

Parishes plan center for neighborhood

Jennifer Burke/Catholic Courier

Once the renovation of Rochester's Sacred Heart Cathedral is completed in early 2005, the parish will set its sights on another goal — opening a neighborhood-outreach center, said Father John Mulligan, pastor and diocesan vicar general.

The new center will be located in the convent across from the cathedral on Flower City Park. Originally built in 1954, the building was renovated in 2003 and basically divided into three sections, Father Mulligan said. One section is still used to house eight Sisters of St. Joseph, and another is used for the adult day-care program Home & Heart, which is administered by St. Ann's Community. When the building was renovated, the third section was earmarked for use by the three parishes that make up the Flower City Park-Lexington Planning Group — Sacred Heart, Holy Rosary and Most Precious Blood — with the hope of eventually using the space for neighborhood outreach, Father Mulligan said.

When renovation work began on the cathedral, Sacred Heart parish offices were temporarily moved into the third section of the convent. But when the cathedral reopens, the combined staff of the three parishes will move into the cathedral's newly created office wing, freeing up space in the convent for the neighborhood-outreach center.

Such a center is sorely needed in the neighborhood surrounding the cathedral, Father Mulligan said.

"I think the neighborhood at Sacred Heart is very much a neighborhood in transition," he said. "I grew up there as a kid, and everyone who lived there worked for Eastman Kodak Co. I think the houses in the neighborhood were very much owner-occupied and single-family homes."

These days, however, Eastman Kodak is no longer the area's primary employer, and Father Mulli-



Mike Crupi/Catholic Courier

Once renovations are complete at Rochester's Sacred Heart Cathedral, parish offices now located in the convent across from the church will be moved, making room for a neighborhood-outreach center.

gan has a sense that many area homes have been converted into duplexes and rental properties. Social-service providers in the area don't seem to have caught up yet with the transforming neighborhood's needs, he added.

"I think right now we have a much more diverse population of people living here," Father Mulligan said. "To some degree that area is underserved. Social services of Rochester have not really focused on that area like they have in other areas."

Father Mulligan said the planning-group parishes have talked with several organizations — including Catholic Charities — about the possibility of using the convent's free space to provide services to the neighborhood. The main goal is for the center to be flexible and able to adapt to the neighborhood's changing needs, he said.

This flexibility might result in the center being used for a variety of different outreach programs, rather than housing just one organization. For example, the center

could be used to conduct clinics for new homeowners and computer-education classes for neighborhood residents or as a place for uninsured parents to sign up their children for health care.

"We want to be careful that we're not duplicating services that al-



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ready exist. We'd much rather name the use based on actual neighborhood needs than what we think the neighborhood needs," Father Mulligan said.

When looking at ways to bring together the three parishes in the Flower City Park-Lexington Planning Group, planners decided that the group didn't need two faith-formation coordinators, Father Mulligan said. In order to streamline services, Judy Borelli, who had been religious-education administrator at Holy Rosary, became social-ministry coordinator for the three parishes. In her new position, Borelli will run the neighborhood-outreach center and be instrumental in determining what kinds of outreach and programming the center will implement.

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- 16 **SLOW DOWN - SPIRITUAL SUGGESTIONS FOR STRESSED LIFE.** Father Joseph Champlin, rector of the Immaculate Conception, Syracuse and author of more than forty books and is known as a gifted speaker. His book titled *Slow Down* is a collection of 101 five-minute meditations to de-stress your days. 9:30 - 3:00. Offering: \$25 includes lunch.
- 17 **DAY OF REFLECTION AND RENEWAL FOR PARISH STAFFS.** The day will consist of presentations by Father Ed Palumbos, time for reflection, prayer and sharing and lunch. 9:30 - 3:00. Offering: \$25 per person.
- 18 **A DAY OF MY OWN**
- 23 **SHARE - A MEN'S SUPPORT GROUP**

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