

The face of HIV/AIDS 30 years later

by Fr. Paul Schumacher

It has been 30 years since the first report of that new disease that would eventually become known as AIDS. Since then, 25 million people have died from AIDS-related illnesses, and today more than 33 million men, women, and children are living with the disease. We have come a long way, but there is still no cure and we always need to remember that this disease is preventable.

Catholic Church in forefront

In May the Vatican hosted international scientists at a one-day conference on AIDS. Among those attending the conference were leading scientific experts on AIDS.

The Catholic Church and other faith groups must continue to acquaint themselves with the true facts of AIDS prevention and feel empowered to promote faithfulness and abstinence. And at the same time, the Church must continue to



**World AIDS Day is
Dec. 1**

take care of the sick and dying, reduce stigma and discrimination, provide clinics and hospitals, and educate people about AIDS.

For this purpose, the Good Samaritan Foundation, an organization established by Pope John Paul II, plans to expand its outreach and assistance to AIDS patients across the globe. One of its top priorities will be providing HIV/AIDS patients with universal and free access to treatments.

A few facts

- Thirty years after the HIV/AIDS emergence, the disease has a new face – people over 50.
- There is a growing need for services among the ethnic groups in the Diocese of New Ulm. The number of active HIV/AIDS clients has increased from six in 2006 to 32 through May 2011.

We must continue to reach out and be of service, as Jesus did.

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