

CFC may lose deal for foster services

Rob Cullivan/Catholic Courier

Catholic Family Center of Rochester stands to lose a contract for \$800,000 in foster-care services due to proposed budget cuts by Monroe County Executive Maggie Brooks.

If the budget is approved, CFC may have to eliminate five or six of its 13 full-time and one part-time foster-care positions, according to Carolyn Portanova, president and chief executive officer.

"It is a very big loss," she said.

The county legislature must adopt a final budget by Dec. 14, and if the cuts go through, Portanova said they are expected to affect the agency by April 1, 2005.

CFC receives a total of \$1.3 million from Monroe County to handle a portion of the county's foster-care caseload. Portanova said the agency oversaw 89 foster-care cases in 2004.

CFC specializes in foster-care services for unaccompanied refugee minors and will continue to receive county funding to deal with those cases, she added. These children

have come to America without their parents, who are either lost or have been killed in their homelands. In 2004, CFC provided foster-care services to 29 unaccompanied refugee minors, she noted.

Monroe County Budget Director Bill Carpenter said the county is cutting a total of \$1.2 million in foster-care contracts with CFC and three other private agencies and, in turn, will add 21 additional caseworkers to its own foster-care program.

He said the cuts are needed to eliminate duplication of services. County caseworkers not only handle their own foster-care cases, he said, but also oversee those outsourced to private agencies, creating an economically inefficient overlap between private and public foster-care workers. He added that New York state also mandates that counties determine foster-care eligibility.

Carpenter said 207 foster-care cases were handled by private agencies over the last year, with more than half handled by CFC. He added that the county continues to believe



Reuters/CNS

Keeping the peace in Haiti

A Canadian U.N. peacekeeper, Dan Moskaluk, helps a blind man walk past a barricade of wrecked autos in a poor neighborhood in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, Oct. 24. While working to clear the neighborhood of street barricades, police established a command post in a Catholic church in the neighborhood that had been a gathering point for supporters of exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide.

CFC is the right agency to serve unaccompanied refugee minors, and that is why the proposed budget contains funding for that area of service.

"This is certainly an area where CFC has taken an effort to reach out to that part of the community, and

they do a great job of it," he said.

Portanova said that if the cuts go through, she hopes the county will monitor the outcome of the transition and its effect on children. Carpenter said "insourcing looks like it will not adversely affect the care of the children."

Sharing Our Blessings... and Changing Lives Forever



tga
2004-2005
THANKS GIVING
APPEAL

Support the TGA and help fund programs, services and ministries throughout our 12-county Diocese that benefit thousands of people each year.

Every gift is important.

Please be generous as you share your blessings to help change lives forever.

To make a gift or for more information, contact your parish, the TGA Office at (585)328-3228 ext. 1297, or visit our web page at: www.dor.org
ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER