



INSTALLATION DAY — Greeting Bishop Kearney at rites installing him as Fifth Bishop of Rochester (November 11, 1937) were two of his predecessors in the See: (left) Archbishop, now Cardinal Edward Mooney of Detroit and (right) Archbishop Thomas Hickey, who died December 10, 1940.

## The Bishop Of Rochester

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every to the prayers of his priest and people. "So many prayers in my behalf went up to heaven during my illness," he explained. "That one day I understand, St. Peter, who is in Our Lord said, 'Say, who is this man, Bishop Kearney anyhow?'"

Although he is very conscious of the vital role which God plays in the affairs of men, the Bishop of Rochester is also a realist. He knows, too, that God works through men. He knows that in this world God gets His work done through the cooperation of men. He never tires of stressing that God blesses all sincere efforts in His behalf.

This is all made dear in one of Bishop Kearney's favorite stories. According to this anecdote a Bishop sent one of his young priests to take over a poor, rundown parish in the outback of the diocese.

"So what you can do," the Bishop told his young priest. "And don't forget, you'll not be alone down there. I'll be with you and help you."

A year later the Bishop visited the young priest and was pleased to see the parish in good shape. "Improvements were made in the past little year."

"I'll help you," the Bishop told the young priest. "That you'll not be alone down here. I'll be with you and help you."

As the Bishop continued to give the young priest credit for improvements made in the parish, the young priest said:

"Bishop, you should have seen this place when God was down here and help you."

This amusing story dramatizes Bishop Kearney's personal philosophy. He believes that for Christ's Church to do her work in this world it is not enough that God work alone. We of us, the Bishop believes, the clergy, the religious and the laity must help God's Church carry on her work. God and His Church work through men.

"Don't expect God to work miracles," he says, "when a little effort on our part will do the job."

to recognize that man depends on others in conducting the Church's work in the Diocese which embraces 700 square miles and 150 parishes.

Repeatedly he expresses his public thanks to the priest and laity for their cooperation in diocesan programs. Repeatedly he evokes the gratitude and loyalty of the laity who rally to his side in every crisis.

How is Bishop Kearney's humble leadership reflected in the progress of the Diocese during the past twenty years belongs to Bishop Kearney's daring leadership and apostolic spirit. And here the best tribute comes from veteran priests who have served under Bishop Kearney during all his years in Rochester.

Although they always give loyal support to the Bishop, they admit that at first some of his undertakings filled them with misgivings. But they also readily admit that their misgivings and concern were soon

dispelled when the Bishop's decisions, as bold as they seemed, resulted in tremendous success and good for the Diocese.

A case in point is the diocesan-wide campaign which Bishop Kearney launched in 1952 to obtain \$3,000,000 for the erection of four new high schools.

Some of the pastors threw their hands up in alarm when the Bishop announced this high school venture. And when quotas were assigned to the parishes some of the pastors felt they were beyond attainment.

Final results of the high school campaign vindicated once again Bishop Kearney's courageous foresight and vision. Despite the unprecedented quotas, almost every parish surpassed its assigned goal. Total pledges amounted to \$4,500,000 in excess of \$1,500,000 over the diocesan-wide goal.

Bishop Kearney's bold and successful venture in the field of financing high school construction is known today as "The Rochester Story" — an achievement which has amazed other dioceses throughout the country. More than one envious Bishop has buttonholed the Bishop of Rochester for an explanation of how it was done.

As he looks back today from the vantage point of his Silver Jubilee in the Episcopacy, Bishop Kearney would be less than human if he did not take some pardonable pride in the fact that his years in the Rochester Diocese have seen the Church change the skyline in every corner of the Diocese.

The rise of new parish schools, high schools, colleges, hospitals, churches, convents, seminaries, and monasteries has kept the Bishop of Rochester busy wielding trowel and mortar at the traditional cornerstone ceremonies.

So familiar a figure has he become at these rites dedicating new institutions throughout the Diocese that the suggestion has come more than once for the Bricklayers' Union to give the Bishop of Rochester an honorary membership card.

Bishop Kearney is especially proud of his diocesan school system which has more than doubled its facilities and its enrollment under his twenty-year tenure.

Once, in reply to public criticism of Catholic schools, he vowed: "For every attack of a bigot on the Catholic educational system, I will per-

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Following his arrival in Rochester (November 10, 1937) Bishop Kearney showed his Papal document of appointment as Fifth Bishop of Rochester to Monsignor William M. Hart, vicar general.