

## A Time To Repent

Today is Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, and a time which customarily marks the beginning of the most solemn period of penance in the liturgy of the Church. Ashes from the palms of last year's Palm Sunday are burned and applied to the foreheads of the faithful as a sacramental and age-old symbol of penitence.

At right, Father Bernard Carges and Auxiliary Bishop John E. McCafferty recite prayers over the burning of the palms at Sacred Heart Cathedral.

Then Bishop McCafferty, below, applies ashes to the foreheads of Mrs. Charles Donner, front of line, Sister Kathleen Leahy, SSJ, and Mrs. John Young.

Photo by Laurence E. Keefe



## Fleischmann Panel Sparks Dissension

By LAURENCE E. KEEFE

The recommendations of the Fleischmann Commission against aid to non-public schools have provoked dissension among the commissioners and attacks from local and state Catholic education officials.

The commission's most recent report was issued Wednesday, Feb. 10 together with a 25-page minority report written by Sen. Thomas Laverne of Irondequoit and four other commission members.

The state council of Catholic School Superintendents and Father Daniel Brent, superintendent of schools in the Rochester diocese, immediately issued statements attacking the conclusions of the commission.

The state council found the commission's conclusions "biased, unsupported by research evidence, and totally unconcerned about nonpublic school children, especially those in the disadvantaged areas who were a particular charge to the commission by the governor."

The Catholic superintendents also said, "It has been revealed by commission member Sen.

Thomas Laverne, that the first conclusion on separation of church and state was doctored at the last minute to conceal the manifest prejudice and inherent contradiction in the commission's basic position. Those opposing aid on this basis said that they would do so even if the federal and state constitutions permitted it."

Father Brent called the commission's recommendations "logical conclusions from unwarranted premises. The 'pro-aid' section of the report points out the weaknesses of these premises."

Father Brent agreed with Sen. Laverne that the commission misused data from the research report which formed the basis of their recommendations. Louis Gray, a New York researcher, prepared the two-volume report, "The Collapse of Non-Public Education: Rumor or Reality?" Said Father Brent, "I understand Gary is quite upset at the way his data was used."

"The commission spent only four per cent of their budget on research on non-public

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## Two Priests Warm To NCC Membership

Last week's announcement that the Roman Catholic Church may be headed for membership in the National Council of Churches (NCC) drew warm responses from two diocesan priests actively engaged in ecumenical ministries.

Father Henry Atwell, new executive director of the Genesee Ecumenical Ministries (GEM), lauded the announcement as reflecting a new trend especially in the light of past policies of the NCC.

He also praised the actions of Bishop Joseph L. Hogan in ecumenical endeavors saying he has "put the diocese ahead of the engine" in the ecumenical movement.

Father Robert Kanka said he thinks the proposed member-

ship is one that merits careful and thorough study. "The advantages of such a coalition would help avoid duplication of efforts and would often provide a united Christian witness in some crucial areas," he said. Father Kanka is president of Elmira's Ministerial Association, the first Catholic to hold the post.

He cautioned, however, that "realistically, the problem of policy stands on controverted issues presents no small problem. I can even foresee majority and minority reports."

Father Kanka also warned that NCC policies "don't seem to be in accord with many grassroots congregations." Because of this, he hopes there will be

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Accounts of President Nixon's trip to Peking this week will fill front pages around the world. Courier Journal columnist Bob Considine is accompanying the chief executive on his history-shattering visit and will send back his impressions to Courier-Journal readers.

Meanwhile, closer to home, but on the same subject, staff writer Barbara Moynihan has a first-hand interview with Father Raymond de Jaeger, formerly a personal adviser to President Diem of South Vietnam and also at one time a missionary in China and prisoner of the Japanese during World War II.

Father de Jaeger has some frank and surprising remarks about the Far Eastern colossus. Read them on PAGE 7.

The Rochester Association of Catholic Laymen (RACL) because of stands it has taken that have been counter to

official Church policy, has itself become something of a center of controversy.

Written in question and answer format, the first segment of a two-part series, "RACL: Everything you Always Wanted to Know but Were Afraid to Ask", appears today on PAGE 18.