

OPTION FOR FUTURE MINISTRY

*Bill, This is what I typed up to present to the Team for now.
It's practically word for word from your letter.
Thanks so much. Love Claire*

SS Peter and Paul Church, Rochester, New York

William Heffron: Pastor

'Rick Lebreque: Associate

Ignatius McGraw: Ministry to elderly Joachim Shultz: Retired

Sr. Virginia McGlynn SSND: Religious Education

The parish has a total population of about 7,000 people

Predominantly Blacks

About 20% Hispanic most of whom are bilingual

The Whites fall into 3 categories:

Middle aged home owners who bought homes before the White-flight.

Old people who have been there for years and don't want to leave.

Poor, uneducated who can't find cheaper accommodations elsewhere.

Active parishioners number about 200; 100 use envelopes; ave. 150 for worship.

It is certainly one of the most neglected areas of the city. It has the usual inner-city problems:

Poor trash removal; many abandoned buildings/boarded up houses;

Vacant lots not cared for; drug selling is pretty open;

Prostitution is flagrant.

A recent Evangelization Census which included about 16,000 people (3 parishes) came up with these significant statistics:

About 7,000 in SS Peter and Paul area

Approximately 50% consider themselves unchurched

Large numbers of alienated Catholics

A large elderly population

A large number of children under 18 and many much younger.

Many mothers with small children/no husband/no support

Many unemployed men/ some have turned to alcohol

Needs:

The presence of caring Christian persons

Prayerful concern for the plight of the many marginal people

A follow-up to the evangelization census; large scale, long term evangelization program

Persons with a strong desire to proclaim the Good News in new ways to people who have rejected what they heard before.

People with a desire to serve others who won't necessarily appreciate the service. So the service must be unconditional, without a thought of reward, spiritual or material; this is the most difficult part of the mission.

What is now being done:

We are trying to evangelize, to build a servant community

We are trying to make ourselves known to the people

We are trying to communicate of Black people that SS Peter and Paul welcomes them

We are trying to discover which kind of service is most possible for us.

We are at the very beginning of a mission, we haven't begun to lay the foundation, we are just beginning to dig it.

What gifts are needed:

Any gifts that will contribute to helping with evangelization, with building a community of people who will be a constant light in this area. Gifts for visibility and availability for service. Types of service might include: coffee house, day care, kindergarten, hospitality center, soup kitchen, alternative school for high school drop-outs, night school for high school equivalency, organize neighborhoods into catalytic communities/ base communities, DRE, director of evangelization, adult education, sacraments programs etc.

SS.CC. ROCHESTER: A celebration of Anniversaries, a Remembrance of What Has Been, a Joyful Look at What is Now, a Confident Commitment to the Future

N.B.: SS.CC. presence in Rochester, in one form or another, dates from at least 1913. The ministry at Our Lady of Victory encompassed about 50 years, and we have been at SS. Peter and Paul for 15 years. A proportionately high number of vocations has come from the city and diocese, with local SS.CC. vocations now serving throughout our province and in Hawaii. Even now, one of our scholastics is a Rochesterian and native of SS. Peter and Paul.

Nevertheless, since the departure from Our Lady of Victory, we have become less known to the Rochester church community and overall population. A well-planned observance could heighten awareness of our long-standing Rochester tradition, and on-going presence and ministry. It would also be an opportunity for a reunion of SS.CC.'s and people of all sorts, comparable to what we experience at funerals in Fairhaven with people in that area.

PROPOSAL: "Sacred Hearts Day" or "Week" can be planned and celebrated. The following are some random ideas of what that could entail:

- 1) Formation of a committee, especially involving the Daily Mass League People
- 2) Proclamation of "Sacred Hearts Day" by Mayor Ryan
- 3) Invitations to all living SS.CC. personnel who have ever served in Rochester, as well as to all local SS.CC. vocations
- 4) Preparation of a souvenir booklet with history, pictures, etc. (ads?)
- 5) A special "Reunion Mass" at Our Lady of Victory on, say, Saturday night, followed by a banquet at which Bishop Clark could make a little talk and present a surprise award to Father Callens
- 6) A special SS.CC. Day Mass Sunday at SS. Peter and Paul, followed by a reception in the hall
 - exhibits of SS.CC. Rochester past and present;
 - SS.CC. around the world, especially our missions;
 - Father Damien;
 - Vocation-related items (our history, charism, formation, etc.);
 - Other?
 - slide shows/films/filmstrips, etc., some in connection with exhibits (e.g., Damien film and filmstrip, slide show on India, Bahamas, etc.)
 - a 30-45 minute program, including:
 - introduction of dignitaries, visitors (SS.CC. returnees, etc.), etc.
 - a brief talk on SS.CC. identity and mission, including a quick review of history and mission in Rochester and Rochester vocations; this could perhaps be done by way of a narrated slide presentation.
 - Remarks by significant people, e.g., bishop, provincial, pastor, committee, chairman, parish council president, mayor.
 - a brief prayer service, perhaps including some reaffirmation of presence and ministry by bishop/provincial/SS.CC.'s currently serving in Rochester, and renewal of vows by all SS.CC.'s present.
 - refreshments
- 7) Possibly a special day or half-day program for Religious on the Saturday, led by Fintan Sheeran with an SS.CC. Sister.
- 8) More elements of preparation:
 - advertising: Gannett, City, Courier-Journal, broadcast media
 - bulletin announcements to other parishes
 - amenable arrangements with Our Lady of Victory; commitment from Bishop, Mayor, etc.
 - invitations to religious communities
 - ticket-selling for banquet; advertisement selling for booklet
 - posters for area high schools and colleges
 - preparation of exhibits, decoration of churches and hall
 - throw-away literature to distribute--e.g., vocations, missions, enthronement, etc.
 - refreshment committee
 - reservation of suitable banquet location
 - preparation of liturgies, music ministry, etc.