

## DIOCESAN NEWS

## Dansville, Wayland schools ponder changes

By Mike Latona  
Staff writer

An 11-member feasibility committee has recommended that two Catholic elementary schools in Livingston and Steuben counties combine some grades in an effort to keep both schools open.

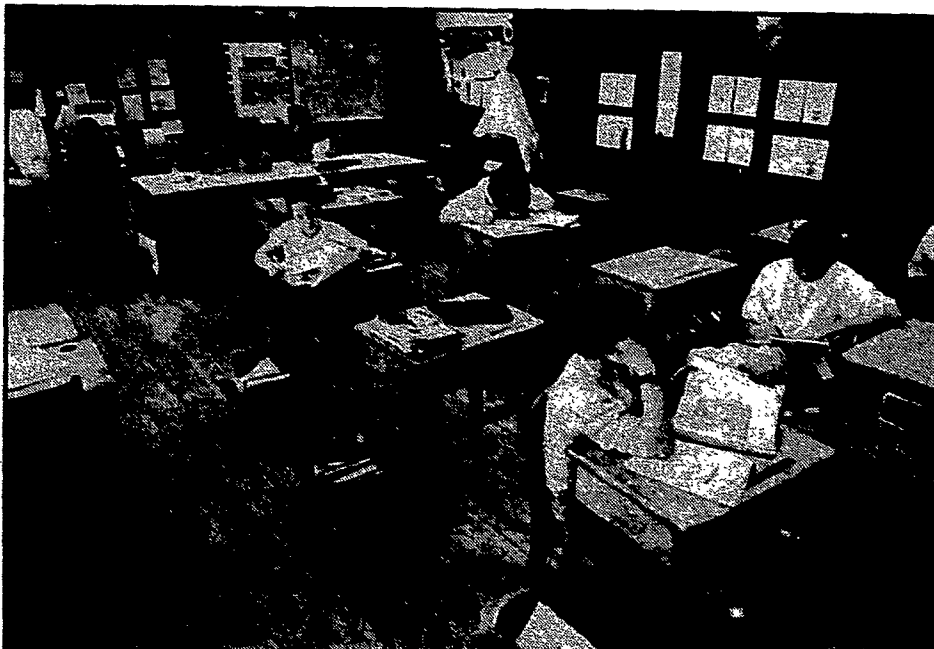
An estimated 150 people — mostly parents of students at St. Mary's School, Dansville, and St. Joseph's, Wayland — attended a Feb. 7 meeting at St. Joseph's School. There, the feasibility committee presented six scenarios regarding the two schools' futures.

The committee's top recommendation was to turn St. Joseph's, which currently offers pre-kindergarten through sixth grade, into pre-K through second grade, plus grades five and six. St. Mary's, which currently has pre-K through fifth grade, would become pre-K through grade four. The net effect of changes at the two schools would be the elimination of one classroom each at the third-, fourth- and fifth-grade levels.

The committee's second-favored option was to close one of the two schools. The remaining options are: to change nothing; to close both schools; to have one principal for both schools; and to consolidate finances into one budget for both schools.

Those who attended the Feb. 7 meeting were presented with all six possibilities and encouraged to give their written feedback. Meetings are taking place this month between the feasibility committee and committees from the Holy Family Catholic Community. Holy Family is a cluster comprising St. Mary's and St. Joseph's parishes as well as St. Pius V Parish, Cohocton, and Sacred Heart Parish, Perkinsville.

Pastoral leaders outside Monroe County are the primary decision-makers for their parish schools, largely determining such questions as closings and consolidations, subject to final approval by Bishop Matthew H. Clark. This decision-making structure contrasts with the consolidated, countywide school system operating within Monroe County under the direction of the Department of Catholic Schools.



Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Students work in Kris Sigwald's sixth-grade class.



Sixth grader Michele Kuhlmann is intent on her classwork Feb. 8 at St. Joseph's School in Wayland.

Father Stephen Kraus, pastor of Holy Family Catholic Community, said he hopes to make his final decision on the schools in time to announce it at weekend Masses March 2 and 3. However, he said he may push back the timetable for making the decision if he feels — based on feedback from parents and committees — that registration for 2002-03 would be negatively impacted.

According to Monette Mahoney, principal of St. Joseph's School, the two ex-

treme positions among the six options in Dansville and Wayland are to make no changes or to close both schools. Mahoney emphasized that some sort of change must occur, noting that St. Mary's and St. Joseph's schools each consume 46 percent of the budgets for their respective parishes. She said she'd like to see those figures drop into the 30- to 35-percent range.

Before the Feb. 7 meeting, "I don't think people realized how much each school has been taking from the parish," said Mahoney, who belongs to the 11-member feasibility committee comprising parishioners, parents, and school and parish administrators.

Steadily declining enrollment is another concern. According to figures provided by the diocesan Department of Catholic Schools, St. Joseph's has decreased from 100 students (not counting pre-K) in 1998-99 to its current total of 62. St. Mary's, meanwhile, has gone from 116 to 83 students. Both are among the smallest Catholic schools in the diocese.

However, Mary Spateholts, another feasibility-committee member, said she's

not in favor of seeing either school shut down.

"We wouldn't fit comfortably into one building, and we felt there would be families lost," said Spateholts, who belongs to Holy Angels Church in Nunda — 15 miles from St. Mary's School and 20 miles from St. Joseph's School.

Two of Spateholts' five children have already gone through St. Mary's School, and three are currently enrolled there. Since Catholic schools already number so few in her part of the diocese, Spateholts said it's important to keep open as many buildings as possible.

"I think an alternative to the public school system, and to have God at the center of it, is more important in this day and age than it has ever been," Spateholts said.

Spateholts said that having pre-K through grade two available at both schools is a high priority for the feasibility committee. "We feel it's very important to keep the small children in their own community, and that grades three on up would be more comfortable traveling the extra five miles," she explained.

Mahoney said that the feasibility committee is hoping for a two-year period to try the model of making St. Joseph's a grades pre-K through 2 and 5-6 school, and St. Mary's a grades pre-K through 4 school.

Mahoney noted that the committee is striving to publicize meetings and other information among parents and parishioners. She remarked that such communications efforts paid off with a "hopeful and supportive" atmosphere at the Feb. 7 meeting.

Though Father Kraus will make the final decision, he said he would prefer that it reflect the consensus of all involved. "What we've tried to do is get the broadest possible input from everybody," the pastor said.

Spateholts added that, for the most part, parents seem prepared to make whatever adjustment is deemed necessary.

"I'd like to think most everyone comprehends that there has to be some change," she said.

## Obituary

## Father Daniel J. McCarthy at 86

Father Daniel J. McCarthy, a priest in the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and a former pastor of Rochester's Ss. Peter and Paul Parish, died Jan. 17, 2002, in Wareham, Mass. He was four days shy of his 87th birthday.

Father McCarthy was born in Brad-dock, Pa. He entered the Sacred Hearts order in 1936 and was ordained in 1942. He received his licentiate in sacred theology from Catholic University of America and spent several years as a professor of philosophy and theology.

From 1950-56, Father McCarthy was a chaplain in the United States Navy. He later served in the Naval Reserves, rising to the rank of commander. In addition, he

taught at St. Mary's College in Winona, Minn., and was provincial superior of the Sacred Heart order's United States province.

From 1969-71, he served as assistant pastor at Holy Redeemer Parish in Chatham, Mass. He then performed missionary work in the Bahamas for one year. Beginning in 1972, Father McCarthy spent eight years as pastor of Rochester's Ss. Peter and Paul. He later was chaplain of the New England Medical Center and also served at St. James Parish in Boston. He retired in 1998.

Father McCarthy's funeral Mass took place Jan. 21 at St. Joseph's Church in Fairhaven, Mass.

[www.catholiccourier.com](http://www.catholiccourier.com)

Catholic Courier (USPS 135-580)  
Vol. 113 No. 18, Feb. 14, 2002

Published weekly except the first Thursday in January and 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, NY 14624, 585/328-4340. Periodicals postage paid at Rochester, NY.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Catholic Courier, PO Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624.



Leo M. Bean



Bryan S. Bean



Stephen D. Bean



David M. Bean

"A Tradition of Family Service"

Family Owned and Operated

LEO M. BEAN

FUNERAL HOME, INC.

2771 Chili Avenue • 426-7830

Nazareth College Arts Center presents

## Martha

The popular children's play about a lonely woman whose life is touched by a goose, performed by the Scottish group Catherine Wheels.

Sun., Feb. 24 • 2 pm & 4 pm

Tickets: \$9

For tickets and more information, call (585) 389-2170.

For group sales, call (585) 424-2979.



Series sponsored by Wendy's Restaurants



EXPERIENCE THE excitement!

Nazareth College Arts Center

4245 East Ave., Rochester, NY 14618  
[www.naz.edu](http://www.naz.edu)