

## ADMINISTRATORS

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ology or a related field, as well as seven years' experience in a collaborative parish staff setting. Among the key personal qualifications are leadership, business skills and ministerial abilities.

Those who qualify are entered into the pastoral-administrator pool. Pool members may apply on an equal footing with priests for all pastoral openings in the diocese; this policy took effect in 2001. The appointments of pastoral administrators are determined by a board of diocesan officials, with final approval coming from Bishop Matthew H. Clark.

Each permanent assignment lasts four years and can be renewed twice, with a limit of 12 years at any one parish. Each parish being led by a pastoral administrator also is assigned a priest who serves as sacramental minister, working in close conjunction with the pastoral administrator. "There has to be a true collaboration," Pedeville said of the expected relationship.

Most of the pastoral administrators and pool members in this diocese are lay women, including a large percentage of women religious, while five of the six men are deacons. Pedeville explained that most lower-level parish staff positions — in which individuals can gain the required experience for becoming a pastoral administrator — are occupied by women.

Sister O'Connell noted that she, like many other women religious, is moving into pastoral leadership after years of serving in non-leadership situations. "It's a different life, or role. Maybe this kind of leadership role will entice other people to the religious life," she speculated.

### OVERCOMING DOUBT

Whether use of the pastoral-administrator model will continue to spread is uncertain. At this point, Pedeville said the diocese will not actively recruit for the pastoral-administrator pool until the availability of sacramental coverage is more definite.

"You still have to have a priest to have a viable parish," she said.

Pedeville and Father Conboy also pointed out that the Vatican still prefers to see priests as parish leaders. "For all the parishes, we would like to appoint a priest pastor. But that's not always possible," Father Conboy said.

Many times, parishes don't know until the actual appointment whether they're getting a pastor or pastoral administrator. "The best candidate is chosen. It's not only who's available, but who's the best



Sister Anne Michelle McGill, SSJ, pastoral administrator of St. Gabriel's Church in Hammondsport, discusses upcoming events March 19 with parish secretary Mary Lou O'Connor (right) and pastoral minister Dan Williams. Sister McGill became the first pastoral administrator in the Diocese of Rochester 10 years ago.

candidate?" Father Conboy said.

Even though the Rochester Diocese has 10 years of experience working with this model, uncertainty still exists about someone other than a priest running a parish. When a parish is getting a pastoral administrator for the first time, Pedeville said she often enters the discussion to help allay concerns.

Pedeville acknowledged that "when you've had one model all your life, the fear of the unknown is a very natural reaction," saying that many dioceses in the United States still refrain from using pastoral administrators in any fashion.

Once people get past their initials doubts, however, Pedeville said they usually embrace the model. Although a handful of diocesan parishes have switched back to priest pastors after having pastoral administrators, she said relatively few shifts have taken place in pastoral-administrator assignments thus far. And, noting that Sister McGill will reach her 12-year term limit in 2006, Pedeville said, "I've had people from Hammondsport already say they want another pastoral administrator."

Sister McGill acknowledged that some people left St. Gabriel's when she arrived in 1994. But by deciding

to walk with the parish, rather than administer it from afar, she has gained many more parishioners than she's lost.

"My style is the whole idea of the people are the church. I try very, very hard to involve the people in every aspect of church," Sister McGill said, citing her support of such recent efforts as refurbishing the church's Stations of the Cross as well as a handiwork ministry, through which several parishioners do volunteer repair work in the community.

Sister O'Connell, also, plans to emphasize empowerment, based on her observations of Father Thomas Wheeland, her longtime pastor at Holy Cross Parish. "I've learned from watching Father to trust people. You give them a task, step back and let them do it — maybe not the way you would do it, but letting them use their talents," she said.

More important than anything else, Sister O'Connell said, is being available to her parish community: "I hope that I would be somebody they could come to."

So far so good, based on her initial contact with the folks in Waterloo. "I felt they were very warm, very encouraging, very open to my presence," she said.

## MODEL IS WIDESPREAD IN ROCHESTER DIOCESE

People qualified to serve as pastoral administrators in the Rochester Diocese are drawn from a pool maintained by the diocese. Those currently serving in permanent positions, along with the year each appointment began, are:

Michele Bertot, Holy Name of Jesus, Greece, 2003.

Charlotte Brown, St. Vincent DePaul, Churchville, 1999.

Sister Joan Cawley, SSJ, All Saints, Corning, 2000.

Deacon Dean Condon, Guardian Angels, Henrietta, 1995.

Sister Alice Cooney, SSJ, St. Joseph, Rush, 1999.

Deacon Raymond Defendorf, St. Mary, Bath, 2003.

Sister Diane Dennie, SSJ, St. Bridget/St. Joseph, East Bloomfield, 2000.

Sister Doreen Glynn, CSJ, St. Mary of the Lake, Ontario, 2003.

Irene Goodwin, St. Mary of the Assumption, Scottsville, 2002.

Deborah Housel, St. Michael, Lyons, 2002.

Sister Anne Michelle McGill, SSJ, St. Gabriel, Hammondsport, 1994.

Sister Joan Sobala, SSJ, St. Felix/St. Francis, Clifton Springs/Phelps, 2003.

Barbara Swiecki, St. Agnes, Avon, 2001.

Sister Chris Treichel, OSF, Sacred Heart/St. Ann, Auburn, 2002.

Those on temporary assignments of at least one year are: Sister Marie Susanne Hoffman, SSJ, Church of the Annunciation, Rochester, who will begin as pastoral administrator at Rochester's Roman Catholic Community of the 19th Ward in June 2004; and Sister Jacquelyn Reichart, RSM, who will retire from Our Lady Queen of Peace, Brighton, in June.

Ten people are in the pastoral-administrator pool but not currently on assignment. They are Craig Bullock; Patricia Curtis; Nancy DeRycke; Sister Karen Dietz, SSJ; Alexandra Gulliano of Milwaukee; Deacon Daniel Hurley; Deacon Michael Mahoney; Sister Kathleen O'Connell, RSM, who will begin as pastoral administrator at St. Mary, Waterloo, in June 2004; Deacon David Palma; and Sister Barbara Stinard, RSM.

— Mike Latona