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which publishes the *Courier*.

"The change is (being made) because we've changed," Father Hart said, noting that many people no longer get all their news in traditional ways. "It seems (the Web) is one of the waves of the future we ought to ride," he said.

Discussion first began about the change several years ago, according to Father Hart. At that time, Bishop Clark announced that, as part of the diocese's new strategic communications plan, he wanted the *Courier* to be on the "kitchen table of every Catholic household in the diocese." The bishop appointed an ad hoc committee to look for ways of making the *Courier* a more efficient communications vehicle, Father Hart said.

"Everyone who tells a story tells it from his or her own perspective," he said. "The bishop really wants Catholics to understand it from the religious perspective, from the Catholic perspective. When a story breaks and the local news has only bits and snippets of what's important, you really want people to turn on their computer and go to www.CatholicCourier.com and find what they're looking for."

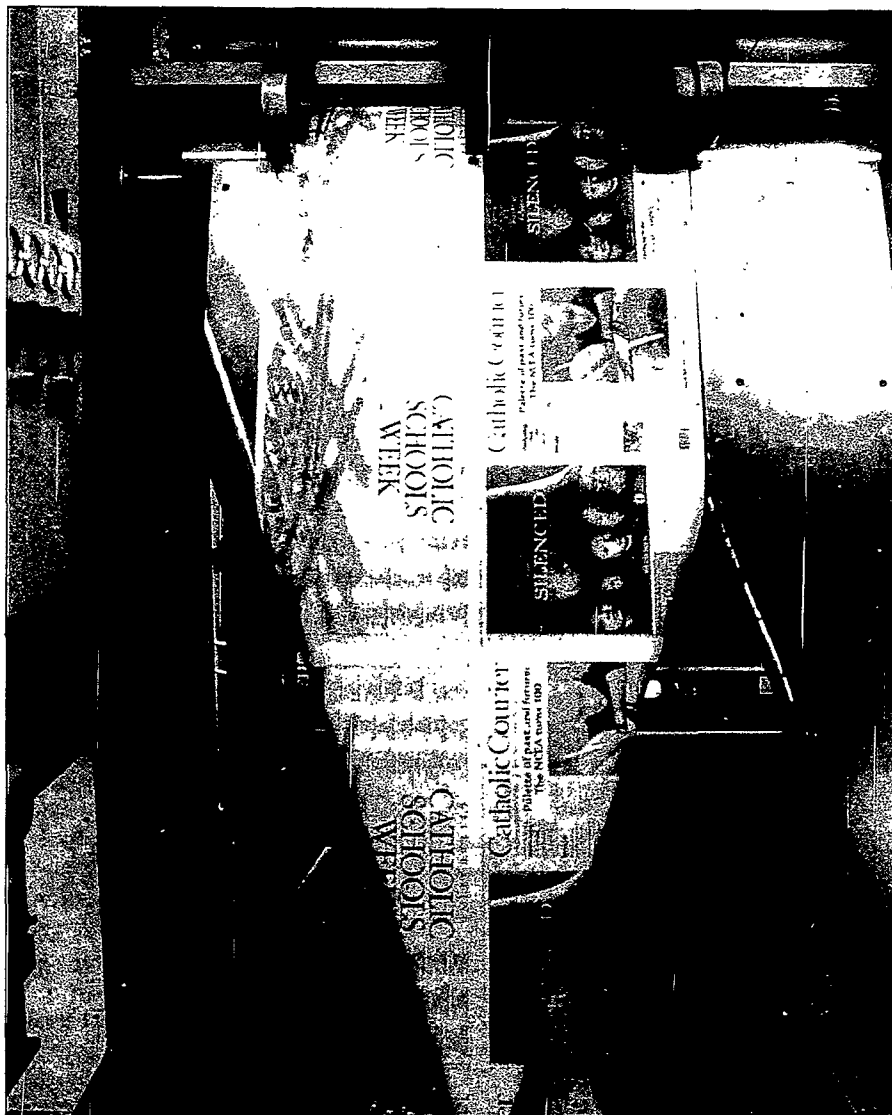
Father Hart said he hopes that the bigger, brighter and more colorful look of the *Catholic Courier Monthly* will "allow this paper to sit around for a while ... much like a magazine. When it sits around, it's more thoroughly read."

Along with news and analysis, the *Catholic Courier Monthly* also will include a broader range of feature material, including "Faith Alive!," a syndicated adult faith-formation package; a Catholic crossword puzzle; sports features; and articles aimed at helping Catholics live their faith in today's society. The monthly paper also will include a greater number and variety of columnists.

Later this year, a Spanish-language version of the *Catholic Courier Weekly* will be launched, Franz said. This edition will include local, national and international news of interest to Spanish-speaking members of the diocese.

The *Courier* is currently read by approximately 90,000 people in 45,000 subscriber households, according to Franz, who added that more than 250,000 people in approximately 130,000 subscriber households will read the *Courier* come April.

Printing and postage savings produced by the switch to monthly frequency will enable the *Courier* to afford sending the paper to almost three times as many subscribers, Father Hart said. Franz added that increased advertising sales are also ex-



The *Catholic Courier* receives its first fold as it passes over a piece of equipment called the former. The paper is then pulled through the folder, where it is cut and folded a second time.

pected to help pay for the change. The dramatic readership increase in the *Catholic Courier Monthly* will make it more attractive to larger advertisers, she said, while the ability to target readers in the three diocesan regions will make the *Catholic Courier Weekly* appealing to smaller, regional businesses.

"Advertisers, both current and prospective, have indicated that they favor the versatility of the monthly, weekly and Web-site venues. There has been much positive feedback regarding the increased size and quality of the paper and the quantum leap in circulation, allowing advertisers to reach three times as many readers," said Daniel Zollo, the *Courier's* advertising director.

Historically, about 30 percent of the *Courier's* revenue has come from advertising sales, while 70 percent has come from subscriptions, Franz added, noting that this pattern is common throughout the Catholic press. Parishes pay for about 90 percent of the *Courier's* subscriptions through a program of mandated circulation, another staple of the Catholic press, Franz said. An agreement made in the early 1980s between Bishop Clark and the diocesan

Priests' Council stipulated that parishes were to pay to provide the *Courier* for 50 percent of their parishioner households.

"A program implemented in January 2002 is gradually moving under-quota parishes up to the 50-percent level, but this plan will not increase parish billing above that point," Franz said. "In fact, parishes that have been paying to provide the *Courier* to more than 50 percent of their parishioners actually will experience a decline in *Courier* billings effective in July 2004."

Bishop Clark said he is looking forward to the changes the *Courier* will undergo in the coming months.

"I am very excited about the changes coming for the *Catholic Courier*," Bishop Clark said. "I hope all Catholics will take this opportunity to learn more about the ministries of the local church and use the newspaper's many new features to teach their children and further educate themselves about their faith. I believe the weekly bulletin insert, the dynamic and improved Web presence and the expanded monthly edition will enable us all to better keep pace with the issues and opportunities ahead."

The coming changes represent the *Courier's* dedication to meeting the communication needs of parishioners, Father Hart said.

"We'll keep exploring to find the ways that people want to receive information from us. We'll keep our ear to the ground and keep updating to meet the needs of our diocese," he said.



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