

DIOCESAN NEWS

Diocese places hold on changes in liturgy

The diocesan Office of Liturgy advised parishes Sept. 13 not to change current liturgical practices until changes announced by the Vatican are finalized.

The Vatican issued new rules July 28, marking the first revision in 25 years of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal. The *Catholic Courier* published a Catholic News Service story on the changes Aug. 10 and included comments from Joan Workmaster, diocesan director of liturgy. Bishop Matthew H. Clark also spoke about the changes during his Aug. 18 presentation at Leadership Days, which was covered by the *Courier*.

Workmaster estimated receiving some 30 to 35 phone calls, plus letters and e-mail about the changes. She said pastors and pastoral administrators inquired, "Are we supposed to be doing something different?"

In response, her Sept. 13 advisory stresses that the instruction's Latin edition is not yet official. The official release

is not expected until October, to accompany the new version of the Roman Missal coming out this fall.

Further, she noted, "When the Latin text is officially released, there will be a period of time for study and planning for implementation. This will most likely be determined by the NCCB (National Council of Catholic Bishops), but each bishop will also have input within his local territory."

An English translation currently being read by U.S. church leaders is only a "study text" — not an official translation, she emphasized.

"Our recommendation is that you change nothing about your current practice until this text is official and we can see what we need to do," Workmaster wrote.

The revised Vatican instructions restrict the role of lay people in distributing Communion and also state that a lay person must never present the homily.

St. Rita's Parish celebrates 50th

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Fifty years ago, St. Rita's Parish was created — literally — in a farm field. A reconstructed church building, brought over from an adjoining town, served as worship space. A barn housed meetings for the 200-family parish community.

Things have changed rather drastically since those humble beginnings: St. Rita's parish membership now totals more than 2,200 families, and the campus in West Webster has several buildings — including a new church dedicated in 1984 and parish center that opened in 1996.

St. Rita's observed the 50th anniversary of its first Mass on Sept. 3. And on Oct. 21, the parish will hold a dinner-dance, continuing a series of golden-anniversary celebrations that have taken place throughout the year. St. Rita's has also compiled a new directory, a special jubilee cookbook, and a display of photos and stories depicting the parish's history.

The parish's patron saint is known as "Saint of the Impossible" — quite appropriate since St. Rita's inaugural Mass took place only five months after ground-breaking had begun in early 1950.

That first liturgy was held in a structure that had served as the former church for St. Margaret Mary Parish in Irondequoit. The building, which had been transported to Webster and reassembled, was to serve as St. Rita's home for more than three decades.

St. Rita's School was added in 1955. The barn, which had been part of a former

grape vineyard on St. Rita's 23-acre property, continued to provide meeting space for parish groups over the years. It is still utilized today, accommodating student overflow from the thriving school.

The first Mass in St. Rita's current church was celebrated on the Easter Vigil of 1984. Four years ago, St. Rita's opened a \$1.2-million parish center with multiple meeting rooms and a spacious gymnasium.

Father Charles Latus, St. Rita's pastor, noted that two of his predecessors covered virtually the parish's entire history. Father Francis Kleehammer, the founding pastor, led St. Rita's until his retirement in 1978 (he died in 1981). Father Kleehammer was succeeded by two co-pastors, Father John Reif and Father James Burke, who served together from 1978 to 1981. Father Reif then became sole pastor in 1981 and served in that capacity until 1998. He is currently parochial vicar at Holy Cross Parish in Charlotte, while Father Burke serves as pastor of Holy Family Parish in Auburn.

Father Latus began as St. Rita's priest-administrator in January 1999 and was made pastor later that year. He leads a parish that is one of the largest in the diocese — and is getting even larger.

"I believe that Webster is the fastest growing suburb in the area," Father Latus said.

Father Latus said he has been impressed by St. Rita's volunteerism in such areas as ministry to the homebound and hospitals.

"A very large percentage of the people are participating in the life of the parish," Father Latus commented. "I'm feeling very comfortable here; the people are very hospitable."



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Migrant camp visit

Bishop John Yanta of Amarillo, Texas, greets Ramona Ramos after an outdoor Mass Sept. 16 at Sodoma Farms migrant camp in Brockport. It was held in honor of Bishop Yanta's visit as a liaison to the U.S. bishops' Office for Migrants and Refugees. It also coincided with Mexico's Independence Day. At right, Bishop Yanta says a blessing over the congregation.



Organ dedication set

A 1915 E. M. Skinner pipe organ will be rededicated Sunday, Oct. 1, at Holy Cross Church, 375 S. George Road, Dryden, at 3 p.m. A reception will follow. The public is invited.

The event will feature music by Annette Richards, an organist from Cornell University, with Frank Campos on trumpet and the Sage Chapel Choir, conducted by Richard Riley.

The organ is the second-oldest in existence made by renowned organ builder Ernest M. Skinner. It was originally built for a Methodist church in Ithaca and was relocated to Wells College in Aurora in the late 1950s.

The organ was made available to Holy Cross Parish five years ago, and reconstruction began in 1996. Through thousands of volunteer hours by parishioners, it has been restored to its original condition, and has been in use there since late 1998.

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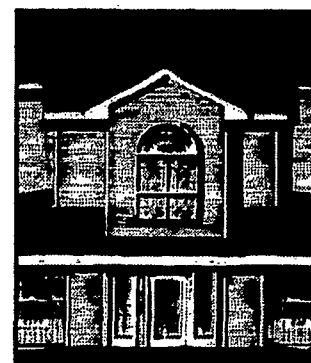


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