

DIOCESAN NEWS

Diocese to recognize five who promote ethic of life

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

The Diocese of Rochester has announced the five recipients of the Vita Award for 2001, who are honored for promoting the consistent ethic of life, which opposes abortion, economic injustice, euthanasia, war and the death penalty.

Bishop Matthew H. Clark will present the awards at the sixth annual Celebration for Life Dinner Wednesday, April 18, at 6 p.m., at the Marriott Thruway Inn, Henrietta. The dinner also serves as a fundraiser for the diocese's Consistent Life Ethic Grant Fund, which supports life-affirming projects of parishes, schools, organizations and groups. Last year's grants totaled \$30,000 and went to efforts to help pregnant women, inmates, welfare-to-work clients, community centers and other programs.

This year's Vita Award recipients are **John Doughty**, youth minister at Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Brighton; **Janice Frawley**, a social ministry volunteer at the Corning-Painted Post Roman Catholic Community, which comprises the parishes of St. Vincent de Paul, St. Mary and St. Patrick, all in Corning; and Immaculate Heart of Mary, Painted Post; **Sister Marilyn Pray, SSJ**, evangelization and outreach minister for Holy Apostles Parish, Rochester; **Marie Milligan**, social ministry coordinator for Roman Catholic Community of Geneva, which comprises the parishes of St. Francis DeSales and St. Stephen; and **Suzanne Schnittman**, the part-time coordinator of the diocese's Pastoral Response to Domestic Violence, and the diocesan consistent life ethic coordinator from 1995-2000.

This year's winners were selected from 50 nominees from all over the diocese.

Doughty was honored for his efforts to end U.S.-supported U.N. economic sanctions against Iraq that were imposed prior to the Persian Gulf War. Activists have blamed the sanctions for helping to cause the deaths of more than a million Iraqis, primarily children suffering from malnutrition, unclean water and a lack of medicines.

Doughty traveled to Iraq in 1999 as part of a tour sponsored by Voices In The Wilderness, an anti-sanctions group. Since then, he has spoken at several colleges and churches about the sanctions. Doughty said

that when he was in Iraq, he met physicians, Catholic Church leaders, and U.N. employees who, across the board, called for the lifting of the sanctions. He added that a number of the people to whom he spoke were not Iraqis, including the papal nuncio, and therefore had no vested interest in opposing the sanctions.

Frawley has chaired both the Corning Community Food Pantry, located at St. Patrick's Church, and the social ministry committee at St. Vincent's, her home parish, during the last half of the 1980s through the first half of the '90s. She still serves as a board member for both groups.

"It's important for all of the parishioners to be involved in some way with the church," she said. "I'm not a marcher or a demonstrator for the right to life or some of the other (consistent life ethic issues). Working behind the scenes, trying to get other people to do the work is more my forte."

Prior to serving at Holy Apostles, Sister Pray served as director of St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center, Rochester, and before that, oversaw St. Joseph's House of Hospitality, a neighboring Catholic Worker house. All three positions have entailed her working with the poor and the homeless. She also has been arrested four times for civil disobedience at military bases involved in nuclear weapons production. She sees both her ministerial work and civil disobedience as components of her commitment to alleviating poverty, which she ascribed to a misdirection of community resources away from peoples' needs.

Milligan serves as both part-time social ministry coordinator for the Geneva Catholic Community, and part-time parish secretary at St. Stephen's. She has overseen a multitude of projects including food pantry collections and distribution; referrals of people in need to area social service agencies; and the provision of housing supplies to families burnt out of their homes.

"It just doesn't happen by itself," she said, noting that dozens of volunteers work with her. "There's all these people who are faithful to the church and who are faithful to their baptismal call."

Schnittman helped to create the Vita Awards when she worked as the diocesan consistent life ethic coordinator. While in that office, she also was a leading force in establishing the diocese's Project Rachel post-abortion outreach program; the ecumenical and interfaith Reconciliation Network Against the Death Penalty, which also includes secular groups; and Jubilee Year 2000 efforts to relieve debts.

Schnittman added that she was pleased that the awards had served to promote the consistent ethic of life for the past six years.

"None of us will ever win a popularity contest, nor will we probably win an election," she said of herself and her fellow winners. "Our friends and families usually don't quite grasp our politics ... (But) the people who espouse and practice consistency in their defense for life, some recognized, but most never noticed, make it possible for others to imagine embracing it themselves."

EDITORS' NOTE: For dinner tickets, donations and grant information, call the diocesan life issues office at 716/328-3210, ext. 304.



David Wallace/Photo intern

Footloose at rally

Tyler Interlichia, 13, of St. Mary Magdalene in Wolcott, dances as (from right) Allison Williams, 13, and Heather Demass, 14, also of St. Mary Magdalene, and others watch, at a Junior High Youth Rally at the New York State Chiropractic College in Seneca Falls, April 7. Organized by the Diocesan Youth Committee, the event was attended by 497 youths and adults and was designed to help young Catholics understand how they are called to live their faith. (Right) Bret Levey, 11, of St. Mary's in Geneseo, responds to a question. Behind him is Laura Trompeter, 12, of St. Margaret Mary in Irondequoit.



Paper garners nine NYPA awards

ALBANY — The *Catholic Courier* won nine awards in the New York Press Association's 2000 Better Newspaper Contest, ranking it eighth in total contest points among the top weekly newspapers in the state.

The awards, which included four for first place, were given out at the association's spring convention March 30-31. Winners were chosen either from all 174 papers entered in the contest, or, in cases noted, from those in specific circulation divisions. The awards, their winners, and comments from the judges:

Photographer of the Year: First place, Andrea Dixon, staff photographer, for a variety of photos taken throughout 2000. "All the judges agreed that this (photo) portfolio was the first place winner. Dixon gets close to her subjects. Further, it is clear she is willing to seek out stories."

Picture Story: First place, Dixon, for photos following the Jaimes family, migrant workers from Mexico, in Wayne County. "This stood out above all others because it actually told the story of the family."

News Story, Division 4: First place, Rob Cullivan, staff writer, for an article on the alleged selling of fetal parts. "This is a tough subject to cover, and the reporter did it well ... Excellent piece."

Coverage of Religion: First place, Cullivan, for two stories on transitional deacons becoming priests, Fathers Patrick Van Durme and William F. "Mickey" McGrath. "Both pieces were well written."

Writer of the Year: Second place, Kathleen Schwar, assistant editor, for several articles throughout 2000. "Her stories are breezy, yet in-depth. Perhaps the most remarkable aspect is that her work is written in a manner that makes it appropriate for any newspaper — not only for a religious publication."

Coverage of Religion: Third place, Schwar, for her cover story on the Vatican document, *Dominus Iesus*. "Great explanation and even-handed reporting on a very touchy issue."

Overall Design Excellence, Division Tabloid - 2: Third place. "Break away from the stereotypical Catholic newspaper. Nice graphics on the two fronts I saw."

Best Front Page, Division Tabloid - 2: Third place. "This paper presents compelling centerpieces, strong stories and solid packaging."

Coverage of Health, Health Care & Science: Honorable mention. "Subscribers to this paper won't feel cheated in terms of health coverage and stories. The sheer volume shows a major commitment to the topic."

Celebrate your wedding anniversary in the Courier!

The *Catholic Courier* again plans to honor couples for their "Milestone" anniversaries.

Those couples who will mark 25, 50, 60, 65, 75, 80 or 85 years of marriage this year, or did earlier this year (2001), may be listed in the annual Milestones/Vocations issue. It will be published May 24.

Please send the following information:

Full names of husband and wife;

Date of wedding;

Church and city where married;

Also include a telephone number should questions arise.

Deadline for submissions is Thursday, May 10.

Send the information to: *Catholic Courier*, P.O. Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624, or e-mail it to agall@catholiccourier.com.

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