

DIOCESAN NEWS

Priest speaks on domestic violence

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Only in the last decade, Father Stephen Dohner maintained, has the Catholic Church taken strong action to address domestic violence in our culture.

"The issue has been around for years, but the church has come late to it," Father Dohner said, noting that the U.S. bishops began increasing their efforts against domestic violence in the early 1990s.

Father Dohner is doing his part to make up for lost time. He founded and maintains a domestic violence program in the Diocese of Cleveland. In addition, he travels the country giving seminars and workshops on the subject.

Father Dohner was due to visit the Rochester Diocese Oct. 24-25 to conduct domestic violence workshops for parish staff. They were to be held at St. Francis de Sales Church in Geneva and St. Bernard's Institute in Rochester.

The workshops, held in recognition of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, mark the diocese's first formal training for pastoral staff on domestic violence. According to Suzanne Schnittman, the diocese's domestic violence outreach coordinator, 110 staff members from 40 parishes were expected.

Parishes are crucial support systems for families affected by domestic violence, Father Dohner stated. He said that it's important to raise the subject in all areas of

church life — among staff, in youth groups, in sacramental preparation classes. In addition, parishes should offer literature and bulletin notices on domestic violence, and publicize phone numbers of social agencies for victims.

"I think there is a moral obligation for those who purport to have a moral voice," Father Dohner said. "Other institutions come and go, but the church is there from birth to death. We're the ones who have families for the whole life cycle."

Father Dohner noted that domestic violence affects anywhere from one-quarter to one-third of all households in the United States. The same statistics, he said, likely apply to Catholic households. He added that at least 90 percent of domestic violence victims are women.

Staff and parishioners should be ready to act as "a link in the chain," he said, in getting help for a victim. Yet direct contact with a victim can be tricky, he acknowledged, because the victim may be unwilling to discuss a problem. To further complicate matters, he added, the perpetrator may be an active parishioner.

"The abuser can also be your head usher, or a member of the finance council," Father Dohner said.

He said that parish staff and parishioners must not rush a victim into leaving her violent situation. He explained that the victim is at greatest risk when she decides to leave: The abuser, fearing loss of control, may lash out.

On the other hand, he said, a victim should never remain in an abusive situation for the sake of preserving marital vows.

"The sacrament of marriage does not say you have to live this way," Father Dohner emphasized.

Domestic violence involves battering, psychological abuse and/or sexual abuse that one partner inflicts upon another. Father Dohner said that abusers can be people who are not socially mature and haven't learned to properly deal with stress, as well as people who depend heavily on their partner for self-image and exert excessive control as a result.

"The heart of what makes an abuser an abuser is not violence. It's a need to control," Father Dohner said.

The most violent abusers are those who are "violent as a means of getting through life," and are also the most difficult to counsel, he said.

Father Dohner added that "70 percent of spousal violence is carried over to children," and that those children are likely to adopt violent traits as well.

Father Dohner, 50, serves as director of the Cleveland Diocese's Department of Marriage and Family Ministry. He is a marital and family therapist who has practiced psychology for 24 years.

In 1992 he began the Domestic Violence Task Force in Cleveland. The ecumenical group works in conjunction with such social agencies as shelters for battered women and rape crisis centers.

Protesters stage vigil

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Protesters held a peaceful candlelight vigil Oct. 21 to oppose impending renovations at Rochester's Sacred Heart Cathedral.

The protest outside the cathedral attracted a crowd of at least 200 from Sacred Heart and other Monroe County parishes, according to organizers. Sacred Heart staff members who observed the vigil estimated the contingent at 50 to 75.

"It was peaceful and prayerful and everything we had hoped for," said Barbara Fredericks, a Sacred Heart parishioner who took part in the protest. "We hope to have made an impression on Father Mulligan (Father John Mulligan, pastor) and the powers that be."

Fredericks is an active member of Catholics for the Real Presence, which organized the protest. That group was founded by Michael E. Brennan, a Sacred Heart parishioner. Brennan joined Sacred Heart Parish one month ago, according to Peggy Best, a parish secretary.

The group maintains that current and planned renovations at several diocesan churches are costly, and not in accordance with church law. Brennan was quoted in an Oct. 19 *Catholic Courier* article as saying that Catholics for the Real Presence oppose the removal of tabernacles from the center of the altar because they feel this practice diminishes the congregation's focus on Christ. However, the U.S. bishops have stated that it is important there be no confusion between the celebration of the Eucharist and reservation. "Active and static aspects of the same reality cannot claim the same human attention at the same time," they stated in "Environment and Art in Catholic Worship."

An Oct. 21 statement from Catholics for the Real Presence said cathedral renovations would "dismantle one of the most beautiful sanctuaries and altars in the diocese."

"To strip the cathedral of its sacred character is a tragic and costly attempt to compromise and undermine Catholic tradition and truth," the statement continued.

"Why won't Bishop Clark preserve or restore the Cathedral?" the statement continued. "Why must so much money be wasted on wrecking an important Rochester landmark?"

But Father Mulligan said in the Oct. 19 *Courier* that all renovations would be done in accordance with Vatican norms. He added that there is no legislation that the tabernacle must remain in the center.

Other potential renovations, Father Mulligan said, would improve the sound system; lighting and wiring; baptismal area; penance areas; handicap access; social gathering space; bathrooms; bishop's chair; and floor plan.

Renovation planning won't begin until committees of parish and diocesan representatives are established in January. The renovations would be done in honor of Bishop Matthew H. Clark's 25th anniversary as Rochester's bishop in 2004.

Meanwhile, Fredericks noted, a petition decrying the cathedral renovations will be presented to diocesan officials in the near future. The petition was circulated at the vigil.



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Preschooler Hao Ly (center) holds up a cut-out bird with the help of his teacher, Joanne Lamphron, at Holy Family School, Rochester. The students' artwork welcomed home Seaman Edward Love, who survived an attack on the USS Cole.

School kids welcome seaman

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

Students and faculty at Holy Family School, Rochester, made sure Seaman Recruit Edward T. Love felt at home after he was injured in the attack on the USS Cole in Yemen.

The 21-year-old sailor, whose family lives next door to the school, suffered a punctured eardrum in the Oct. 12 blast when a bomb-laden boat exploded next to the Cole, killing 17 sailors.

Children in Holy Family's early childhood program, ages 3, 4 and 5, with fourth- and fifth-graders in Holy Family's after-school program, decorated the windows of the west side of the school — which faces the Love home, according to

Sister Lorraine Burns, SSND, principal. Words on the windows declared, "Welcome Home Seaman Edward Love."

Love, who is home for a month, according to a Navy official, visited the school the morning of Oct. 20, and thanked the children for their sign.

He also received a plastic plaque with an eagle and a U.S. flag from the school's 3-year-olds, according to Ro Muscolino, Holy Family's early childhood coordinator.

She added that the kids told Love they had been praying for him.

A group of fourth-graders also asked Love questions about the attack, Muscolino said. She noted they were particularly intrigued by the fact that someone would deliberately attack the ship.



Sister Lorraine Burns, SSND, principal, takes pictures of the signs.

Although no firm link has been established between any group and the attack, Yemeni and U.S. investigators have listed Osama Bin Laden, a Saudi who was behind the bombings of two U.S. embassies in Africa two years ago, as a prime suspect.

Attempts to contact the Love family by the *Catholic Courier* were unsuccessful.

Although the Loves do not belong to Holy Family, Sister Burns and Muscolino said they have been great neighbors to the parish.

"They're a lovely family," Muscolino said.

Nazareth College alumna leaves \$1.5 million bequest; funds to be used for expansion

The late Nazareth College alumna Marjorie Loos, class of '31, made a \$1.5 million bequest to the college. A resident of Pittsford, she and her late husband, J. Mallory Loos, a former vice president at Rochester Gas & Electric (now RGS), have long been generous supporters of the college.

"We are very grateful for the steadfast generosity that Marjorie and Mallory Loos have shown to Nazareth College over the years," said Robert A. Miller, college president.

He added that the money would be used

to expand the campus and its curriculum over the next five years.

Mrs. Loos served as president of the college's Alumnae Association during the early 1950s, and continued to be an active member of that association over the years. In 1997, the atrium of the Speech and Hearing Department in Carroll Hall was dedicated and named for the Looses.

Mrs. Loos helped to organize annual membership drives for the Catholic Youth Organization and the Community Chest. An active member of Brighton's Our Lady

of Lourdes Parish, she was a member of its Rosary Society. A veteran of World War II, Mr. Loos was senior vice commander of the New York Department of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and a member of the National Board of Directors of the VFW. He was appointed by Gov. Nelson Rockefeller to the Board of Visitors of the New York State Women's Relief Corps Home.

Nazareth College recently announced plans to double the physical size of the campus, purchasing 73 acres of adjacent property from the Sisters of St. Joseph.