



File photo

Sister Anne Michelle McGill, SSJ, serves as pastoral administrator at St. Gabriel's Church, Hammondsport.

Lay ministers on rise

By Jerry Filteau
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Lay ministers now outnumber priests on the staffs of most U.S. Catholic parishes, said the report of a survey released May 4.

The National Catholic Parish Survey found that the laity, deacons and religious holding ministerial positions on parish staffs outnumber priests in parishes by nearly 2-to-1 — by more than 2-to-1 if one excludes the priests who are resident in a parish but not part of the staff.

The parishes in the survey ranged from 23 members to 20,650, but the average parish had a little more than 2,800 members and a yearly budget of about \$580,000.

More than 90 percent of the pastors re-

sponding to the survey said they were satisfied with their overall parish ministry. Those with large parishes, large staffs and diverse parish programs and outreach tended to express the highest levels of satisfaction.

Researchers Jim Castelli, president of Castelli Enterprises, and Father Eugene Hemrick, research director for the Washington Theological Union, conducted the mail survey of pastors in late 1999 and early 2000. From questionnaires sent to a national random sampling of Catholic parishes they obtained 704 usable responses.

Many of the questions were designed to provide data that could be compared with findings from a 1982 survey of 1,100 parishes conducted as part of the mas-

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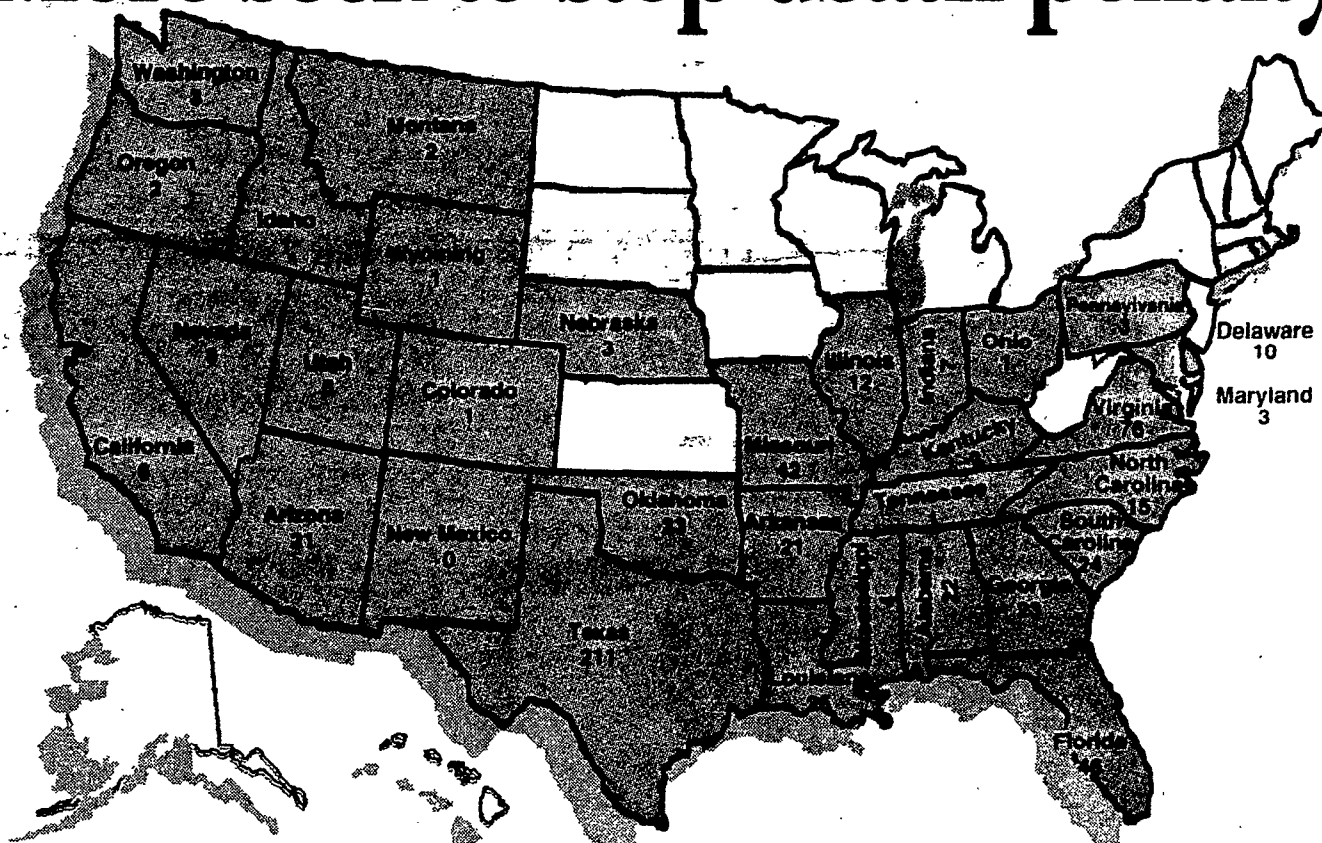
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More seek to stop death penalty



Map shows executions by state since 1976.

The reason Peggy Rosenthal attends anti-death penalty vigils each month is basic.

"It comes out of the commitment to the consistent life ethic," said Rosenthal of Rochester's Blessed Sacrament Parish. "The death penalty seems to us to be of particular urgency now. ... People are being killed."

And fellow activists note that Monroe County has asked for the death penalty in five of seven first-degree murder cases, which they say is the greatest percentage of any county in the state since the penalty became legal in New York in September 1995.

Meanwhile, a national movement for a moratorium on

the death penalty is gathering critical support, and opponents of the death penalty are watching closely.

Moratorium Now! — a three-year nationwide effort — has collected 800 of the 2,000 moratorium resolutions and statements endorsing such resolutions it hopes to have by the year's end. Among them are 19 resolutions and statements by city and county councils — including Rochester City Council members' March 3 letter asking Gov. George Pataki to support a moratorium resolution, apparently within New York.

"It's really snowballing. We say ricocheting," said Trisha Kendall, one of two organizers of Moratori-

um Now! The project is organized through the Equal Justice Center at Quixote Center in Hyattsville, Md.

More than 100 organizations in New York state have called for a moratorium. They include the Diocese of Rochester; Pax Christi Rochester; the Corning/Painted Post Roman Catholic Community; Abbey of the Genesee; Rochester Catholic Worker/St. Joseph's House of Hospitality; Assumption of Our Lady Parish, Fairport; House of Mercy; the Sisters of Mercy; the Sisters of St. Joseph; St. Margaret Mary Parish, Apalachin; St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Scottsville; St. Salome's Parish,

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