

# DIOCESAN NEWS

## Director strives to preserve unity of parish staffs

**EDITORS' NOTE:** This article is the final one in an occasional series on how the Diocese of Rochester's Thanks Giving Appeal benefits parishes.

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

**GATES** — Barbara Pedeville admits she doesn't believe in cleaning house.

As director of management and staff relations for the Diocese of Rochester's Human Resources Ministry, Pedeville does work to keep her desk neat at the Pastoral Center. But the "housecleaning" she discourages is the replacement of an entire staff by a new parish leader.

Although wholesale hiring is uncommon, it can happen when the new pastor or administrator may want to hire all-new staff or feels unable to work with veteran

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staff. At that point, veteran staff members may want to quit as well.

Pedeville noted that she works hard to keep such situations from happening, as well as to smooth conflicts that may arise between parish employees and employers anytime, anywhere. She has served as a mediator in such situations, she said, and listens to the concerns raised by employers and employees. For example, employees and the new pastor or administrator may have different work styles, she said.

"We like any conflict to end," she said. "We like to see win-win situations."

In recent years, Pedeville has particularly worked to improve relations between new pastoral leaders and staffs hired by previous leaders. The diocese has developed a formalized process through which parish employees and parish leaders tell the diocese what they're looking for in a new pastor or administrator. Her office, in turn, shares the information gathered with such bodies as the Diocesan Priest Personnel Board. That board is chaired by Father Michael F. Conboy, who also directs the Department of Priest Personnel, another Human Resources office. The board considers parish staff and parishioners' concerns when deciding which priests and lay people to recommend that Bishop Matthew H. Clark appoint to a parish, Pedeville noted.

"The ideal is not always possible, but we try to accommodate (parish concerns) as much as possible," she said.

Pedeville said formalizing the process of

matching pastors and administrators with parishes has reduced the potential for employee turnover when a new parish leader comes on board. She noted that she's proud that 80 to 85 percent of parish staff throughout the diocese stay on when a new pastor or pastoral administrator is hired.

"We hope that all staff people present in a parish can work effectively or productively with a new administrator or priest on staff," she said. And when they can't, she said, she's there to help staff members find employment elsewhere in the diocese.

"Sometimes, moving on to a new parish or setting ... certainly can be a growth opportunity for a person," she said.

Helping the diocese match parishes with potential pastors and administrators is just one of the many duties of Pedeville's office, which oversees diocesan-wide employee recruitment and orientation, and staff relations. The office is one of several that operate under the auspices of Human Resources, which is slated to receive \$338,000 from the 2001-2002 Thanks Giving Appeal.

In addition to Pedeville's office, the TGA funds Human Resources' other of-

fices that promote vocations and oversee seminarians; provide clergy services and development; oversee deacon assignment processes and development; work with newly ordained priests; collaborate with campus ministries at 21 schools throughout the diocese; and oversee recruitment, employment and staff relations for Catholic schools.

The goal of this year's TGA is \$4.931 million. As of Jan. 4, commitments made to the 2001-2002 TGA totaled \$4.71 million from more than 44,400 donors. The campaign continues through June.

Pedeville's office earned high praise from Father Robert Kennedy, pastor of Blessed Sacrament Parish, Rochester. Prior to taking on the first pastorate of his priestly career in June 2000, Father Kennedy had spent 12 years as adjunct professor of liturgical studies at St. Bernard's Institute, Rochester, where he still teaches part-time. He credited Pedeville and Patricia Hosking, benefits administrator for Human Resources, for helping him make the adjustment to parish administration.

"I think, for a first-time pastor, they were an immensely helpful resource," he said.

### Appointments

Bishop Matthew H. Clark has announced the following appointments:

**Father Donald J. Curtiss**, to the pastorate of the Good Shepherd Catholic Community, effective Jan. 1, 2002. Father Curtiss had been serving as sacramental minister at All Saints Parish in Corning.

**Father Philip J. Billotte** will replace Father Donald Curtiss as sacramental minister at All Saints Parish in Corning, upon the completion of his sabbatical. The diocese did not provide a date for his appointment.

Prior to his sabbatical, Father Billotte served as pastor at Our Lady of the Lakes Catholic Community in Penn Yan, Dundee, Naples, Rushville, Prattsburg and Stanley.



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Anti-war protesters encircled in "blood" (red paint) lie at the Pastoral Center on Buffalo Road, Gates, Dec. 28.

## Peace activists demonstrate; two meet with Bishop Clark

By Rob Cullivan  
Staff writer

**GATES** — Eighteen peace activists held a noon vigil around the flagpole at the diocesan Pastoral Center on Dec. 28 to protest the Catholic Church's just-war teachings and the U.S. bishops' support of the war in Afghanistan.

The protesters, representing the Catholic peace group, Pax Christi Rochester, and St. Joseph's House of Hospitality, a Catholic Worker facility in Rochester, prayed and read statements and biblical passages.

Some lay down on snow-covered ground around the pole while their bodies were outlined in red paint.

"How many bombed Afghan civilians constitutes terrorism" read one of the signs they held. Bishop Matthew H. Clark accepted two protesters in his office and a letter outlining their concerns.

"Jesus did not proclaim Just War Principles ...," the letter read. "The Gospel proclaims nonviolence and makes no exception for the nation-state."

Michael Tedesco, diocesan spokesman, said the bishop appreciated the protesters' commitment to their cause.

The activists' protest coincided with vigils and protests nationwide organized by Pax Christi USA to "mourn the victims of

war and terrorism" on the Feast of the Holy Innocents, the day that commemorates the slaughter of Hebrew boys by Herod's soldiers searching for the young Jesus. The Rochester protesters likened the current war to Herod's attack on young boys.

"It was a military action carried out by legitimate authority, the established government," their letter read, referring to Herod's order for a massacre.

"It had a just cause — to prevent what his intelligence reports indicated was a real threat to his legitimate political power ... If Just War Theory cannot even be used to clearly condemn the massacre of the Holy Innocents, how can it be said to be Christian?"

Section 2309 of the "Catechism of the Catholic Church" states that nations may wage war to defend themselves, although such war is subject to various stringent considerations, including a respect for the lives of noncombatants.

In the wake of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued statements that asserted the United States' right to respond to the attacks, but within the context of just-war teachings.

The statements also cautioned that the war not be seen as an attack on Islam or the Afghan people.

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