

## CALL

Continued from page A1

- The fact that many Catholic parents do not encourage their sons to become priests.

- The image of priests as overworked and stressed, and

- The absence of priests in the daily lives of young people

The regional discussion sessions also examined what the diocese could do better to encourage vocations, and what strengths it already has to recruit potential priests. The groups suggested:

- Posting priests to all area college chaplaincies,

- Taking men considering the priesthood on a summer mission,

- Placing stories and pictures of priests on the diocesan Web site, and

- Encouraging parishes to identify and invite potential candidates to consider the priesthood

During the convocation, priests talked about their vocation, examining both good and bad aspects. Father Horan said. For example, many priests in the Rochester Diocese and nationwide have high levels of job satisfaction, he said, noting that he enjoys celebrating Mass, preaching and being a meaningful part of his parishioners' lives. On the other hand, Father Horan and other priests said some priests feel overburdened and stressed out by having to shepherd more than one parish, especially as more and more parishes are combined through the diocesan pastoral planning process. He added that although the public views mandatory celibacy as a major obstacle for men considering the



Mike Crupi/Catholic Courier

**Father Thomas H. Watts of St. James Parish in Waverly (from left), Father Peter Clifford of St. Michael's Parish in Newark and Father Robert Bourcy of St. Patrick's Parish in Macedon join their fellow priests in renewing their commitments to priestly service. The commitment service took place during the April 6 Chrism Mass at Rochester's St. Michael's Church.**

priestly vocation, celibacy doesn't seem to be a major issue for most priests after they are ordained.

"Once you're ordained, that ship has sailed, and you hopefully have proceeded in freedom ... and are ready to avail yourself of the help that God will provide in this life," he said.

Indeed, Father James E. Hewes, pastor of St. John the Evangelist

Church in Clyde and St. Patrick in Savannah, noted that Protestant denominations likewise are experiencing clergy shortages, even though their ministers are permitted to marry. He noted that the vocation of the priesthood is in trouble at the same time the vocation of marriage is in trouble.

"This reflects one of the cultural barriers to priesthood and marriage

today for many people, which is the difficulty in making long-term commitments when that involves some sort of sacrifice," he said.

Diocesan priests asked to offer solutions to the priest shortage suggested a number of measures, from asking parish councils to address the vocations issue to encouraging Catholics to pray for more vocations.

Father Patrick J. Van Durme, parochial vicar of St. Patrick's and Blessed Trinity parishes, based in Owego, said families should ask their children to reflect on what God wants for them, no matter what the calling. Father Van Durme said that he entered seminary, left and then came back, and that men considering the priesthood must be left free to determine if they are being called.

"My parents did not always ask me what I was going to be," he said. "They also asked me what God wanted me to do. ... This is what got me to the seminary and what got me back after 10 years and many relationships."

He added that it's important for all Catholics to ask what God wants of them.

"If we are all doing what God wants from us, then by extension, we must be getting enough priests," he said. "The biggest issue is that people are not listening enough to God."

## Coordinator seeks to further promote vocations

Mike Latona/Catholic Courier

ROCHESTER — In Carol Dady's opinion, identifying factors for the priesthood shouldn't be limited to what she calls "the obvious ones" — no sex, no married priests, no female priests.

Rather, Dady says, the joys of priestly life must be trumpeted more often. Bringing this about is one of her top goals as the new diocesan coordinator of priesthood vocations awareness and discernment.

Dady, 47, began her position April 1. She joins a vocations-awareness team that also includes Father Timo-



thy Horan, director of priesthood vocations awareness and discernment; Father William Donnelly, rector of Becket Hall, the diocesan residence for those discerning a priestly vocation; and Father James Schwartz, director of seminarians.

"We all need to be enlightened and educated about what a life to the Lord really is," Dady said. Yet, she added, "You don't often hear it spoken from the pulpit. Or in the media,

except when it's negative."

She said it's crucial for priests to promote their vocation: "They've got to be giving examples of what it's like to be a happily ordained priest. They will have to be the ones to share their vocations stories," she stated. A positive example is "24 Hours With the Lord," an overnight program in which several diocesan priests speak with young men interested in the priesthood. The event is built into priest ordination weekend, which is June 12 this year. Dady added that parents and grandparents, also, should raise the possibility of a religious life with young people.

Dady will work primarily out of Becket, located at 314 Gregory St. in Rochester next to St. Boniface Church. Although her position is newly created, it bears resemblance to that of Patricia Finnerty, who held the title of diocesan director of vocations awareness from 1999 to 2003.

Dady is a longtime parishioner of Holy Rosary in Rochester, and has been active in several volunteer capacities there. She had served the past 12 years as administrative assistant in cardiac rehabilitation at Rochester General Hospital. She and her husband, John — a member of the popular Dady Brothers musical group — are the parents of six children (one deceased).

SISTERS OF SAINT JOSEPH  
OF ROCHESTER

Congratulations,  
Father Bruce Ammering!

We are blessed by your  
presence among us



Was Jesus married?  
Who was Mary  
Magdalene?  
Do the so-called  
"secret" Gnostic  
Gospels lead us to  
a different Jesus?

**25% OFF**  
BREAKING THE DA VINCI CODE  
NELSON BOOKS

Coupon must be presented at time of  
purchase. Expires June 30, 2004

Alpha &  
omega  
bookstore and more

**BRIGHTON**

Southview Commons, 125 White Spruce Blvd  
(585) 272-8080

**GREECE**

Stone Ridge Plaza, 1520 West Ridge Rd.  
(585) 697-7693

**PENFIELD**

Panorama Plaza, 1601 Penfield Rd  
(585) 381-1250

Open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m.  
www.alphaandomegabookstore.com