

Diocesan campaign aims to raise \$5 million

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

The Diocese of Rochester seeks to raise \$5 million in this year's Thanks Giving Appeal, its primary diocesan-wide annual fundraising effort.

The goal is slightly less than last year's of \$5.2 million. The appeal last year raised \$4.83 million, according to Jennifer K. Myska, diocesan director of annual giving. "Even though we didn't reach (our goal), it was still a very successful TGA," she said. "It was one of the best giving years that we had. The big lesson I would derive from last year is we do count on parishioners for the TGA."

TGA funds half the diocese's annual budget, with the rest of the budget income



coming from fees, investments and gifts.

The year's TGA theme is "We are Given to Share," the same as last year's theme, Myska added. The theme refers to the fact that God is the source of all we have and all we are, and we are called to share our personal blessings with each other.

"Within the next two weeks, in early October, parishioners across the diocese will receive information and a pledge form for

this year's campaign," she said. "Our hope is that parishioners will respond generously, as they have in the past."

Gifts can be made by cash, personal check or credit card, according to TGA information. Parishioners interested in making gifts of stocks or securities should contact the Diocesan Development Office at 716/328-3228, or 800/388-7177 ext. 288, for details.

Bishop Matthew H. Clark was to kick off the appeal at a Sept. 26 afternoon meeting with more than 100 pastors, administrators and lay leaders at St. Mary's Church, Canandaigua.

"When I speak about our annual Thanks Giving Appeal, I realize that I am so very fortunate to have a special perspective from which to observe all that it accom-

plishes," he stated in prepared remarks. "I see it on a daily basis throughout the years and rejoice in its rich blessings. I often talk about how the ministries funded through the TGA provide outreach to thousands of people, young and old, urban and rural, in every part of our diocese."

According to information from the TGA office, last year's TGA funds helped to finance the following activities:

- Training of 180 catechetical leaders.
- Tuition assistance to 2,000 needy Catholic school families.
- Retreats, rallies, and local and national conventions for 3,200 young people.
- Liturgical and ministry workshops for more than 800 lay leaders and parish staff.
- The Rite of Christian Initiation of

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The sacrifices of migrant workers



'The harvest is impossible without them'

— Bishop John Yanta

At Sodoma Farms near Brockport, an unpaved passageway runs off the main drag, Gordon Road. At the end of the dirt road, unnoticed by passing motorists, is the humble camp where the farm's Hispanic migrant laborers reside with their families.

On Saturday night, Sept. 16, residents gathered on the grounds at dusk for a Mass celebrating Mexican Independence Day. It was no ordinary liturgy. The celebrant was Bishop John W. Yanta from the Diocese of Amarillo, Texas, who was on a three-day pastoral visit to the Rochester and Buffalo dioceses.

Approximately 200 people gathered under two tents, braving temperatures that dipped into the low 50s. Young families huddled together, while several men hovered near the tent's edge.

The Mass began at 7 p.m. "Mexican time" — meaning the liturgy actually began after 7:30. Near one side of the tent, a German Shepherd whined for attention. On another side, children played with a cat that had wandered onto the scene. Portable lights flickered on and off numerous times during the Mass, but nobody seemed to mind, including Bishop Yanta, who praised the makeshift church.

"Thank you for the beautiful cathedral you have built for me," he said to the congregation in Spanish.

After Mass, as worshipers filed

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Bishop John W. Yanta, of Amarillo, Texas, distributes Communion Sept. 16 at a migrant camp at Sodoma Farms in Brockport, during a visit to the Rochester and Buffalo dioceses. Top photo, the offertory brought forth a variety of gifts.

Story by Mike Latona
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