



BISHOP RAPHAEL NDINGI

A Bishop Views Africa

By LAURENCE E. KEEFE

A 1969 graduate of St. John Fisher College — Bishop Raphael Ndingi — returned to Rochester this Spring to report on progress in his home see of Machakos, Kenya; to see old friends from college; and to look for personnel and financial assistance from American Catholics.

Bishop Ndingi graduated from Fisher in 1969 with a B.A. in history, and immediately upon graduation was elevated to head a see newly created by

Pope Paul VI. The new bishop was 38 years old at the time of his nomination.

"My diocese is poor and vast," says Bishop Ndingi, who spent his first year in office traveling through the rural areas which comprise most of the Machakos diocese.

"The people of Machakos depend entirely on the land for income," the bishop says. "From May 1970 to April of this year we had absolutely no rain. You cannot conceive the effect this has. Everything dies — the cattle, the crops, everything."

Just after his graduation, the bishop-elect spoke about his plans for his Kenyan diocese: "I intend to try very hard to get all the Christian groups to work together as Christians." Now, two years later, these Christian groups are working teaching in Kenyan schools.

Bishop Ndingi points out that a much greater cooperation on social programs exists between the churches and the state in Kenya than it does in the United States. "We are both concerned," he says, "with trying to eradicate ignorance, disease and poverty, and we try to prevent too pronounced a gap between the haves and the have-nots, although there will always be something of a gap.

"We want converts who come to us from conviction, not out of gratitude," Bishop Ndingi thinks. "We engage in everything that uplifts man, both body and soul. You cannot stress one and neglect the other. And our care is not only for Christians but for everyone who needs our help." This philosophy partly explains the cooperation between the Kenyan government and the church there.

Bishop Ndingi will preach at St. John of Rochester Church in Fairport and Our Lady of Good Counsel, Rochester, this month. During his stay in the area he has been living at Good Counsel where he was assistant pastor during his student days at St. John Fisher.

The bishop did not make his journey solely to ask for financial charity, for he believes, "the Church, wherever it is, should be self-supporting." The real need, he explained, is for "trained personnel to educate native Sisters," who work as teachers, hospital nurses and in medical dispensaries.

In contrast to the United States, "vocations are good." There would be no trouble converting all 700,000 residents of Machakos diocese, feels Bishop Ndingi, if only enough priests were immediately available.

Record Class At Fisher

A record graduating class of 312 at St. John Fisher College was told by Dr. Timothy S. Healy, S.J., vice chancellor of Academic Affairs at The City University of New York, Sunday afternoon that no matter how much you have looked forward to this day, going anywhere, even out, involves motion and change, and all change is frightening.

Graduating with honors, in order of their academic standing, were:

Summa cum laude — Lance De Masi of Irondequoit, Robert W. VanDevelde of Williamson, Jonathan R. Kelly of East Rochester, and Michael W. Pryor of Detroit, Mich.

Magna cum laude — Thomas J. Bowles of Staten Island, Robert C. Doell of Irondequoit, James J. Kinnally of Old Bethpage, Thomas M. Steed of Binghamton, Carlos A. Palasciano of Rochester, Thomas G. Bisky of Irondequoit, James E. Metzinger of Irondequoit, John A. Olah of Secane, Pa., and John G. Fleissner of Buffalo.

Fisher Alumni Meet Tonight

The annual meeting of the St. John Fisher College Alumni Association will be held at 7:45 tonight, June 9, in Basil Hall on campus.

Father Charles J. Lavery, president of the college, will address the meeting. Robert Wanzer, basketball coach, will be honored as a representative of this year's basketball team, which had a record 19-2 season. The results of recent voting among the 3,000 members will be announced, and new officers will be installed.

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