

WORLD & NATION

Catholic groups issue guide to help parishes

By Tracy Early
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — The National Catholic AIDS Network, working with Catholic Charities USA, has completed a three-year project to produce a manual for guiding parishes in AIDS ministries.

Father Robert J. Vitillo, director of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development and president of the AIDS network board, and Father Rodney J. DeMartini, network director, co-chaired a seven-member steering committee that developed the manual.

In a joint interview with Catholic News Service March 3, they said this was the first resource of its kind for Catholic parishes and was developed in response to "numerous inquiries" from parishes that found nothing available elsewhere.

The manual, produced in a loose-leaf notebook format, is called "Many Threads, One Weave," a reference to the many individuals and needs within the one "weave" of the church. It is being sold in a package with a video produced by the Catholic Communication Campaign, "Living with AIDS: An Occasion of Grace."

Fathers Vitillo and DeMartini said the resources would help parishes show that the church is a "healing and welcoming community."

Many people still do not know about the extensive services the church provides or the encouragement to AIDS ministry given by Pope John Paul II and the U.S. bishops, they said.

Included in "Many Threads, One Weave" is a letter signed by Bishop Howard J. Hub-

bard of Albany, episcopal moderator of the AIDS network, and Auxiliary Bishop Joseph M. Sullivan of Brooklyn, episcopal moderator of Catholic Charities USA. AIDS ministries form part of "the seamless garment of respect and reverence for life," they said.

The resource will help parishes both "in their mission of service to those whose lives have been touched" by the "devastating pandemic," and in raising "awareness and commitment to help reduce the spread of this disease," they said.

Father Vitillo, whose office is at the U.S. bishops' headquarters in Washington, and Father DeMartini, who is based in the San Francisco area, were in New York to meet with officials of one of the Catholic foundations that provided small grants to finance the project, and to launch a campaign to publicize the availability of the manual.

They said it was appropriate to start the campaign in New York because the AIDS network was incorporated in New York in 1989 and began its work in New York in 1990 with the blessing of Cardinal John J. O'Connor.

The priests said that although some people have become complacent about the disease, the AIDS problem in the United States is growing and so is the need for parish AIDS ministries.

According to recent estimates, the United States has about 890,000 people living with HIV and AIDS, and has more new cases, about 40,000, each year than deaths from AIDS, they said. Cases in black and Hispanic communities are twice their proportion of the population, and the num-



Reuters/CNS

Flood victim awaits aid

A man waits for treatment inside a church being used as a field hospital in the town of Chokwe in Mozambique March 6. Fears of epidemic are growing in the area suffering from its worst flooding in decades.

bers among heterosexuals are growing, they said.

They said AIDS ministries had traditionally focused on caring for people in their last months, but is changing somewhat as improved drug therapies allow longer and more active lives for patients who have access to the drugs and can tolerate them.

So in addition to caring for people unable to leave their homes or hospices, AIDS ministry may now often be helping someone get reintegrated into community life and find employment, the priests said.

Fathers Vitillo and DeMartini said the manual's sections on prevention of AIDS set forth church teaching that sex should

be reserved for marriage and that abstinence is the only "100 percent safe" way to prevent contracting AIDS.

Parishes need to conduct educational programs on AIDS prevention for young people, they said, because programs in other settings often lack any reference to values the church considers important.

The priests said 30 "facilitators" had been trained to lead parishes or groupings of parishes in studying the manual, and pilot training events had been held in the Archdiocese of Denver and dioceses of Cleveland and Fresno, Calif. The manual will be translated into Spanish, and Spanish-speaking facilitators will be trained, they said.



"When looking into retirement communities, I made sure I understood the variety of options available to me. With no entrance fee, I feel I get a real value because I'm not locked into any type of program. And having that kind of freedom allows me to travel extensively, which I have always enjoyed. Then, when I return to the security and comfort of my home at Chapel Oaks, I continue to relive my excursions by presenting travelogues of my fabulous trips, both near and far."

— Marguerite "Peg" Pinner
Irondequoit, New York

No Entrance Fee Required. Call today!

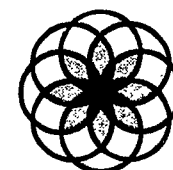
"I Fell in Love with the Incredible Value."

The French call it *joie de vivre*, or love of life. That ability to approach life joyfully and fully appreciate all that each day has to offer. Every day, residents of Chapel Oaks, Rochester's newest and finest rental retirement community, are finding the joy of retirement living. Once you've experienced life at Chapel Oaks, you may find yourself falling in love with the true joy of living all over again.

Fall in love with the *tradition* of St. Ann's of Greater Rochester, Inc., who for 125 years has provided senior adults with a truly fulfilling retirement lifestyle. The *location* of being perfectly situated on 14 beautiful, secluded acres of the St. Ann's campus and just minutes away from Rochester's finest shopping, entertainment and cultural activities. The *independence* to continue an active life style without routine maintenance and tiresome daily chores. The *value* of a rental concept with no entrance fee, which makes Chapel Oaks Rochester's most affordable retirement living options. The *convenience* of exceptional services and amenities, and the spacious one- and two-bedroom

apartment homes. Or, fall in love with the *security and peace of mind* that comes from having priority access to a full continuum of health care services right on the St. Ann's campus.

Retirement is your time to seize the day and life to its fullest; to experience your "joie de vivre." Please call (716) 342-3052 for more information about Chapel Oaks or to arrange your personal tour. Once you see all that we have to offer, you may just find yourself falling in love with the true joy of living all over again!



ST. ANN'S
CHAPEL OAKS
Full of Life

1550 Portland Avenue Rochester, NY 14621
(716) 342-3052

An affiliate of St. Ann's of Greater Rochester, Inc.

