

DIOCESAN NEWS

Supporters witness deacons' rites

The Dec. 4 ordination of Patrick Van Durme, 34, in Belgium, brings to two the number of transitional deacons preparing for priestly ordination June 24 in Rochester.

William "Mickey" McGrath, 36, whose home parish is St. Anne, Palmyra, was ordained a transitional deacon Oct. 7 at the Vatican, by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger.

Some 30 relatives, friends, priests and diocesan representatives were on hand to witness Deacon Van Durme's ordination at Louvain.

"The ordination is amazing but the turnout for this from family and friends is overwhelming," Deacon Van Durme e-mailed the *Catholic Courier* shortly before his ordination. He said he had expected his parents and a brother or sis-

ter, but 14 relatives came.

"The ordination is a great blessing but the show of support says it all to me. It is from that kind of support and love that I make a commitment to the whole community."

Before their journey, family members received a special blessing Nov. 28 at St. Mary's, Dansville. Deacon Van Durme's home parish. The deacon is completing his fourth year of seminary training at The American College, Louvain, and a master of divinity degree at the Catholic University of Louvain. He had ministered at the Roman Catholic Community of the 19th Ward.

Among family present for his ordination were his parents, Nicholas and Anne Van Durme, of St. Mary's.

Deacon Van Durme said he planned a

"family roots trip" to Ireland after his ordination, as he is half Irish and half Belgian.

Deacon McGrath is completing his fifth year of theological training. He attends seminary at North American College in Rome and is completing his theological degrees at the University of St. Thomas in Rome. He had worked at Holy Ghost Church, Gates. He is the son of William and Mary Kay McGrath, also of St. Anne's.

William McGrath recalled his son's ordination as overwhelming.

"When you are ordained in St. Peter's Basilica by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, with 31 other deacons and within excess of 300 priests processing ... can you top this?" he said.

- Kathleen Schwar

Episcopal installation honors all ministries

By Kathleen Schwar
Assistant editor

ROCHESTER — Outgoing Bishop William Burrill handed his crozier to Bishop Jack M. McKelvey, marking the latter's installation Dec. 4 as bishop coadjutor of the Episcopal Diocese of Rochester.

More than a dozen Episcopal bishops from outside the area, and several other denominational representatives from Western New York were among 1,800 people at the ceremony at the Eastman Theatre. Father Joseph Hart, vicar general, represented the Diocese of Rochester.

Bishop McKelvey officially takes over Jan. 1 as the seventh bishop of the eight-county Rochester Episcopal Diocese, its 58 parishes and 18,000 members. Bishop Burrill, who served the Rochester Diocese for 16 years, is retiring to Arizona.

Under Bishop Burrill, the Roman Catholic Diocese and Episcopal Diocese of Rochester signed a covenant in 1988 committing to continuing dialogue between the two and their parishes, which had begun in 1976. It has helped bring Catholic and Episcopal parishes together in parts of the diocese.

Bishop McKelvey's first words to the congregation were of thanks for those attending — and of concern over an anti-gay flyer distributed outside the theater before the ceremony. The vaguely-worded flyer read, "Inclusive but not diluted ... say no to homox."

"I want you to know that flyer in no way represents this bishop nor his leadership in this place," he stated, to a round of applause.

In fact, the bishop is known for his support of the gay and lesbian community. He'd invited a Dignity-Integrity choir to sing and lead the congregation in the refrain of "We Are the Body of Christ." Dignity-Integrity Rochester is an unofficial group of about 40-50 Episcopalians and Catholics dedicated to gay and lesbian rights within the church.

The bishop's denouncement "came as a very welcome surprise to us," said Michael J. Nicosia, choir member and lay chaplain to Dignity/Integrity. "Members of our group were very enraged about it (flyer)."

Bishop McKelvey's installation proved to be a celebration of the shared ministries of all who were baptized.

"He wanted it focused on all our ministries together," said Episcopal Father David Robinson, chair of the installation committee. "His theme throughout the process of designing the installation was not only shared ministries and the Good News, but inclusiveness of as many groups and people as possible... and to have fun with it."

The congregation renewed baptismal vows, with children using pine branches to sprinkle water throughout the congregation.

Bishop McKelvey offered a loaf of



Mike Mergen/Photo Intern

Bishop Jack M. McKelvey rejoices at his installation as bishop coadjutor of the Rochester Episcopal Diocese Dec. 4, at Rochester's Eastman Theatre. He officially becomes the diocese's seventh bishop Jan. 1.

bread and wine to parish representatives. After receiving the bishop's ring and pectoral cross, he was presented with numerous community gifts including an autographed Red Wings baseball and season tickets, and an increased life insurance policy — a tease about his love of car racing.

Married and the father of four children, Bishop McKelvey received his master and doctor of divinity degrees from Virginia Theological Seminary.

He had served as suffragan (assistant) bishop of the Diocese of Newark, N.J., since 1991. He served for 24 years as a parish priest in Delaware and New Jersey.

The bishop has participated on the national level in studies dealing with the sin of racism and on ecumenical relations programs. In the Diocese of Newark, he worked on developing new approaches to urban and rural ministry.

In her sermon at the installation, Bishop Mary Adelia R. McLeod of Vermont noted that expectations of a bishop are high. Bishops are asked, she said, "to tap dance on jello and not break the surface."

Bishop Matthew H. Clark, in a farewell to Bishop Burrill printed in a recent *Episcopal Chronicle*, wrote, "... I shall miss occasions on which we compared notes on what it is like to be a bishop. As you might expect, we had some laughs in those discussions but I remember as well Bill's understanding, support and counsel."



Father Robinson commented, "I'm hoping Matthew Clark and Jack hit it off as well. My hope is they will have a good relationship."

"There's a lot of weight on a bishop's shoulder, I think Matthew and Bill shared that burden."

As for the covenant, he said, "I think it will be strongly supported. It may even expand."

Priest appointment

Father Michael Brown has been appointed pastor of the Catholic Community of Mt. Morris and Nunda, effective Nov. 27. He had been parochial vicar at the Corning-Painted Post Catholic Community.

He replaces Father Dan Condon, who is on study leave at the Catholic University of America for two years.

Diocese names Lopata second parish liaison

The diocese has named Casey Lopata as the second liaison between the Pastoral Office and parish planning groups, effective Jan. 4.

Lopata is administrator of the Diocesan Tribunal. He will assist 17 of the 35 planning groups developed in recent years in response to Pastoral Planning for the New Millennium.

Lopata will work with William Pickett, pastoral planning director, and Karen Rinefierd, who since July has been serving as liaison.

"He brings different skills to this and we know we can work together," Rinefierd said, adding that Lopata's business background and her ministry skills should serve well. He retired in 1998 as a program manager after 32 years with Xerox Corp.

Lopata also is co-director of the Catholic Gay & Lesbian Family Ministry, a self-supporting group that operates on behalf of the diocese. Rinefierd is its diocesan liaison.

Lopata will work one day a week as tribunal administrator until June 30, when he'll be a full-time liaison.

"I am delighted that Casey has accepted this position," stated Kathleen Cannon, diocesan director of parish support ministries, in a Dec. 3 press release. "Through the hard work of the tribunal staff and Casey's administrative leadership skills, the tribunal case backlog has been eliminated. I have every confidence that Casey will apply the same leadership skills to his work as planning group liaison."

She noted the backlog elimination was expected to take 24 months but took only 18. The tribunal administrator position is expected to be phased out.

Obituary

Sr. Nathalie Brahler dies at convent at 102

Sister Nathalie Brahler, SSJ, died at the Sisters of St. Joseph Convent Infirmary in Rochester on Oct. 27, 1999. She was 102.

A native of Webster, Sister Nathalie entered her order from Holy Trinity Church in 1918. She then taught in a succession of parish schools for 44 years: St. Augustine's and Our Lady of Perpetual Help, St. Lucy's, St. Francis Xavier and Christ the King, all in Rochester; St. Theodore's in Gates; St. Aloysius, Auburn; St. John the Evangelist, Spencerport; St. Patrick's, Dansville; St. Mary's, Canandaigua; St. Patrick's, Corning; St. Mary's, Elmira; and St. Agnes, Avon.

Sister Nathalie retired from teaching in 1964, and served as a seamstress at the SSJ motherhouse for 26 years. She retired to the infirmary in 1990.

In an Oct. 9, 1997, article in the *Catholic Courier* marking her 100th birthday, Sister Nathalie was described by one friend as a serious educator who loved children and playing cards as well. The article also noted that Sister Nathalie's favorite expression was: "For pity's sake!"

Sister Nathalie is survived by nieces, nephews and her Sisters of St. Joseph. Contributions may be made in her memory to the Sisters of St. Joseph Convent Infirmary, 4199 East Ave., Rochester, N.Y. 14618-3733.