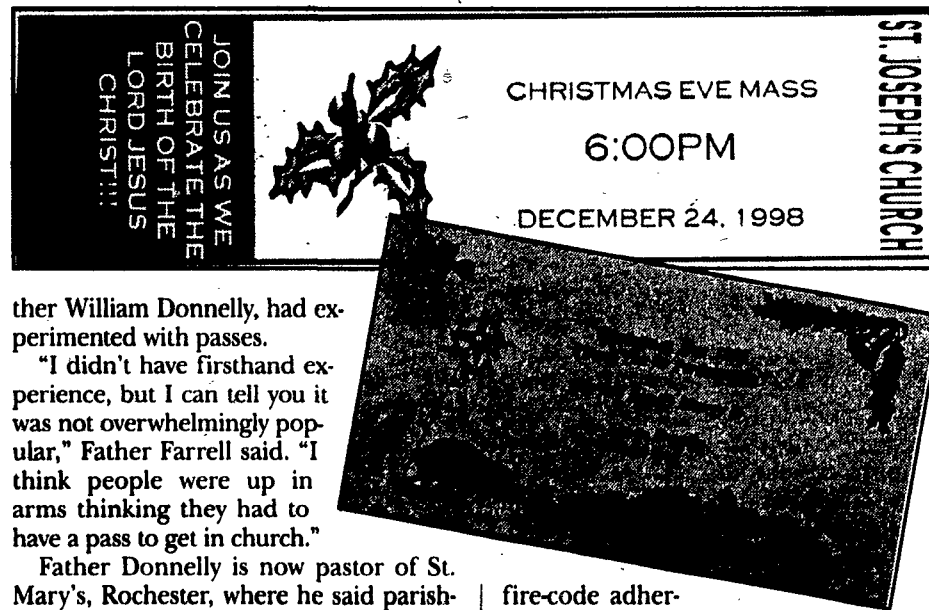
Thus began passes for Christmas Masses at St. John's, where Sister Treichel is pastoral associate, and where Father Kevin Murphy was pastor (but out sick that Christmas Eve). Today St. Joseph's Church in Penfield, where Father Murphy became pastor in 1996, also issues passes.

"We don't call them tickets. We call them passes," both emphasized. While tickets are bought and sold, they explained, passes are free and are issued to limit seating. St. Joe's collects passes at the door, but St. John's has not.

During the past decade Christmas Eve Masses, particularly children's liturgies, have become popular. Many people — not just families with young children — now prefer to attend Christmas Eve liturgies than Mass on Christmas Day. The resulting crowds worry liturgists and parish staff members as well as fire officials.

At some parishes people stand outside the church doors on Christmas Eve, listening to the Mass inside or watch over closed-circuit TV in adjacent rooms.

Some pastors have responded to the Christmas Eve crush by adding Masses, as did Father Richard Farrell, pastor of St. Mary's Parish, Elmira. His predecessor, Fa-



ther William Donnelly, had experimented with passes.

"I didn't have firsthand experience, but I can tell you it was not overwhelmingly popular," Father Farrell said. "I think people were up in arms thinking they had to have a pass to get in church."

Father Donnelly is now pastor of St. Mary's, Rochester, where he said parishioners gladly sign up two-three weeks ahead of time for whatever Christmas Eve Mass they plan to attend. This is the third year for the system, which he said spreads people out evenly.

This year, St. John's staff decided to discontinue passes. Sister Treichel said that over the four years it used them, "We achieved what we wanted — a safe environment, the ability to celebrate well."

Elsewhere, the practice is being picked up. At St. Mary's Church in Canandaigua, parishioners have not yet warmed up to the fact they'll need passes for Christmas Eve this year for the first time. Father Walter Wainwright, their pastor, has been advising them about this since October.

"I am not happy with it either," Father Wainwright said. "But to me, it was a necessary step and the best way of doing it." His concern and that of other priests, is

fire-code adherence and safety in case of an emergency. St. Mary's seats about 740 people but attendance at Christmas Eve has been over 1,000, he said.

"I am hoping they realize the safety factor," Father Wainwright said. "Especially at family Masses, where there are so many young children, it wouldn't take much for a catastrophe."

Before Father Murphy arrived at St. Joseph's, some Christmas Eve Masses drew as many as 1,300 people to a church built to accommodate 800.

"I can't imagine what the parking was like," he said. "If there was an emergency, you wouldn't be able to get the ambulance or fire vehicle in anywhere close."

This year St. Joe's is offering four Christmas Eve Masses and three Christmas Day Masses, presided over by Fathers Murphy; Eric Phillips, priest intern; Ed Steinkirchn-

er, retired; and Larry Rice, a Paulist priest who is the son of parishioners Barb and Cliff Rice. Auxiliary police will help control traffic.

Overcrowded Masses not only present physical dangers, but spiritual drawbacks for parishioners, liturgists pointed out.

"They can't sit, can't hear, they're out in the vestibule and can't see, and it doesn't facilitate participation in the celebration," said Sister Ann Rehrauer, associate director of the liturgy secretariat for the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Joan Workmaster, diocesan director of liturgy, said, "In some ways we are making people feel they've got to come to this 'midnight' Mass when they could look at the possibility of coming Christmas Day and have a wonderful celebration."

Until a 1967 papal indult, Catholics could not fulfill their Sunday Mass obligation by attending Mass the previous evening. The indult paved the way for more and more Masses of anticipation on Christmas Eve. Later, some churches moved their midnight Masses up as well.

"Back in the '50s and '60s people went to more than one (Christmas) Mass — midnight Mass and then Mass again in the morning," Sister Rehrauer observed. "That is not happening and it's too bad... We lose the sense of the day when we're always anticipating it the night before."

Workmaster noted that the diocese constantly encourages parishes must to promote their Christmas Day liturgies and make them more attractive to people.

On Christmas Day, for example, children could bring gifts they've received to have then blessed. Or they could bring a toy they have treasured and is in good condition to give for someone else, she said.

Fr. Faraone still in hospital after suffering brain damage

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Father David Faraone, 43, pastor at Church of the Epiphany in Sodus and St. Rose Church in Sodus Point, remains hospitalized due to complications after he collapsed in the parish rectory on Oct. 18.

Elizabeth Masco, a cousin of Father Faraone's, said Nov. 30 that Father Faraone was in guarded condition at Highland Hospital in Rochester. She added that he was due to be transferred from the intensive care unit to another part of the hospital within a few days.

According to Masco, the priest sustained neurological damage in early November at Highland. Masco said that the damage occurred shortly after Father Faraone's physicians attempted to remove a tube from his throat. Father Faraone stopped breathing at that point, and suffered the damage during the 10 minutes it took for the doctors to revive him. Masco said that the doctors do not know whether Father Faraone's condition is reversible.

"It was a very unfortunate and unforeseeable complication that happens in a very small percentage of people," said Masco, who serves as Father Faraone's health-care proxy.

Masco emphasized that the Highland Hospital physicians were not negligent in their handling of the situation. "We are

confident that everything was done in the proper manner," she said.

In addition to the neurological damage, Masco said that Father Faraone had developed pneumonia as a result of his collapse. During the collapse, she said, stomach contents were breathed into the lungs, causing a trauma in the lungs.

Masco said that Father Faraone's pneumonia had cleared and his present condition does not appear to be life-threatening. She said that although doctors haven't determined what caused the collapse, they have ruled out the possibility that it was a stroke, brain bleeding or tumor.

Helen Hillis, secretary at Church of the Epiphany/St. Rose, was with Father Faraone on Oct. 18, the day he collapsed.

"He asked me to get something out of a file cabinet and I heard him fall. He was unconscious, so I called 911," Hillis recalled.

Hillis said that Father Faraone was taken to Myers Community Hospital in Sodus, Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester and then Highland Hospital, all on that same day.

During his illness, Father Faraone's pastoral duties are being covered by Father Lance Gonyo, who began Nov. 5 as temporary administrator of Church of the Epiphany/St. Rose. Father Gonyo had previously been parochial vicar at the Holy Family Catholic Community in Dansville, Wayland, Perkinsville and Cohocton.

Sandy Grocki, diocesan clergy services

coordinator, said that Father Faraone is considered on medical leave, and that his title as pastor remains intact.

Hillis remarked that the Epiphany/St. Rose parish community has struggled to cope with Father Faraone's misfortune.

"It's a very sad place right now. I worked with him every day for 5½ years," she said. "We just keep praying, and hoping for the best."

Father Faraone currently is not taking visitors. However, his family said that cards

are welcome. They can be sent to him at Highland Hospital, 1000 South Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14620.

Masco noted that Epiphany/St. Rose made an audiotape greeting for Father Faraone, and that prayers and greetings have come in from as far away as Hong Kong, Germany, Holland and Brazil.

"I want people to know we can feel their prayerful support," Masco said. "Everyone we run into continues to tell us of their prayers, that their church is praying."

Recognizing

★ St. John Fisher College is among 100 institutions named to the Templeton Honor Roll and named an exemplary college program in the "Volunteer Service Programs" category, both for the second time, in *The Templeton Guide: Colleges that Encourage Character Development*.

★ John L. DiMarco Sr. and John D. Doyle, Monroe County executive, received McQuaid Jesuit High School's Rev. Richard P. Noonan Distinguished Alumnus Award Sept. 22, at the Rochester Yacht Club. DiMarco is chairman of the board and CEO of The DiMarco Group.

Corrections

In the Nov. 25 *Catholic Courier* Katherine Honeck, not Megan Honeck, is shown in the School of the Americas protest photo.

In the Nov. 4 Kids Chronicle the Bible Accent should have stated that Jesus told us the greatest Commandment was to "love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."

Catholic Courier (USPS 135-580) Vol. 111 No. 9, December 2, 1999

Published weekly except the last Thursday in December.

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.

LAMPUGHTER

A Special Place for Special People



Christmas Eve 4-8 pm

Our regular menu has more than 25 entrees to choose from.

New Year's Eve

Champagne, appetizer, salad, main course, coffee, service \$49.95 per person.

Located Down the Road from the Greece Marriott
831 Fetzner Rd., Corner Maiden Lane • 225-2500