

DIOCESAN NEWS

Parish Support office adds 2 staff members

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Two new staff members, Father Michael Upson and Deacon John Nelson, have joined the restructured diocesan Office of Parish Support Ministries.

Father Upson will begin Oct. 1 as a departmental associate director for the Multicultural Services division. In this role he will directly coordinate the Office of Black Ministry while also overseeing staff members in the offices of Hispanic and Migrant Ministry, Asian-Pacific Ministry and Translation Services.

Father Upson took training in diversity issues during the mid-1990s at the National Multicultural Institute in Washington, D.C. He also spent 2 1/2 years ministering in Trinidad, West Indies, early in his priesthood.

Bernard Grizard, first-year departmental director of Parish Support Ministries, said he had sought to create "an office that can respond to any culture. I think Father Mike will respond very well to this because of his experience."

"I have always found it exciting, stimulating and challenging to be with persons of other cultures and to travel and spend extended periods of time in other countries," Father Upson commented. "I would hope to implement programs within the diocese that would enable people to get more of a glimpse of the giftedness and sacredness of others' cultural and spiritual experience."

Father Upson's position is 75 percent full-time. In order to accommodate his new duties, he will decrease his role as admin-



Father Upson

istrator of Rochester's Immaculate Conception Parish.

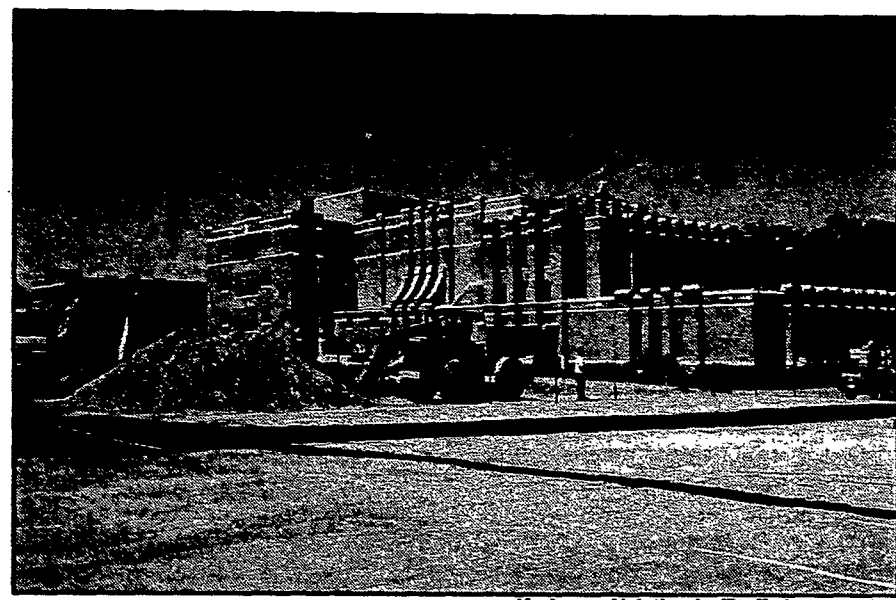
"I have a wonderful staff, fully supportive of this new endeavor. I believe all will be well with the parish — and during the day, they'll always know where to find me," Father Upson said.

Ordained in Jamaica, N.Y., in 1976, Father Upson came to the Rochester Diocese in 1989. He has served since 1992 as administrator of Immaculate Conception. He was incardinated earlier this year as a diocesan priest.

Meanwhile, Deacon Nelson was due to begin Sept. 3 in the newly created position of Health Care Ministry coordinator. In this part-time role, Deacon Nelson said he'll strive to implement the findings of a health-ministry task force that was formed in 1999 at the request of Bishop Matthew H. Clark. The panel reviewed diocesan policy on pastoral care at hospitals, long-term care facilities and inpatient treatment centers.

Deacon Nelson said it's important to respond to the changes in health-care ministry, with more patients convalescing at home and a declining number of priest chaplains being available. One of his chief priorities, he said, is to help form ministries at the parish level.

"There's many things we have to come to grips with — what's in the box, what's outside of the box and what fits," said Deacon



Karin von Voigtlander/Staff photographer

Construction continues

Work progress on a new \$3.8 million health and fitness center continues Aug. 30 at Our Lady of Mercy High School in Brighton. The school hopes to complete the project in time for its 75th anniversary in 2003.

Nelson, who was ordained a permanent deacon in June 2002. He performed considerable field work in hospital ministry while preparing for the diaconate.

Deacon Nelson will operate under Grizard's direction. Other ministries directly linked to Grizard will be Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs, Urban and Rural Services and the newly created Office of Jail Ministry. Grizard said he hopes to eventually hire a staff person for the jail ministry position.

Meanwhile, Joan Workmaster, diocesan director of the Office of Liturgy for the past eight years, has been made a departmental associate director along with Father Upson.

Workmaster retains her former duties and now oversees the Women's Commission and Office of Domestic Violence as well.

Grizard said he's pleased with the new look Parish Support Ministries office, remarking that "there are more responsibilities, more programs to respond to the needs." Grizard also said the new model creates a more cohesive structure throughout the department. Workmaster agreed, saying Parish Support Ministries has "a tremendous responsibility" in serving so many needs within the diocese.

"In order to do this job in a better way, rather than have fragments, we need to work more as a team," Workmaster said.

Obituaries

Msgr. George A. Cocuzzi, 78; served diocese in numerous capacities

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Msgr. George A. Cocuzzi, who performed a broad range of ministries in his 53 years as a diocesan priest, died Aug. 27, 2002, at Rochester General Hospital following a long illness. He was 78 years old.

Msgr. Cocuzzi, a Rochester native, grew up in St. Patrick's Cathedral Parish. He attended St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's seminaries and was ordained by Bishop James E. Kearney in 1949.

Following ordination, he served for two years as assisting priest at St. Jerome's Parish in East Rochester. From 1951-54 he studied at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome and obtained a doctorate in canon law. He was named notary of the Rochester Diocese in 1954 and vice chancellor in 1955. Pope John XXIII made him papal chamberlain in 1959, and Pope Paul VI confirmed him in this rank in 1963. He was named a monsignor in 1966.

In 1964 Msgr. Cocuzzi was promoted to diocesan chancellor. He served in that position for two years before taking his first pastorate, at Rochester's Holy Family Parish, where he served for eight years. Following a sabbatical leave at the National Center for Urban Ethnic Affairs in Washington, D.C., Msgr. Cocuzzi returned to the Rochester Diocese in 1975 to become vicar of urban ministry.



In 1978 Msgr. Cocuzzi became founding director of the diocesan permanent diaconate program. "That was terrifically important," said Father James Doyle, a classmate of Msgr. Cocuzzi's. Father Doyle said the diaconate program can trace its present success to the pioneering work of Msgr. Cocuzzi and Sister Mary Hilaire Gaelens, a Sister of Mercy who died in 1997.

In 1983 Msgr. Cocuzzi became pastor of Rochester's St. Francis Xavier Parish. Beginning in 1985 he served in supporting roles at the combined Holy Redeemer/St. Francis Xavier Parish, as well as at St. Michael in Penn Yan, St. Columba/St. Patrick in Caledonia and Mumford, Strong Memorial Hospital in Rochester, St. Christopher in North Chili, Immaculate Conception in Ithaca, and again at Holy Redeemer/St. Francis Xavier.

Msgr. Cocuzzi retired in 1992. During his later years he also served at St. Lucy's Parish in the Bronx, and for several years as administrator of St. Raymond's Parish, also in the Bronx. He moved back to the Rochester Diocese in 1999 and had resided until recently at Church of the Assumption in Fairport.

Father Doyle remarked that Msgr.

Cocuzzi was successful in whatever role he undertook. "Because of his personality, and being blessed with intelligence, he was able to manage all situations. He fit in very well, and the people loved him. He was very considerate of everyone," Father Doyle commented.

"He was greatly talented," agreed Father Edward Steinkirchner, another classmate, who remained close friends with Msgr. Cocuzzi over the years.

Father Richard Brickler, a good friend who was Msgr. Cocuzzi's longtime assistant at Holy Family Parish, said urban ministry was nearest and dearest to the monsignor's heart.

"He did a lot of different things, but he always seemed to go back to that," said Fa-

ther Brickler, pastor of Rochester's St. Boniface Parish, who served as homilist at Msgr. Cocuzzi's funeral Mass. Father Brickler added that the monsignor learned Spanish so he could better relate to the St. Francis Xavier/Holy Redeemer community, and was a vocal advocate for the rights of the underprivileged.

Msgr. Cocuzzi's funeral Mass was held Aug. 30 at Church of the Assumption, with Bishop Matthew H. Clark presiding. Interment was at Holy Sepulchre Cemetery.

Msgr. Cocuzzi's brother, Father Bruno Cocuzzi, a Discalced Carmelite priest, died July 21. Msgr. Cocuzzi is survived by a brother, D. John Cocuzzi; sisters, Agnes (Abelo) Tomasso and Anne (Christopher) Renda; and several nieces and nephews.

Sister Mary Elizabeth Lennon, SSND

Sister Mary Elizabeth Lennon, formerly Sister Mary Dora, of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, died Aug. 17, 2002, at the order's motherhouse in Wilton, Conn. She was 92.

Sister Mary Elizabeth was a native of Rochester's Holy Redeemer Parish. She earned a bachelor's degree in education at Mt. St. Joseph College in Buffalo, and her teaching career spanned more than 60 years. Her assignments in diocesan schools in Rochester included Holy Redeemer (1959-64), Holy Family (1964-65), St. Boniface (1965-67, 1976-78), St. Anthony (1973-76) and Holy Ghost (1987-1994).

She is survived by her brother, William,

and niece, Karen Calabrese, both of Rochester; and nephew, Chris Lennon of Southport, N.Y.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated in the motherhouse chapel on Aug. 21, with burial in St. Mary Cemetery, Bethel, Conn. Memorials may be made to SSND Development Fund, Wilton, CT 06897.

— Lou Litzenberger

Recognizing

Participants of this year's Catholic Family Center Corporation of the Year Awards are Wegmans Food Markets Inc. and Rochester Gas and Electric's Greenfield Power Plant. Wegmans has supported the Catholic Family Center by donating food, clothing, and other supplies to their stores and warehouses, collecting clothing for the center's clothing bank, and providing Spanish and Second Language classes at their stores.

www.catholiccourier.com

Catholic Courier (USPS 135-580)
Vol. 113 No. 47, September 5, 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: 1136 Buffalo Road, Rochester, NY 14624, 585/529-9530. Periodicals postage paid at Rochester, NY.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Catholic Courier, PO Box 24379, Rochester, NY 14624.