

The Catholic COURIER

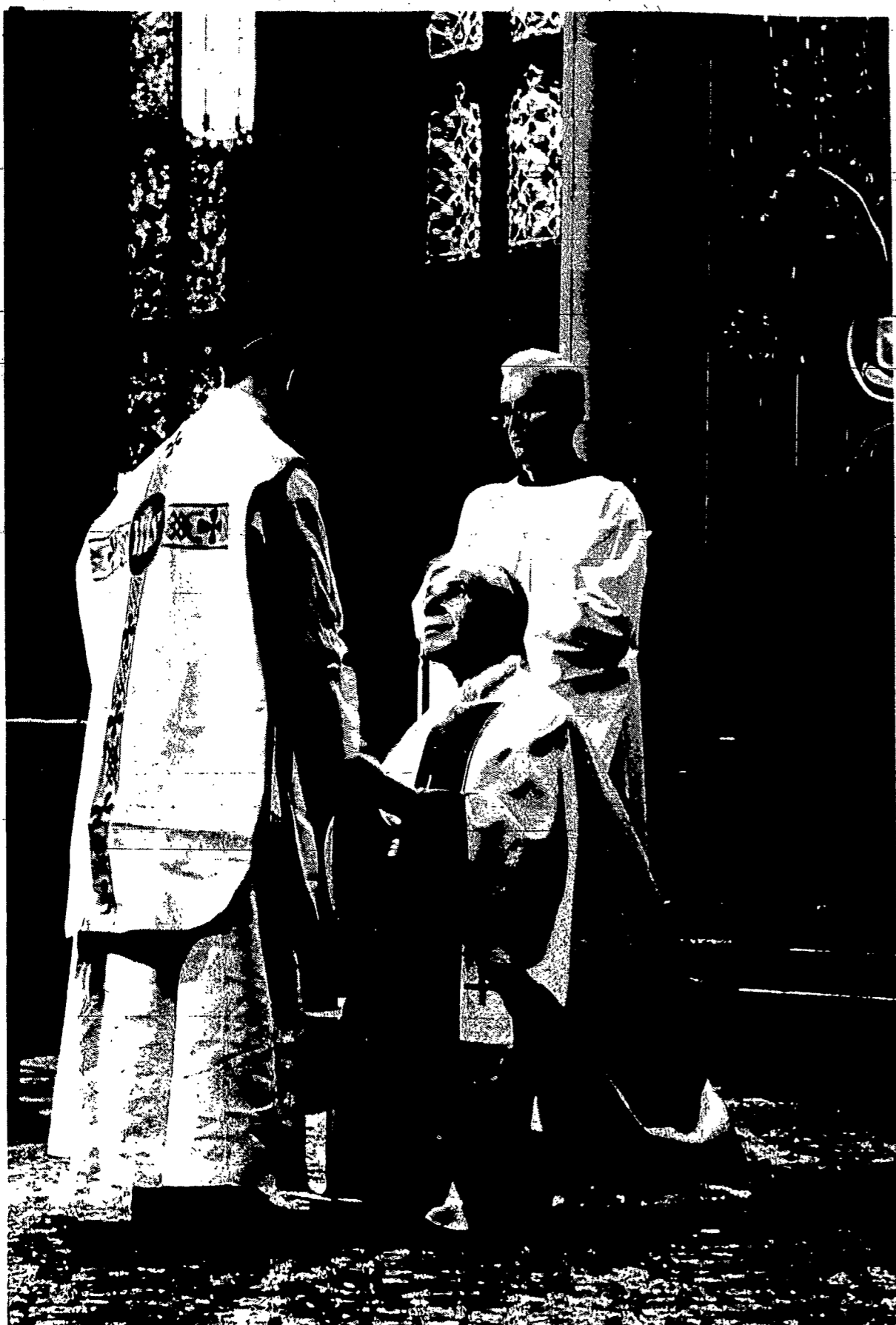
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A New Priest's Blessing . . .

Bishop Sheen left his throne to kneel for a blessing from each of the young priests he ordained at Sacred Heart Cathedral Saturday morning. Here Father William M. Swingly gives the Bishop his blessing. Father Joseph Brennan, St. Bernard's Seminary rector, stands at the Bishop's side. Other ordination photos on page three.



The statue of Our Lady of Fatima is silhouetted against the sky as Pope Paul offers prayers at famous shrine.

No Ticket at Fatima

Monsignor Joseph Cirrincione, Rochester's Radio Rosary priest, was recently in Fatima, Portugal, for 50th anniversary observance of apparitions of our Lady there.

Without a ticket to admit him to area reserved for clergy, he was shunted from one spot—where he met Lucy dos Santos, one of the 1917 visionaries,

now a Carmelite nun, to a second spot—where he met members of the royal families of Spain and Italy, to a third spot—where he met the Pope!

He describes his pilgrimage in a special article for Courier readers. Turn to page 10 of this issue and slip out the tabloid section. His story is printed in the center portion of the tabloid.

Did Irish Dig the Canal?

By FATHER ROBERT F. McNAMARA

St. Bernard's Seminary

It has often been stated, sometimes rather boastfully, that Irish laborers were key figures in the digging of the Erie Canal—that historic waterway begun just 150 years ago next month. Not long ago, in fact, Harvey Chalmers wrote a semi-fictionalized book titled "How the Irish Built the Erie."

More recently, however, Ronald E. Shaw's scholarly study of the origins of the Canal, "Erie Waters West," has asked for proof of this assertion. He is inclined to believe that the Irish were a minor factor, especially in the earliest years of the Canal.

Official documents indicate that in 1819, three-quarters of the canal laborers were natives, not immigrants; and that after 1828 most canal workers were recruited in the locality of the canal.

He probably has a point. The digging of the Erie Canal began in 1817 and was finished in 1825. It was enlarged 1836-1860. Now the immigration of Irish into western New York was slow during the years in which the canal was first being constructed. It rose to top proportions during the years of enlargement just before the Civil War. Most likely, therefore, the Irish did not constitute a large proportion of the laborers when the original canal was dug.

Nevertheless, Irish laborers were singled out for special praise in the official construc-

tion report of 1818; and the work which immigrants did in 1819 when the canal was being cut across the Montezuma Swamps became too proverbial to be gainsaid.

There is a tradition in several parishes in the diocese of Rochester that canal workers helped form the nuclei of a number of parishes in towns along the canal route.

Denis Dwyer, for instance, arrived in Seneca Falls in 1827. He was one of several pioneer Catholics to settle there who was employed on the Erie canal system. At Fairport, tradition says that a number of the original Catholics there came because of their association with canalizing. The same was the case at Brockport.

What seems to have been true of the Erie Canal project in its

third to fifth decades, was certainly true of the later ramifications of the Erie system—the Chemung Canal, the Crooked Lake (Keuka) Canal; and especially the Genesee Valley Canal, constructed from Rochester south to Olean, 1836-1857.

Bishop John Timon, first bishop of Buffalo (1847-1867), bears witness to the large number of Irish laborers employed in digging this latter branch canal, much of which ran through the present diocese of Rochester. In his "Missions in Western New York" (Buffalo, 1862, p. 220), he wrote as follows.

"At Mount Morris, three hundred Irish Catholics working on the Canal were visited by Rev. Mark Murphy, and, to suit their convenience, Divine Service was

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Cathedral Mass Sunday For High School Grads

A dramatic attempt to give a more spiritual significance to graduation ceremonies for hundreds of high school students in the Rochester area was announced by Bishop Sheen this week.

All prospective graduates of both Catholic and public high schools are invited to attend a special Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral Sunday, June 11 at 5 p.m. Bishop Sheen will celebrate the Mass and preach the sermon.

Sister Florian of the Sisters of St. Joseph has written special music to be sung at the Mass. Basilian Father Jay Walsh of Aquinas Institute will lead the students in the singing of folk music.

The Bishop's proposal for a Baccalaureate Mass appears to be the first step in what eventually may become the ceremony for the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Early in February Bishop Sheen announced that he intended to raise the age for confirmation to that of high school graduation.

Brother Daniel Redmond, C.S.C., principal of Cardinal Mooney High School, is coordinator of arrangements.

Bishop Sheen to Launch Adult Education Series

The first Adult Education Congress will be launched in the diocese of Rochester on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings, June 28, 29 and 30 at 7:30 p.m. at Nazareth Academy, 1001 Lake Avenue, Rochester.

The Congress will feature three lectures on the Bible, revolving around two personalities of the Old Testament—Abraham and Moses, and on Friday the subject will be Christ the Son of God.

The program will consist of a lecture, dialogues and questions. The lecture each evening will be given by Bishop Sheen. The open discussion will be conducted by two experts in Scripture: Father Joseph Brennan of St. Bernard's Seminary and Father Sebastian of the Capuchin Order.

There will be no admission charge and the Congress will be open to all laity, religious and clergy.



Bishop Sheen chats with men at St. Joseph's House of Hospitality during supper. He said Mass at House chapel following the supper.

Rochester's Skid-Row Welcomes Bishop

Bishop Sheen visited some of the men of Rochester's "skid row" recently telling them that in their want and deprivation they were "closer to God" than many more affluent people.

The Bishop made his first visit to St. Joseph's House of Hospitality, 402 South Ave., Rochester, where homeless and transient men are given free meals and clothing daily.

Arriving while the men were at supper, the Bishop sat chatting with them during the meal. In a brief talk he drew a parallel—"no room at the inn" for Christ's birth, and the plight of the property-less poor, noting that the latter could look on Jesus "as their leader."

The Bishop then celebrated Mass in the second-floor chapel for the men and for the group which conducts the House.

Saying Mass with him were priest-friends of the institution

— Father Raymond Kenny of St. Andrew's Seminary faculty, House chaplain; Father Benedict A. Ehmann, pastor of St. Michael's Church, and Father Robert Hoffman, assistant pastor of St. Boniface Church.

Also present were Father P.

David Finks, vicar for urban ministry, and Father Michael C. Hogan, the Bishop's secretary.

In the sermon, and in a talk following the Mass, Bishop Sheen lauded the spirit of charity and brotherhood evidenced in the work at the House, and

expressed his pleasure at the opportunity to witness it personally.

The House, which is conducted by a small group of laymen, is in its 28th year in dispensing food and clothing to some 40 to 80 men daily.

U.S. Bishops Ask Prayers for Peace

Washington — (NC) — The head of the U.S. Catholic bishops' organization issued a call here to Catholics and "all who believe in God to join in a crusade of prayer for peace throughout the world."

Archbishop John F. Dearden of Detroit, president, National Council of Catholic Bishops, said the bishops had set aside Sunday, June 11, "as a day of prayer in all our churches and chapels."

"Let us pray for immediate peace in the Middle East and ask God's guidance upon

the leaders of nations, so that they may mediate this dispute quickly and permanently," the archbishop said.

The archbishop said the outbreak of war in the Middle East is "a tragic event" with consequences "truly frightening" which could trigger "a world holocaust."

"In this hour of crisis, we, the Catholic bishops of the United States, unite with the Holy Father in his fervent hope that the United Nations Organization will be successful in halting the conflict."

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