

Walls of Prejudice are Crumbling

In The Age of Fairness

Bishop Sheen was in Rome but thousands heard his message at a mammoth "Fairness to Children" Madison Square Garden rally in New York City this past Tuesday.

The rally launched the final state-wide month-long effort to rid the state Constitution of religious bias dating from 1894. Voters will decide the issue at the polls Tuesday, Nov. 7.

The Bishop's statement, read to the Gotham throngs, was in the form of a letter to Father Edward E. Steinkirchner who is directing the Fairness campaign in the Rochester Diocese.

Full text of the statement is as follows:

"I wish to encourage you for your intelligent and devoted interest in cultivating Fairness among our people.

"The change of temper in this country in the last few decades has been remarkable. Three Berlin Walls of prejudice which existed in our past are crumbling: the Wall of Color, the Wall of Race and the Wall of Religious Bigotry. We have passed the age of tolerating others and moved into the Age of Fairness.

"In this new America, no citizen must be penalized because of the way his skin reflects light, or because of his race, or because of the way he wishes to worship God, from Whom, according to the Declaration of Independence, come our rights and liberties.

"To help inspire and intensify the American Spirit of

good will, please, for the next few months, deepen the spirit of Fairness and Charity in schools, families and among all people.

"If you find that any child is denied a right to attend the school of his choice because of his color, or if you find that anyone is denied social benefits because of the way he worships God, be opposed to that injustice, however shrouded it be in legalistic terminology.

"At no moment in our heritage, has America been so imbued with the spirit of equality and justice to all. A violation of equal rights can never be the foundation of a government founded on equality. It is not just a question of being Christian. In fact, the Christian virtue of the oneness of humanity, has now become in our American life, Fairness to all.

"If our government is willing to supply guns and ammunition to a young man who attends one of our schools, why should it not be willing to supply his education? If a government can equip a man for dying on a battlefield, it can also equip him for living in peace.

"If at any time, our citizens go to polls, bid them vote for Equality and Fairness to all, without penalty or closed hand to any of God's creatures, and I mean any. Believe me, in a hundred years or more, if the tombs of all who read this letter were opened, among all the dry bones, who could tell which was a Negro, a Jew, or a Catholic? While the Spirit of God is in us, let us not wait for death to distribute Fairness, especially to our children."

Other 'Fairness' Items — Pages 2 and 4



A New Church ...

Ronald Siragusa and Debra Pecoraro, first graders at Annunciation school, Rochester, had a preview peek at their all-new church on Norton Street. Parishioners will mark their parish jubilee in the new church scheduled to open this Sunday. Other pictures are on page six.

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Holy Family Parish Tries Harder — See Page Five

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Two Vicars Link Far Corners of Diocese to Bishop

By REV. ROBERT KANKA

The two regional Vicars of the Diocese of Rochester are both pastors in their fifties, rich in parish experience and highly regarded by priests and people of their areas.

There the resemblance ends. Father Raymond Wahl, 55, who heads the Eastern Vicariate is a barrel-chested outdoorsman, whose booming laughter sets pictures a-quake on the wall. Pastor of Owasco's Sacred Heart Church, he is also Bishop Sheen's pastoral representative in the five county area radiating west from Auburn.

Father Bartholomew O'Brien, his counterpart in the Southern Tier, is a soft-spoken ascetic, who seldom raises his voice even in stress situations. The 53-year-old pastor of St. Mary Our Mother parish in Horseheads is a well known retreat master, writer of spiritual books and a confessor of rare discernment.

Both have spent their entire priesthood — 30 years for Father Wahl, 27 for Father O'Brien — as parish priests, something of a rarity in these days of "special work" priests.

Trod Different Paths Father Wahl was a natural for youth work during his 19 years as an assistant pastor in Auburn and Rochester parishes. Tuned in by several years as a Stella Maris counselor during his seminary days, he was a strong booster of Scout and other youth activities in parish work.

Voters Must Be Registered

If you are not properly registered to vote, you cannot cast your ballot in the forthcoming Nov. 7 elections. This will be your opportunity to vote on the new State Constitution.

Even those on "Permanent Registration" lists may be ineligible if: 1) They have not voted in the last two years; 2) they have moved to a new address, or 3) they have changed their name, e.g. by getting married.

Make sure that you are registered correctly so that you can express your views on Election Day.

IF YOU MOVE ... let us know about it so we can keep your Courier coming to you on time. Phone or mail us notice of your change of address. Include your old address and new address and the name of your parish. Courier Journal, 35 Scio St., Rochester, N.Y. 14604. Phone-716-454-7050.



FATHER WAHL 'up to his elbows'

During his 10-year hitch at Rochester's Holy Redeemer, he had a big basement room in the school bulging with piles of tents, cooking gills and other paraphernalia, evidence of a lively Scout movement there.

Father O'Brien spent most of his curacy in two spots—Rochester's St. Patrick's parish and Elmira's St. Peter and Paul's. Without skipping his regular parish duties, he continually developed new talents.

Even as a young priest, he was in demand as a retreat preacher. Later he turned his hand to writing, produced two lives of saints for young people — on St. Aloysius and St. John Vianney. He also authored "Spurs to Meditation," for priests and seminarians.

For a man of the spirit, Father O'Brien is a gifted organizer. He helped start the Legion of Mary in the Elmira area in 1957, was chosen area (Curia) director, and has seen the Legion there grow to some 20 praesidia since then.

Two Men — Two Approaches

The differing temperaments of the two men are reflected in the way they go about their new job — being the Bishop's representative in areas somewhat removed from the see city of Rochester. Since the post is

a new one — a product of Vatican II deliberations — it is susceptible of varying approaches.

Basically, the regional episcopal vicars are appointed to help a bishop "exercise the pastoral government of the diocese more effectively." (Pope Paul's decree "Christus Dominus.")

The vicars are empowered to grant many of the requests for dispensations (e.g. from marriage bans, for mixed marriages) that formerly came only from the pastoral office. They also act as liaison men, keeping the Bishop's finger on the spiritual pulse of his diocese.

Father O'Brien, the organizer, already has the various operation of his vicariate neatly structured. In an 8-page leaflet, he lists the various deaneries, explains how each specialized apostolate is set up. His "Structures" outline includes the Ecumenical Apostolate, Religious Education, the Newman Apostolate (four universities or colleges in the Southern Tier) and various institutional assignments.

Father Wahl, the man of action, is less inclined to establish new structures. "Today's parish priest is up to his elbows in directives," he muses. "We're



FATHER O'BRIEN 'a great joy'

getting the work done," he points out emphatically. "but we can do it with the basic structures we already have."

Covering their Beat

Both men spend considerable time getting around their new "beats," which cover wide territories. The Eastern Vicariate includes the counties of Cayuga, Wayne, Seneca, Ontario

and Yates. The Southern Vicariate embraces the counties of Chemung, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga and Tompkins.

Father Wahl has one advantage that is unique to the Auburn area. The priests around there have a long-standing tradition of clerical togetherness. Twice a week, "open house" luncheons, one at Sacred Heart parish, one at Holy Family, bring together 15 to 20 priests each. Just by having lunch twice, Father Wahl can be in weekly dialog with some 38 priests in his vicariate.

Father O'Brien's Falcon has already carried him to each of the 21 parishes in his charge, and he plans to keep in regular contact with them. "The priests have been very kind, and it is a great joy to work more closely with them," he stated after his first circuit ride.

He uses a printed newsletter entitled "Communications," intended to achieve what the title says. It's a combination of vicariate news, announcements and neighborly chit-chat. ("Father Blank is in the hospital, you know. If you don't have time to drop in, he would certainly appreciate a card from you.")

While the new vicars haven't been in their jobs long enough to evaluate their effect thoroughly, many observers feel that they have already begun to develop a greater rapport between the Bishop and his people in the further reaches of the diocese.

Priests and people who have problems or suggestions that they might feel hesitant about taking to Rochester, are quick to relay their sentiments to the vicars, who are well known to them and also easily available.

This also brings up one final thing which these two quite different priests share.

Last spring when Bishop Sheen asked his priests to suggest three priests who would be valuable leaders in the diocese — both Father O'Brien and Father Wahl emerged near the top of the list.

That's at least a good start for a regional vicar.



Photo from The Sun Bulletin, Binghamton

Owego throngs surround Bishop Sheen.

... A New School

Bishop Sheen arrived in Owego in a driving rainstorm and left three hours later in brilliant autumn sunshine.

His visit there came on the eve of his departure for Rome and the Synod of Bishops to which he was appointed by Pope Paul.

In Owego he blessed new St. Patrick's parish school.

Close to 2000 people braved the downpour to pack St. Patrick's Church where the blessing rite was held. The Bishop said the dedicatory prayers in the church sanctuary rather than at the school's entrance. He later toured the school, followed by the throngs who wanted to see first-hand the famed prelate.

Construction of the new two-story \$322,000 structure by Snyder Brothers of Owego makes St. Patrick's school "one of the finest in the southern tier," according to Father Leo J. Matuszewski, pastor.

The "old school" has been renovated for offices, library and cafeteria.

Vatican Paper Titles Cardinals Monsignors

Vatican City — (RNS) — L'Osservatore Romano, official daily newspaper of Vatican City, has simplified the formula it uses for giving the titles of cardinals in its news stories and articles.

Under the new style, L'Osservatore will refer to cardinal simply as "Monsignore," dropping the formula, "Most Eminent and Most Reverend," which it formerly used in its first reference to a cardinal in each story.

A spokesman for Osservatore said the change was prompted by a desire for simplicity and conformity to modern conversational usage. He added that the Church does not plan to abolish the title of "Eminence" in its formal references to cardinals on other occasions.

St. Bernard's to Retain 'Identity' in Ecumenical Merger

Announcement last week that St. Bernard's Seminary was to be linked with two other clergy preparatory schools came as a considerable surprise to most Catholics of the Rochester Diocese.

The ecumenical aspects of the new arrangement, likely to go into effect in 1969, raised the inevitable question — "How can students for the Catholic priesthood learn their theology from Protestant professors?"

The question was already being asked when it was learned that Protestant clerics were to teach sociology and sermon

preparation techniques at St. Bernard's Seminary this year.

But the question became far more frequent when the subjects involved were to be scripture, theology, ethics — and the sharing of library facilities with books readily available which not in the very distant past were considered a danger to the faith of Catholics.

Bishop Sheen answered the questions raised by stating the three theology schools will work toward "integration with identity."

Linked in the proposed merger with St. Bernard's are Colgate Rochester Divinity School and Bexley Hall, an Episcopalian school related to Ken-

yon College, Gambier, Ohio. Colgate Rochester earlier this year became affiliated with the University of Rochester.

The three seminaries plan to establish a Center for Theological Studies at Rochester.

Whether any new construction of buildings is part of the merger plan has not as yet been announced.

Bishop Sheen explained the purpose of the ecumenical venture in the following statement:

"In keeping with the spirit of ecumenism and the out-growing of the dichotomy of the Divine and the secular, St. Bernard's Seminary is desirous to unite with theological institutions in ministering to the

world without losing itself.

"Theological developments demand not only the Church involvement in the world, but also the need of the Holy and the Transcendent. Because other religious seminaries have recognized the double mission of being a servant and needing a Saviour, the time has come to join with them in those things where we can help one another and save the world.

"In order to become conversant with contemporary philosophical investigations, especially those exercising special influence in our country, and in order to become introduced to the elements of goodness and truth which other religions possess, St. Bernard's Seminary is

entering into negotiations with Colgate Rochester School of Divinity and Bexley Hall, the Episcopal Seminary to work toward an ecumenical theological center.

"The principle governing our interests in this project is integration with identity. Integration will be on those levels of common academic and curricula concern — such as the sharing of certain courses, seminars, library facilities, research projects, and inner-city ministry, etc.

"Identity means the right of the integrating seminary to teach its own doctrine under the light of Faith and with guidance of the Church's authority.

"The needless multiplication of faculties, the need of dialogue, the recognition of sharing in God's Word, and the common resolve to be a spiritual haven in the mass of society, have prompted this move to a coalition.

"Colgate and Bexley have much to give St. Bernard's, and we trust that St. Bernard's in turn will have much to give them. In those things we share in common, there will be unity; in those things in which we differ, there will be dialogue and charity; in those things in which there is difference with the spirit of the world, there will be Presence and Witnessing."

Democracy For Friars

Chicago — (NC) — More democracy, greater sharing of responsibility and less secrecy in conducting provincial affairs is called for in a survey of the Dominican Fathers' Midwestern province.

The survey, called a provincial self-study, was made over two and a half years with financial aid from the Rankob Foundation of New York as a "model for religious renewal." It is believed to be the first such complete undertaking concluded by an U.S. province of male religious.

Twenty-two Pages Of News, features

Cursillo Comes to Rochester See Page 5

Crossword	21
Entertainment	15
Local News	5
Photo Feature	21
Pop Topics	16
School News	7
Sports	19
Want Ads	20
Women	12