

Interfaith Action to work with city

Rob Cullivan/Catholic Courier

Interfaith Action, Most Precious Blood Parish and the City of Rochester are expected to announce this week that they have struck a deal to work together on a dumping plan for what Interfaith has called "contaminated soil" in a landfill on the city's west side.

Edward Doherty, commissioner of environmental services for the City of Rochester, previously told the *Catholic Courier* that the soil has been tested and is not hazardous.

Brian Kane, director of Interfaith Action, a federation of churches, organizations and businesses, said the agreement was reached Oct. 29, and calls for members of Interfaith and Most Precious Blood to serve on a committee overseeing the plan's implementation. The committee will include Father Gary Tyman, pastor of Most Precious Blood, which is located in the neighborhood of the landfill, Kane said.

The agreement also includes a pledge by the city to fund the hiring of independent consultants to monitor the soil's toxicity and the air quality around the landfill, Kane

said. The agreement also calls for neighbors to participate in a planning process to determine the future use of the landfill, he added.

The soil originated in a parking-lot renovation project in Charlotte, and was mistakenly dumped in the Town of Greece. The city has proposed removing it and dumping it in a former landfill located behind Edison Technical and Occupational Center's sports field as well as a lot in which school buses routinely are parked.

Interfaith Action and Most Precious Blood have been rallying neighbors for several weeks to fight the proposed dumping. According to Interfaith Action, neighbors are concerned that contaminated dust will float across Edison, the school buses, homes and businesses; that the soil contains arsenic, barium and other toxic materials; that the city's plans to wash down every truck after every trip to the landfill is a sign of the soil's contamination; and that people with respiratory problems will be adversely affected by the dumping. Additionally, Interfaith Action said neighbors also are concerned about extra traffic from dump trucks driving through the neighborhood.

However, Doherty said "the material is certainly not harmful in any



Reuters/CNS

Honoring the dead

A young Salvadoran girl paints a cross at a cemetery in San Salvador Nov. 2. People around the world remembered loved ones on All Souls' Day. Pope John Paul II said that prayers for the deceased can take many forms, including visits to cemeteries.

way," and that any soil found to have unacceptable levels of toxic material will be removed from the site. He said the city continually will monitor air quality around the site.

Doherty also explained that trucks carrying the soil must be washed after each trip to prevent soil from caking, and that the trucks will be taking a route to the site that is some distance from any

residences.

Any foundry slag — a porous rock-like substance created by the burning of iron ore — found in the dirt will be removed from the soil and placed in a special Monroe County landfill, according to Doherty.

"If the slag is removed and there isn't much dust in the air, we should be fine with that," Kane said.

Workshop on racial justice slated

Rob Cullivan/Catholic Courier

The Diocese of Rochester's Office of Black Ministry will host a "Racial Justice Workshop" from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 15, in the diocesan Pastoral Center's Bishop Dennis Hickey Conference Center.

The workshop will address the topic of "Working Towards A More Catholic Christian Community: Developing Strategies to Confront and Eliminate Racism." The workshop goals are to create awareness around the issue of racial injustice and to inform participants of effective strategies to address the issue of racism with faith communities.

The workshop co-presenters will be Donna Mostiller, director of human resources for the YWCA in Buffalo, and Tara Heavern, the YWCA's housing compliance manager. In addition to her work with the

YWCA, Mostiller served as a delegate to the National Black Catholic Congress IX in Chicago in September 2002. Heavern has worked on funding and developing homeless programs for the YWCA, and has run workshops on such topics as racism, literacy and conflict resolution.

The Racial Justice Workshop will provide historical, religious and sociological overviews of racism. Participants will be involved in interactive activities that will help them understand the impact of racism on individuals and organizations. About 30 people have already signed up for the workshop, according to Father Michael Upson, coordinator of the Black Ministry Office. The workshop is free and open to anyone engaged in ministry in the diocese as well as anyone interested in the issue, he said.

Father Upson noted that the workshop is taking place in November, which is African-American Catholic History Month. The workshop will also take place one day after the 24th anniversary of the release of "Brothers and Sisters to Us: U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter on Racism in Our Day."

"Racism is not merely one sin among many," the bishops wrote, "it is a radical evil dividing the human family and denying the new creation of a redeemed world. To struggle against it demands an equally radical transformation, in our own minds and hearts as well as in the structure of society."

A free continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. Donations will be accepted.

For information or to register, contact Yvonne Moss at 585/328-3228, ext. 1328, or e-mail her at moss@dor.org.

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