

OBITUARIES

The Rev. Alan Caparella, aunt in area

The Rev. Alan E. Caparella, 52, parochial vicar and administrator at the Holy Ghost Church in Whitman, nephew of Mina Eccher of Readsboro, Vt., died Easter Sunday, March 31.

Born Dec. 17, 1938, he was ordained to the priesthood June 12, 1965.

Before going to Holy Ghost Church six years ago, he was a teacher from 1965-68 and administrator 1968-72 at Serra High School, McKeesport, Pa.; director of Seminarians 1973-76 at Bonaventure House, Brighton; provincial counselor, directors of personnel 1976-79 of Franciscan Province of the Immaculate Conception, New York City; and chaplain 1979-81 at Massachusetts General Hospital, Boston. He served as pastor 1981-84 of St. Leonard Church in Boston's North End and as parochial vicar 1984-85 of St. Anthony Church, Revere.

Father Caparella, a member of the Franciscan Friars order, was also active in the community outside the parish and participated in ecumenical services. He often provided counseling to young people during times of community crisis, such as after fatal car crashes and during the Persian Gulf war.

He was chaplain of the fire department, police department and Cardinal Spellman General Assembly Fourth Degree Knights. He organized youth sports at the church and invited all children of the community to participate.

After hearing of Caparella's death, Selectman Richard Cole was quoted as saying "No matter what religion, or what faith you are, Father Alan's death affected almost every family in the community. I hope his family can endure the loss, and I hope our community can endure the loss."

When he died, town officials lowered flags to half-staff and the town hall in Whitman was closed during the Mass. At least 100 high school students were dismissed early to attend the service, which was attended by at least 1,200 residents of the com-



The Rev. A.E. Caparella

munity.

At the funeral Mass, a parishioner Daniel Manning called Father Caparella "Whitman's greatest friend. Father Alan was our priestly parish priest, our gentle community shepherd."

"He loved his parish and all the people in this town, and always felt a part of it. He loved the summer cookouts for the kids, the Halloween Mass and the volleyball games," Manning said.

His colleagues and parishioners described him as a man who approached life with zeal and enthusiasm, a man who was always there when others needed him.

A memorial to Father Caparella printed on a page in the funeral Mass program read "He was all things to all people. He was Santa Claus at the Christmas pageant and the incarnation of St. Francis as he worked with children and those in need....He was the priest with a broad smile, a kind word and a heart that reach out enthusiastically to all who met him."

The Rev. Henry Boivin, pastor of Holy Ghost Church, promised parishioners that he will continue to support the parish youth programs started by Father Caparella. He said he regarded Caparella as a brother and added "I know Father Alan had brothers, but I never did. It was a nice experience for me."