

Consecration Rites Unite Diocese In Sacred Heart Devotion

COURIER-JOURNAL
Friday, November 4, 1966

At an afternoon Mass in Sacred Heart Cathedral and in the evening on a three station radio network, Bishop Kearney dedicated the Diocese and its families to the Sacred Heart of Jesus Sunday, October 30. Monsignor John E. Maney, chancellor of the Diocese, gave the sermon at the Cathedral Mass. Following is the text of his sermon.

"Now on the last, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and let him drink who believes in Me. As the Scripture says, from within him there shall flow rivers of living water.'" (John VII, 37-39)

On this solemn feast of Christ the King, the last of the great feasts of the liturgical year honoring our Lord Jesus Christ — at the end of a year which has been dedicated in a particular way to the Sacred Heart of Jesus — we are gathered together as a family in this Cathedral Church of the Diocese of Rochester at the call of the Shepherd of our souls to render a solemn tribute of thanksgiving and praise, of love and adoration to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Patron of this Cathedral.

This ceremony is indeed a fitting climax to a year that has been marked with outpouring torrents of divine grace from the Sacred Heart of our Saviour upon the clergy and the faithful of this diocese.

Only the Heart of Jesus "in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" can adequately measure the gifts of grace that have come to all of us during this "Year of the Sacred Heart."

The clergy could cite innumerable instances when their ministry seemed to possess an unusual efficacy in dealing with souls, in penetrating the most hardened of hearts, in calling back to the fold those sheep who had strayed long and far from the Divine Shepherd, in touching from the jaws of hell those who very last moment many a minister whose doom seemed sealed in final impotence.

The faithful of our Diocese could recount many a heart-rending story of special strength and consolation received in times of sorrow and tribulation, of inexpressible answers to long and ardent prayers for spiritual and temporal favors, of the sudden healing of the sick, of the conversion of those who were once in the life of sin, of the conversion and final repentance of those who had been in the grip of the evil one.

Yet, all of these have drunk from the fountain of the Sacred Heart and have experienced in their own lives "the gift of God" the Samaritan well: He that shall drink of the water that I will give him shall not thirst forever, and the water that I will give him shall become in him a

fountain of water, springing up into life everlasting" (John IV, 13-14).

What has been the reason for these prodigious outpourings of divine grace? It is because, hearing the call and invitation of our Shepherd in Christ, this Diocese has renewed itself through a special and intense devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

It is this devotion to the Sacred Heart that was called by our late Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, of blessed memory, a "perfect profession of the Christian religion." For this is the religion of Jesus which rests entirely on a Mediator who is man and God, so that no one can come to the heart of God except through the heart of Christ, as He Himself says: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through Me." (Encyclical "Haurietis Aquas")

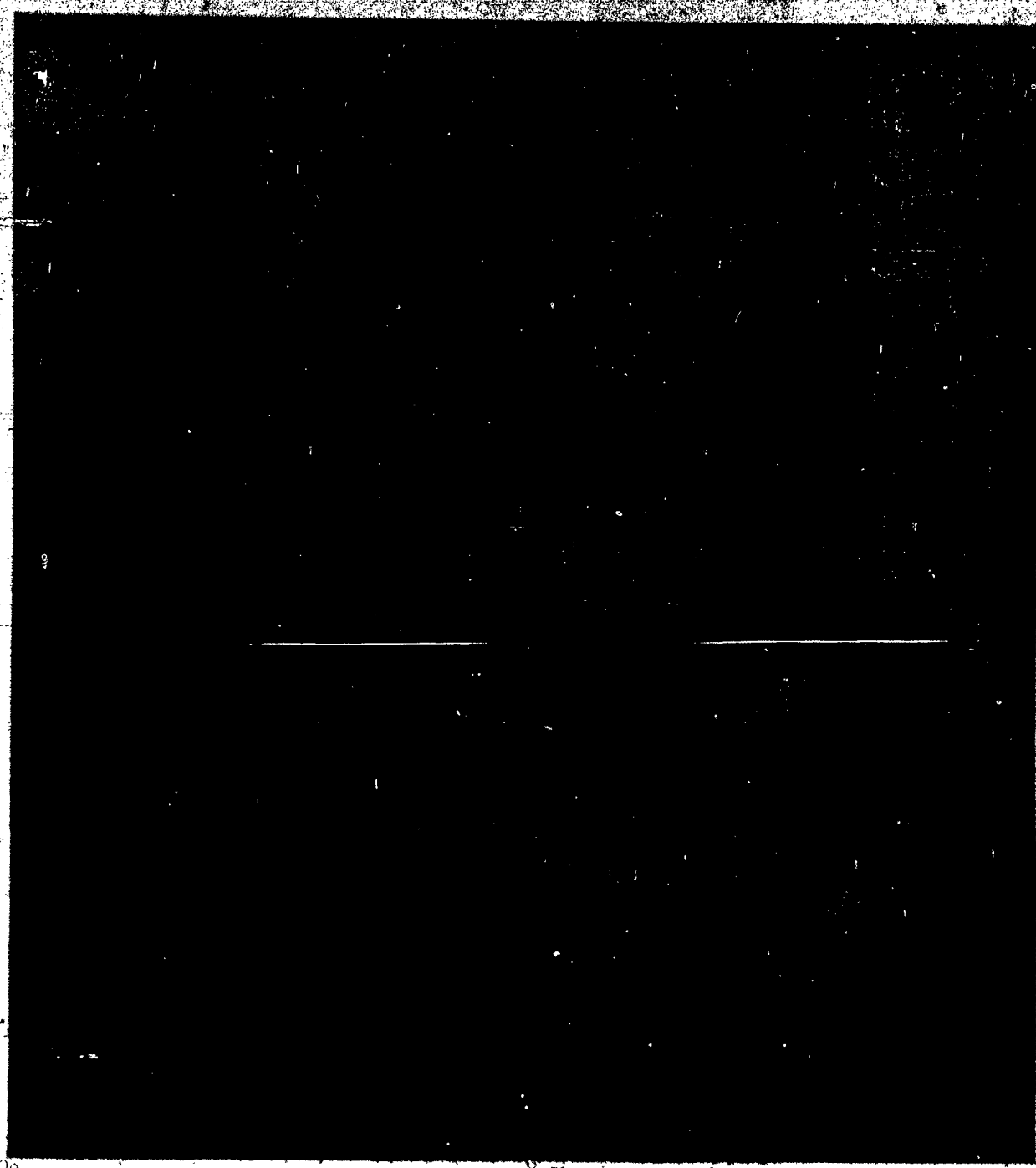
Our devotion to the Sacred Heart of our Saviour is not merely a pious sentimentality. It is rooted firmly and fundamentally in the deep dogmatic truths of the Incarnation and Redemption.

The Eternal Word of God actually and substantially united to His Divine Person, an individuality in the perfect human nature which was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit in the most pure womb of the Virgin Mary. Consequently, Jesus Christ possesses a heart of flesh hypostatically united to the Divine Person of the Word, and capable of suffering, yearning, dying, and being pierced through with a lance, for our redemption.

We must, therefore, adore this heart as the Heart of God. We must give thanks and praise to this heart as the living sign and symbol of the divine love that accomplished our redemption and salvation. "Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John XV, 13)

What infinite love throbbed in the heart of our Saviour for us during the course of His mortal life when He revealed to us the fullness of that love. St. John exclaims: "In this we have come to know His love, that He laid down His life for us." (1 John III, 16)

And especially when on the night before He died, He instituted the sacrament of His love, the Holy Eucharist, wherein He willed to remain with us forever, our eternal spiritual food, and our heavenly Father, and our constant companion and nourishment for our souls in this



Bishop Kearney gives his blessing at the solemn Mass in Sacred Heart Cathedral Sunday, October 30, feast of Christ the King. As part of the rite, he solemnly consecrated the Diocese and its activities to the Saviour's Sacred Heart. This is the text of the act of consecration:

At the close of this year which we have dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, during which that gracious Heart has enriched our Diocese with many graces, we now solemnly consecrate the Diocese to

the Sacred Heart of Jesus. We consecrate the Diocese and its activities to the Saviour's Sacred Heart. This is the text of the act of consecration:

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He owes every grace that we have ever received to this love. We must continue to grow in this love if we are to attain that fullest perfection of the Christian life which the great Apostle to the Gentiles urged to his beloved "Ephesians" when he said: "For this reason I bend my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... that He may grant you from His glorious riches to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the progress of the inner man. And to know Christ dwelling through faith in your hearts; so that, being rooted and grounded in love, you may be able to comprehend with all the Saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know Christ's love which surpasses knowledge, in order that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God." (Ephesians III, 14-19)

Therefore, it is most fitting and proper for us today on this feast of Christ the King to renew our dedication and our consecration to His Sacred Heart. Today He reigns in heaven in glory at the right hand of His Father, but His Sacred Heart never ceases to beat with love for men. "Since He lives always to make intercession for us." (Hebrews VII, 25)

Ever since His ascension into heaven the Sacred Heart of Jesus has continually shored up the world with the gifts of His love, beginning with the Holy Spirit Who is the substantial living Person of love between the Father and the Son, and who dwells in His Church, ever replenishing the faithful with the manifold gifts of His Holy Spirit. These gifts of love from His Holy Spirit have renewed the apostolic spirit of His Church in every age.

Have new apostles have preached His word fearlessly and His love poured out in death throughout the history of the Church. Countless martyrs, confessors, virgins and holy men and women have received a supernatural strength to lead lives of Christian perfection because of this outpouring of the love of God which is diffused in our hearts through the indwelling of His Holy Spirit.

Nor can we fail to thank Him for the most tender of all His gifts to mankind, His own sweet Immaculate Heart. He gave to us from the throne of His mercy the most precious of hearts when His Sacred Heart was emptied of itself of the last throes of love which He had to give to a sinful

world. As He was the mother of our Redeemer, according to the flesh and His sacrifice in His great act of redemption, so He is truly the mother of all those who have been redeemed in the precious blood of His Divine Son. And for this most tender gift of His Sacred Heart we render our thanks today.

We here in the Diocese of Rochester at the closing of this year can truly say in the words of the Beloved Disciple who laid his head upon the breast of the Saviour close to His Sacred Heart: "O! His fullness we have all received and grace for grace." (John I, 16)

For all these torrents of divine grace poured upon us in this diocese we now gratefully join with our Bishop as he leads us in a renewal of our dedication to the Sacred Heart of Jesus which has loved us with such infinite love.

We shall consecrate ourselves, our lives, our families, our Diocese, our country and the world to His Sacred Heart, praying that this solemn act of devotion from the heart of a grateful Diocese may please His adorable Heart and that we may be thus more worthy in His sight to receive His continued blessings in the future.

We pray today that His kingdom may be extended over the whole world, His kingdom of truth and life, His kingdom of holiness and grace, His kingdom of justice, love and peace.

The Heart of Jesus is the only hope for the world today. The Heart of Jesus is our only salvation from the dreadful evils that surround us. Wherefore the Diocese of Rochester dedicates itself completely to Him whose Sacred Heart presides from His kingdom over the high Altar of this Cathedral where He is enshrined as the "King and Center of all our hearts," and whence His love goes out into the lives of every man, woman and child in this diocese. In His love we shall live and move and have our being.

"Who, then, shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? But in all these things we overcome because of Him who has loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor powers, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans VIII, 35-39)

Heart, Symbol of Love

Father Louis Hohmann, diocesan director of the League of the Sacred Heart, also called the Apostleship of Prayer, gave this talk on Sunday evening's radio broadcast. The text of his talk will conclude his series of articles in this paper written each week during the Sacred Heart Year.

As one enters the Cathedral in Rochester, the first thing that strikes the eye is the large image of the Sacred Heart above the main altar. The Heart is exposed to view, the living beating symbol of his love for men. The heart is outstretched, as though he were saying, "Come to me." And he desires to embrace anyone who will come.

Of all the creatures on earth, man is the only one made to truly choose to love. As animals cannot, man is able to rise above himself and love unselfishly. This is his destiny, why he was made.

Our purpose in life then, is to choose God. Religion is seeking at all if it is not a love affair between God and man.

It is only when we choose self in preference to God that we become mean, little, and selfish. At the very dawn of human history Adam did just that and we have done it since. As a result human nature was doomed to chaos, suffering and death. And that chaos remains in our modern world just as surely as sin remains.

God's love for us was without limit, though, and in a marvelous manifestation of that love he came into the world in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. And he came for just one purpose — to show us how to love God and our fellow men. From the very beginning of that life to the end we see the example of that love. Not one page of the Gospel is without it. But in the brief time we have we must be content to cite the climactic words of that love.

In the Garden of Gethsemani, Jesus Christ was prostrated by the weight of all our sins which he carried on his shoulders. He was suffering for us and the burden was so incomprehensibly great that his blood was literally driven out through his pores. He sweat blood.

On Calvary Jesus Christ gave himself finally and completely for love of man. He lay a pale cloth on the soldiers' cutting loins. He had given his head to the torturing crown of thorns; his hands were used to bless and his feet were used to go to the poor and suffering. He gave to the nails, his tongue was swollen with thirst; his

eyes must listen to the blasphemy of the Jews. His eyes must behold the suffering of his mother; and when he had given his mother to us, there was nothing more to give except his life. He loved his heart to die.

In this manner did Jesus Christ teach us the love for God for us as he also taught us how to love God. It is the heart of the devotion to the Sacred Heart. Behold the Heart which has loved men so much.

On our part devotion to the Sacred Heart means first that we may possess God because he loves us. No matter what the circumstances of our lives, no matter what the suffering, trial or temptation, we matter what the loneliness, so matter what the sin we have committed, we may come to him and find refreshment, peace and love.

Devotion to the Sacred Heart means also the effort to imitate the love of Jesus Christ. It means giving ourselves to God unselfishly as he did. When we can honestly say that we have dedicated, given our total lives to him, that we want nothing more than to do his will, we have learned the love that is the fulfillment and the beauty of our lives. We will have learned to become divinely human and humanly divine.

Today we renew our consecration to love. We come freely and lovingly to the outstretched arms of Jesus our very being in the tender protection of his embrace, and only there will we find true and perfect peace.

No Carpet Is Sale

Talschman, Formosa-Maryknoll Father Leonard J. Marston of West Lynn, Mass., has a problem keeping his modest rectory in rugs.

Before leaving on a mission trip the 31-year-old Maryknoller spread six musty, damp shag-rugs out in the back yard to dry in the sun.

Returning late in the afternoon, the tired padre arrived just in time to watch the last of his rugs being devoured — and obviously relished — by a herd of water buffaloes.

Christian Love In Homes

Father Thomas O'Day, national director of the League of the Sacred Heart, gave the following talk on the radio broadcast Sunday evening.

The consecration of the family brings to mind the beautiful ceremony which marks the beginning of family life.

Just as the life of a Priest begins at the altar with the Mass of his Ordination, and the life of a Religious begins at the altar with the Profession of the Vow of Poverty, chastity and Obedience, so the life of a family begins at the altar with the Sacrament that the life of a family begins. There the young couple consecrate themselves to each other.

The act of consecration was an act of love. It was fortified by grace, and the altar, where your family life begins and where the Holy Sacrament of the Mass is offered, that altar reminded you that sacrifice is necessary if that love is to endure and grow ever stronger and deeper with the years.

So it is easy enough to say "I love you" but the test of love is sacrifice, and the proof of real love is our lives for those we love. On the day you stood at the altar you made your marriage vows, your act of consecration to one another, but the proof that your love was genuine and that your words were sincere in your daily life-long living of that consecration, your unselfish living for one another.

So must it be too with this act of consecration of your family to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. It will take but a few moments to kneel and read the prayer together, but this act of consecration, like the one you make to each other, is an act of love, and an act of love for our Divine Lord. It shall have a profound and lasting effect on your family life. The love of our family for our Divine Lord will be tested and proven genuine in your daily living the way he

others, of love of the Mass and frequent Holy Communion and family prayer. Children find it easier to honor and obey their parents when the parents are striving in their daily lives to make themselves deserving of that honor, respect, obedience and love.

That is the real meaning of the Act of Consecration you are about to make to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. This is a fitting climax to this year of the Sacred Heart in the Diocese of Rochester, a year in which we have witnessed a tremendous growth in the Apostleship of Prayer in the parishes and schools of the Diocese.

New Centers were established, and more Parish Centers have had a great increase in the enrollment of members. A similar advance has been made in the schools, where a special Apostleship of Prayer program for the children has been started — the Eucharistic Crusade.

I know that under the inspiring and zealous guidance of your Diocesan Director, Father Louis Hohmann, this program will continue until every Parish Center and every parochial school will have the Eucharistic Crusade program of the Apostleship of Prayer.

The family is the keystone of our society. If every family now about to make this Act of Consecration will perseveringly try to live it, then its impact will be felt in the parish and community of the Diocese.

What a deep consolation this will be to the great priestly heart of your devoted and beloved Bishop, who is anxious that Devotion to the Sacred Heart should be outstanding not just this year but always in every parish, every school, every home of the Diocese of Rochester which today in a wonderful impressive ceremony at the Cathedral has consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

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