

# DIOCESAN NEWS

## Frigid winter means busy shelters

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

Winter always brings an increase in the numbers of homeless people, particularly men, who seek shelter, according to Susan Bennett, Catholic Family Center's director of homeless and housing services, which includes the Francis Center for men.

"In the summer we can have 10 empty beds," Bennett said of the 37-bed Francis Center. "But now we are full, full, full."

Francis Center is one of many outreach efforts made by the Diocese of Rochester to help people who lack housing. The center's 37 beds for homeless men include 13 dedicated for those involved in programs helping them to make a transition from life on the streets to a more stable existence, according to Bennett. When the shelter opened in 1991, more beds were devoted to men in transition, she said, but over time, the need for emergency shelter has grown.

Part of the reason more beds are needed for this year's homeless male population is the March 2000 closing of the shelter program at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality, a Catholic Worker center, she said. The former director of the St. Joseph's program, Kevin Eubank, is still searching for a building to house a shelter called Safe Haven Project Inc., which will be a secular program. An average of 40-45 people, most of them men, were sleeping at St. Joseph's last winter, but the house ended the shelter program due in part to insufficient staff.

Safe Haven, a program for 25 homeless men, was slated to open this fall in the former rectory of the old St. Bridget's Church. (St. Bridget's congregation moved to the former St. Theresa's Church in 1997.) But the Rochester City Council voted in November against rezoning the area around the church and rectory to allow the shelter to operate. Eubank noted that he and city officials currently are searching for a new location for Safe Haven.

Another formerly Catholic program, Dimitri House, a shelter for seven men, has been operating since July independently of Corpus Christi Parish, which originally sponsored the house. In its move to independence, Dimitri House hasn't "skipped a



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Residents at Francis Center in Rochester (back row from left), Michael Girard, 39, Timothy "Bull" Collins, 20, Timothy Broyld, 22, Matthew Peer, 22, and Bob Reynolds, 55. (Front from left), Daniel Barrett, 36, and Chris Arsit, 21.

beat," according to Ginnie Knopp, a volunteer.

"We pretty much have a regular clientele," she said of the men who sleep there.

In addition to the Francis Center, two other Catholic shelters operate in Rochester: Women's Place for women and children, and Bethany House, a Catholic Worker home that can serve 11-12 women and children.

Women's Place, designed for 18 women, each with one to two children, is "bursting at the seams," according to Bennett. That's because the women living there today have larger families than did prior clients, she said, noting some women have brought as many as five children with them. The lack of emergency housing for women and children in Rochester compelled CFC to propose establishing a new shelter for women and children, which is tentatively slated to open in spring, 2002, she said.

Donna Ecker, co-director of Bethany, also noted an increase in female homelessness in recent years. She said that she is now

regularly turning away more requests for help than in years past.

Rochester isn't the only place in the diocese seeking to serve the homeless. Catholic Charities of the Finger Lakes staff in Geneva regularly refer clients to community groups and churches who can help them find housing. Two such churches are St. Stephen's and St. Francis DeSales that make up the Roman Catholic Community of Geneva. Marie Milligan, social ministry coordinator for the churches, said the parishes help one or more families a week with rent assistance and other kinds of help so that they don't wind up on the streets. Since Geneva has no shelter, she has also occasionally bought bus tickets for homeless people to go to Rochester or Syracuse for shelter, she said.

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EDITORS' NOTE: To find out what type of donations shelters need, call the following numbers: Francis Center at 716/423-9590; Women's Place at 436-5452; Bethany House at 454-4197; and Dimitri House at 325-1796.

## Joseph Marcoux becomes transitional deacon

Joseph Marcoux was ordained a transitional deacon Dec. 9 at the American College Oratory in Louvain, Belgium. He is scheduled for ordination as a Rochester diocesan priest in June 2001.

In attendance at the Dec. 9 ordination were Deacon Marcoux's parents, Leo and Jennie, and numerous priests from the Rochester Diocese who traveled overseas.

"It's very exciting to have a son to be ordained a deacon and, God willing, a priest. It's wonderful," Jennie Marcoux said.

Deacon Marcoux, 35, grew up in Irondequoit's St. James Parish. The church is located directly across the street from Deacon Marcoux's childhood home, where his parents still live. Deacon Marcoux is the sixth of eight children.

He graduated from St. James School and Bishop Kearney High School. He then studied food service at Monroe Community College, and has been a cook and chef for 10 years.

In 1993 he enrolled at the Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio. He grad-

uated with honors in 1996 with a bachelor's degree in philosophy and theology.

Later in 1996, Deacon Marcoux took graduate studies at Oxford University in England, studying the Renaissance and Reformation. He again graduated with honors.

Since 1996, Deacon Marcoux has studied at the American College in Louvain. He already has earned bachelor's and master's degrees in religious studies, and a bachelor's in sacred theology. He is presently completing his master's in theology and licentiate in sacred theology.

In his pastoral year of 1998-99, Deacon Marcoux served in the Corning-Painted Post Roman Catholic Community. He completed his clinical pastoral education at Rochester's Strong Memorial Hospital in 1999.

"To think that an average middle-class kid from East Irondequoit could have had all the experiences that I have had so far, never ceases to amaze me," Deacon Marcoux remarked. "I wonder with awe what will be next."

Deacon Marcoux is due to be the only Rochester diocesan priest ordained in 2001. The ordination is scheduled for June 23 at Rochester's Sacred Heart Cathedral. Deacon Marcoux plans to celebrate his first Mass on June 24 at St. James Church, then return to Louvain to complete his studies.

"I really cannot wait to get back to the diocese. Living in Europe has been an expanding experience, but my home is the Diocese of Rochester, and that is where my life and work are as well," Deacon Marcoux commented.

- Mike Latona

## Video details football era

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

ROCHESTER — Aquinas Institute's storied football history is now available on videotape thanks to the efforts of Howard Nielsen, whose son, Brian, is a senior at the high school and who was a linebacker this fall on the football team.

Nielsen, a parishioner at Sacred Heart Cathedral, premiered "When Football Was Bigger Than Life," a 75-minute documentary film he spent three years making, at The Little Theatre Nov. 15. About 250 people attended the showing, and Nielsen has since sold 600 copies of the film's video at \$19.95 a pop.

The documentary covers Aquinas' football program from 1930 to 1947, when it grew into a national powerhouse, and also looks at football in general in the area, including a segment on the Rochester Jeffersons, a charter member of the National Football League. A labor of love for Nielsen, he said he must sell a total of 3,000 copies of the video to break even on his \$39,000 investment. He added that donors gave him \$1,000 to make the film.

All profits will be turned into making a sequel documenting Aquinas' football from 1948 to 1951, when the school began to de-emphasize its program, Nielsen said. He added that someday he would also like to make a movie dramatizing the life of U.S. Army Major Donald W. Hollender, an Aquinas student and football player who starred on the West Point team and was killed in Vietnam. Hollender Stadium, which no longer exists, was named for the soldier.

The video is available at several area video and grocery stores, and can also be obtained by visiting Nielsen's business, Chester Cab Pizzeria, 707 Park Ave., or by calling Single Wing Productions at 716/271-2135.

Catholic Courier (USPS 135-580)  
Vol. 112 No. 11, Dec. 14, 2000  
Published weekly except the last Thursday in December.  
Subscription rates: single copy, 75¢; one-year subscription in U.S., \$20.00; Canada and foreign \$20.00 plus postage. Offices: 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624, 716/328-4340. Periodicals postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.  
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Catholic Courier, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, N.Y. 14624.

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